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ROBERT S. McELVAINE
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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Encyclopedia of The Great Depression

Robert S. McElvaine, Editor in Chief

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Arthur Schlesinger, and Studs Terkel.

Sources of inspiration,
students of the Great Depression,
and friends.

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PREFACE

The Great Depression, the worldwide economic collapse that began in 1929 and ended only well after the outbreak of World War II a decade later, remains a topic of widespread fascination. There are several reasons for such continuing interest. Among them is the fact that the experience was seared into the lives, memories, and outlooks of an entire generation, coloring its members' views of their subsequent experiences. Another reason for the intense interest in the Depression is that it seemed to contradict the expectations of most Americans and their experiences of relative prosperity throughout most of the time since. Then there is the era's defiance of the modern trend toward individualism and the identification of personal well-being with material consumption. Those who object to the modern rush toward ever greater selfishness and self-indulgence are drawn to the alternate visions of co-operation and rejection of consumerism evident in the Great Depression.

There are also the facts that the modern presidency emerged, the role of the federal government as a major force in citizens' lives was established, the partial welfare state was begun, and the political realignment that remained dominant for much of the remainder of the century was forged during the Great Depression.

Perhaps most of all, however, the Great Depression continues to be a matter of great inter-

est because so many people remain uncertain about the economic prospects in their own times. Anyone who is at least vaguely aware that this massive economic collapse was preceded by a period of unprecedented prosperity in the 1920s is apt to ask the question: "If it happened once, can it happen again?" Whenever the unemployment rate raises sharply, as it did in the early 1980s, or the stock market plunges, as it did in 1987 and again, in a much more prolonged slide, between 2001 and 2003, those of us who specialize in the era of the Great Depression are asked to comment in the popular media on whether another depression might be coming. The fear that "hard times" could return has never completely vanished, and this concern stimulates continuing interest in the events of the 1920s and 1930s.

The Great Depression was the worst domestic crisis the United States faced in the twentieth century and the second worst, after the Civil War, in American history. However, it was by no means confined to the United States. Rather, the economic collapse became a global phenomenon. The worldwide ramifications of the Depression constitute another major reason for contemporary interest in the era. It is widely believed that the worst horrors of the twentieth century—the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and his Nazi followers, World War II, and the Holocaust—would not have happened had

the economic collapse not provided an opening for extremist views to gain credibility.

As its role in the appeal of dictatorship and controlled economies indicates, the Great Depression severely tested both democratic political institutions and market-based economies. It was the principal achievement of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs in the United States to demonstrate that democratic institutions and a slightly modified free market economic system were viable. Indeed, the Great Depression can be seen as providing a stage upon which Roosevelt and Hitler presented to the world sharply contrasting views of the proper way to organize and lead societies, polities, and economies. That contest was finally to be decided under arms in World War II, which in a real sense can be seen as the final act—the climax—of the Great Depression.

The 542 articles in the two volumes that constitute *The Encyclopedia of the Great Depression* are intended to provide the widest audience, both the general public and students of history, with accessible information and analysis, reflecting the latest scholarship, on an extensive variety of topics related to the Great Depression.

Although the bulk of the articles in this encyclopedia focus on the era of the Great Depression in the United States, a substantial number of entries address the worldwide dimensions of the economic collapse and deal with specific events and figures from other parts of the world.

The Great Depression was, of course, first and foremost an economic and, consequently, a social phenomenon. As such it brings up images that are—well, *depressing*. But anyone who sees the era of the Depression as *only* grim misses much of its flavor and significance. The decade of the 1930s was, to be sure, a time of economic hardship that was, with the exception of the South during the Civil War, unprecedented in American history. But it was much more. It was a period of political and social innovation. It was also a time of extraordinary cultural developments in the new medium of sound cinema as well as in art, literature, music, theater, and photography. Even a cursory look at the list of articles under the heading of "Culture" in the outline of contents should give the reader a sense of

how diverse, significant, and, in many cases, "un-depressing" the cultural aspects of the decade were.

The Depression decade came to be dominated by the personality of Franklin D. Roosevelt, but it was also populated by a vast array of other memorable characters—women as well as men, minorities as well as whites, international figures as well as Americans—from the arts, labor, business, politics, government, civil rights, diplomacy, the media, religion, academe, the law, social reform, agriculture, and sports. Biographies of more than two hundred of these individuals are to be found in the pages of this compendium.

This encyclopedia constitutes the most comprehensive resource available on one of the most important periods in our history and one that continues to affect us today in ways subtle and not-so-subtle. A substantial number of articles in these two volumes are, in my opinion, the best short analyses of their subjects available in print. In many cases, the articles are written by the leading scholars on the subject. There is every reason to anticipate that this publication will remain the standard reference for the era of the Great Depression for many years to come.

There are 542 articles in the *Encyclopedia of the Great Depression* arranged alphabetically for easy reference. The articles range in length from 300 to 5,000 words. Entries are written by 270 scholars from around the world, active researchers in history, American studies, economics, social science, geography, political science, radio and television, literature, and music. Each signed article features several carefully chosen cross-references to related entries as well as a bibliography of print and internet resources. A topical outline appears in Volume I, just after the alphabetical article list. It groups articles by broad categories, thereby offering teachers and readers alike an informed map of the field. A comprehensive index offers yet another entry point for the set, encouraging readers to explore the information contained in these two volumes.

In addition to the fine work of the contributors, this project is the result of the great work of my associate editors, Roger Biles, Joe Trotter, Tony Badger, and Patricia Sullivan, and I thank them all. Several people at Macmillan Reference USA and the Gale Group have worked on this project over

the course of its development and helped to assure its successful completion. I want to thank Erin Bealmear, Joe Clements, Judith Culligan, Jill Lectka, and Elly Dickason.

My parents, Edward and Ruth McElvaine, lived through the Great Depression, and their stories first sparked my interest in the period and in history in general. That interest was carried forward and developed by a large number of instructors, scholars, and writers over the years, including Carl Youngman, Warren Susman, Lloyd Gardner, Charles Forcey, Richard Dalfiume, Melvyn Dubofsky, James MacGregor Burns, Frank Freidel,

Joan Wallach Scott, Susan Ware, Harvard Sitkoff, Lizabeth Cohen, Patrick Maney, the four associate editors of this encyclopedia, and the four friends and sources of inspiration to whom it is dedicated, Lawrence W. Levine, William E. Leuchtenburg, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and Studs Terkel.

My wonderful family, as always, deserves the greatest thanks. Anne is my everything. Kerri, Lauren, Allison, Brett, Scott, Evan, and Anna add even more to my life, causing it to overflow with joy.

ROBERT S. McELVAINE
CLINTON, MISSISSIPPI, AUGUST 2003

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JOHN PARRIS SPRINGER

University of Central Oklahoma
 Marx Brothers

MICHAEL B. STOFF

University of Texas, Austin
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GEORGE C. STONEY

New York University
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JAMES STRIPES

Whitworth College
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*University of South Carolina; W. E. B. Du Bois
 Institute, Harvard University*
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JOE W. TROTTER

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Cambridge, Mass.
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 Causes of the Great Depression
 Dictatorship
 Ethiopian War
 Europe, Great Depression in
 Fascism
 Gold Standard
 Good Neighbor Policy
 Hawley-Smoot Tariff
 Hitler, Adolf
 International Impact of the Great Depression
 Isolationism
 Keynes, John Maynard
 Kristallnacht
 Latin America, Great Depression in
 London Economic Conference of 1933
 Mexico, Great Depression in
 Military: United States Army
 Military: United States Navy
 Mussolini, Benito
 Nazi-Soviet Pact
 Olympics, Berlin (1936)
 Peace Movement
 Popular Front
 Reciprocal Trade Agreements
 Roosevelt, Franklin D.
 Spanish Civil War
 Stalin, Joseph
 Stimson, Henry
 World Court
 World War II and the Ending of the Depression

LABOR

Alabama Sharecroppers' Union
 Amalgamated Clothing Workers (ACW)
 American Federation of Labor (AFL)
 American Labor Party
 Bridges, Harry
 Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP)
 Collective Bargaining
 Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)
 Dubinsky, David
 Fair Labor Standards Act
 Gastonia, North Carolina
 Green, William
 Harlan County
 Highlander Folk School
 Hillman, Sidney
 International Labor Defense (ILD)
 International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union
 (ILGWU)
 Labor's Non-Partisan League
 La Follette Civil Liberties Committee
 Lewis, John L.
 Little Steel Strike
 Mason, Lucy Randolph
 Memorial Day Massacre
 Murray, Philip
 National Farmers Union (NFU)
 National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (Wagner Act)
 National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)
 Norris-La Guardia Act
 Organized Labor
 Perkins, Frances
 Randolph, A. Philip
 Reuther, Walter
 San Francisco General Strike (1934)
 Sit-Down Strikes
 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU)
 Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC)
 Strikes
 United Automobile Workers (UAW)
 United Mine Workers of America (UMWA)
 Wagner, Robert F.
 "Which Side Are You On?"
 Women's Emergency Brigade

LAW, JUSTICE, AND CRIME

Anti-lynching Legislation
 Black, Hugo
 Bonnie and Clyde (Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow)
 Brandeis, Louis D.
 Capone, Al
 Cardoza, Benjamin N.
 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
 Cohen, Benjamin V.
 Corcoran, Thomas G.
 Crime
 Darrow, Clarence
 Dewey, Thomas E.
 Douglas, William O.
 Frankfurter, Felix
 Herndon, Angelo, Case
 Holmes, Oliver Wendell, Jr.
 Hoover, J. Edgar
 Houston, Charles
 Hughes, Charles Evans
 International Labor Defense (ILD)
 Jackson, Robert
 La Follette Civil Liberties Committee
 Law Enforcement
 Legal Profession
 Lynchings
Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada
 Murphy, Frank
 National Lawyers Guild
 Scottsboro Case
 Supreme Court
 Supreme Court "Packing" Controversy

NEW DEAL

Agricultural Adjustment Act
 Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA)
 Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)
 American Guide Series
 Arnold, Thurman
 Arthurdale, West Virginia
 Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act of 1937
 Baruch, Bernard
 Berle, Adolf A., Jr.

Black Cabinet
 Boondoggle
 Brain(s) Trust
 Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)
 Civil Works Administration (CWA)
 Cohen, Benjamin V.
 Collier, John
 Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC)
 Communications Act of 1934
 Conservation Movement
 Corcoran, Thomas G.
 Davis, Chester
 Deficit Spending
 Democratic Party
 Dewson, Mary (Molly)
 Documentary Film
 Douglas, William O.
 Eccles, Marriner
 Election of 1932
 Election of 1934
 Election of 1936
 Election of 1938
 Election of 1940
 Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935
 Ezekiel, Mordecai
 Fair Labor Standards Act
 Farley, James A.
 Farm Credit Administration (FCA)
 Farmers Home Administration (FmHA)
 Farm Policy
 Farm Security Administration (FSA)
 Federal Art Project (FAP)
 Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
 Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC)
 Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)
 Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)
 Federal Housing Administration (FHA)
 Federal Music Project (FMP)
 Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA)
 Federal One
 Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC)
 Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC)
 Federal Theatre Project (FTP)
 Federal Writers' Project (FWP)
 Fireside Chats
 Flanagan, Hallie
 Flynn, Edward J.

<p>Frank, Jerome Frankfurter, Felix Gellhorn, Martha Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 Good Neighbor Policy Government, United States Federal, Impact of the Great Depression on Governments, State, Impact of the Great Depression on Grand Coulee Project Greenbelt Towns Guffey-Snyder Act of 1935 Guffey-Vinson Act of 1937 Henderson, Leon Hickok, Lorena Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) Hopkins, Harry Howe, Louis McHenry Hundred Days Ickes, Harold Indian New Deal Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 Johnson, Hugh Jones, Jesse Kennedy, Joseph P. Keyserling, Leon Labor's Non-Partisan League LeHand, Marguerite (Missy) Moley, Raymond Morgenthau, Henry T., Jr. National Housing Act of 1934 National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (Wagner Act) National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) National Recovery Administration (NRA) National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) National Youth Administration (NYA) New Deal New Deal, Second New Deal, Third Old-Age Insurance Perkins, Frances Planning Post Office Murals Public Power Public Utilities Holding Company Act Public Works Administration (PWA) Recession of 1937</p>	<p>Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) Reorganization Act of 1939 Resettlement Administration (RA) Roosevelt, Eleanor Roosevelt, Franklin D. Rural Electrification Administration (REA) Securities Regulation Shelterbelt Project Slave Narratives Social Security Act Soil Conservation Service (SCS) Subsistence Homesteads Division Supreme Court "Packing" Controversy Taxation Taylor Grazing Act Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC) Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Tugwell, Rexford G. Tully, Grace United States Housing Authority (USHA) Wagner, Robert F. Wallace, Henry A. Williams, Aubrey Woodward, Ellen Works Progress Administration (WPA)</p> <p>PLACES</p> <hr/> <p>Africa, Great Depression in Appalachia, Impact of the Great Depression on Arthurdale, West Virginia Asia, Great Depression in Australia and New Zealand, Great Depression in Boulder Dam Canada, Great Depression in Cities and Suburbs Dust Bowl Europe, Great Depression in Gastonia, North Carolina Grand Coulee Project Harlan County Latin America, Great Depression in Mexico, Great Depression in Midwest, Great Depression in the Northeast, Great Depression in the Route 66</p>
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South, Great Depression in the
West, Great Depression in the American

POLITICS

Agricultural Adjustment Act
American Labor Party
American Liberty League
Anticommunism
Anti-lynching Legislation
Association Against the Prohibition Amendment
(AAPA)
Bilbo, Theodore
Black Cabinet
Black Thirty-Hour Bill
Borah, William
Brain(s) Trust
Byrd, Harry
Byrnes, James F.
Cartoons, Political
Cermak, Anton
Chavez, Dennis
Communications and the Press
Communist Party
Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)
Conservative Coalition
Coolidge, Calvin
Costigan, Edward
Democratic Party
De Priest, Oscar
Dewey, Thomas E.
Dictatorship, Fear of in the United States
Election of 1928
Election of 1930
Election of 1932
Election of 1934
Election of 1936
Election of 1938
Election of 1940
End Poverty in California (EPIC)
Farley, James A.
Fireside Chats
Fish, Hamilton
Flynn, Edward J.
Garner, John Nance
Glass, Carter

Grassroots Democracy
Hague, Frank
Harrison, Byron "Pat"
Hatch Act of 1939
Hearst, William Randolph
Hoover, Herbert
Hopkins, Harry
House Un-American Activities Committee
(HUAC)
Howe, Louis McHenry
Ickes, Harold
Johnson, Lyndon B.
Joint Committee for National Recovery (JCNR)
Labor's Non-Partisan League
La Follette, Philip
La Follette, Robert M., Jr.
La Follette Civil Liberties Committee
La Guardia, Fiorello H.
Landon, Alfred M.
League for Independent Political Action
Lehman, Herbert
Lewis, John L.
Long, Huey P.
Marcantonio, Vito
Maverick, Maury
Micheaux, Oscar
Mills, Ogden
Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party
Mitchell, Arthur W.
Moses, Robert
Moskowitz, Belle
Murphy, Frank
National Women's Party
Norris, George
Olson, Floyd B.
Patman, Wright
Pecora, Ferdinand
Pendergast, Tom
Pepper, Claude
Political Realignment
Prohibition
Raskob, John J.
Reorganization Act of 1939
Republican Party
Robinson, Joseph
Roosevelt, Eleanor
Roosevelt, Franklin D.
Sinclair, Upton

Smith, Alfred E.
 Socialist Party
 Social Security Act
 Stimson, Henry
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 Talmadge, Eugene
 Tammany Hall
 Taxation
 Taxpayers Leagues
 Thomas, Norman
 Thomas Amendment
 Townsend Plan
 Union Party
 Wagner, Robert F.
 Wallace, Henry A.
 Washington Commonwealth Federation (WCF)
 Wheeler, Burton K.
 White, William Allen
 Willkie, Wendell
 Wisconsin Progressive Party

THE LEFT

Abraham Lincoln Brigade
 Alabama Sharecroppers' Union
 American Labor Party
 American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC)
 American Student Union
 American Youth Congress
 Bridges, Harry
 Browder, Earl
 Communist Party
Cradle Will Rock, The
Culture and the Crisis
 End Poverty in California (EPIC)
 Farmers' Holiday Association (FHA)
 Foster, William Z.
 Grassroots Democracy
 Guthrie, Woody
 Highlander Folk School
 Hunger Marches
 International Labor Defense (ILD)
 League for Independent Political Action
 Long, Huey P.
 Marcantonio, Vito
 Marxism
 Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party
 Muste, A. J.

National Lawyers Guild
New Masses
 Olson, Floyd B.
 Peace Movement
 Popular Front
 Sinclair, Upton
 Socialist Party
 Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW)
 Southern Negro Youth Conference (SNYC)
 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU)
 Spanish Civil War
 Stalin, Joseph
 Thomas, Norman
 Unemployed Councils
 United Farmers' League (UFL)
 Washington Commonwealth Federation (WCF)
 "Which Side Are You On?"
 Wisconsin Progressive Party
 Workers Education Project

THE RIGHT

American Liberty League
 Anticommunism
 Anti-Semitism
 Black Legion
 Boondoggle
 Byrd, Harry
 Conservative Coalition
 Coughlin, Charles
 Dictatorship, Fear of in the United States
 Fascism
 Ford, Henry
 Hitler, Adolf
 House Un-American Activities Committee
 (HUAC)
 Kristallnacht
 Lindbergh, Charles
 Mussolini, Benito
 Smith, Gerald L. K.
 Spanish Civil War
 Taxpayers Leagues
 Union Party

PROTEST

Bonus Army/Bonus March

Communist Party
 Conservative Coalition
 Coughlin, Charles
 Don't Buy Where You Can't Work Movement
 End Poverty in California (EPIC)
 Farmers' Holiday Association (FHA)
 Harlem Riot (1935)
 Hunger Marches
 Long, Huey P.
 Marxism
 Memorial Day Massacre
 San Francisco General Strike (1934)
 Sinclair, Upton
 Socialist Party
 Strikes
 Townsend Plan
 Unemployed Councils
 Union Party

RACE AND ETHNICITY

African Americans, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC)
 Ames, Jesse Daniels
 Amos 'n' Andy
 Anderson, Marian
 Anti-lynching Legislation
 Anti-Semitism
 Armstrong, Louis
 Asian Americans, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Bethune, Mary McLeod
 Black Cabinet
 Black Metropolis
 Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP)
 Bunche, Ralph
 Caste and Class
 Chavez, Dennis
 Church, Robert R., Jr.
 Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
 Collier, John
 De Priest, Oscar
 Domestic Service
 Don't Buy Where You Can't Work Movement
 Du Bois, W. E. B.

Ellington, Duke
 Ethiopian War
 Father Divine
 Fauset, Crystal Bird
 Foreman, Clark
 Harlem Riot (1935)
 Herndon, Angelo, Case
 Holiday, Billie
 Houston, Charles
 Howard University
 Hughes, Langston
 Hurston, Zora Neale
 Indian New Deal
 Indian Reorganization Act of 1934
 Latino Americans, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Louis, Joe
 Lynchings
 Mason, Lucy Randolph
 Micheaux, Oscar
Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada
 Mitchell, Arthur W.
 National Association for the Advancement of
 Colored People (NAACP)
 National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax
 National Negro Congress
 National Urban League
 Native Americans, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Owens, Jesse
 Race and Ethnic Relations
 Randolph, A. Philip
 Robeson, Paul
 Roosevelt, Eleanor
 Scottsboro Case
 Slave Narratives
 Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW)
 Southern Negro Youth Conference (SNYC)
 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU)
 Tuskegee Syphilis Project
 Vann, Robert
 Weaver, Robert Clifton
 White, Walter
 Williams, Aubrey
 Wright, Richard

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 Niebuhr, Reinhold
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 Ryan, Father John A.

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Adamic, Louis
 Agee, James
American Exodus, An
 Ameringer, Oscar
 Ames, Jesse Daniel
 Anderson, Sherwood
 Bakke, E. Wight
Boy and Girl Tramps of America
 McWilliams, Carey
Middletown in Transition
 Odum, Howard
 President's Committee on Social Trends
 Raper, Arthur
Report on the Economic Conditions of the South
Road to Plenty, The
 Rumsey, Mary Harriman
 Ryan, Father John A.
 Sanger, Margaret
 Social Science
 Southern Agrarians
 Steinbeck, John

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African Americans, Impact of the Great
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 Agriculture
 Asian Americans, Impact of the Great
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 Back-to-the-Land Movement
 Breadlines
Boy and Girl Tramps of America
 Caste and Class
 Causes of the Great Depression
 Charity

Children and Adolescents, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Cities and Suburbs
 Class
 Consumerism
 Crime
 Domestic Service
 Dust Bowl
 Economy, American
 Education
 Elderly, Impact of the Great Depression on the
 Family and the Home, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Farm Foreclosures
 Gays and Lesbians, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Gender Roles and Sexual Relations, Impact of the
 Great Depression on
 Health and Nutrition
 History, Interpretation, and Memory of the Great
 Depression
 Homelessness
 Housing
 Income Distribution
 Individualism
 Industry, Effects of the Great Depression on
 Latino Americans, Impact of the Great
 Depression on
 Leisure
 Men, Impact of the Great Depression on
 Midwest, Great Depression in the
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 Migratory Workers
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 Okies
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 Prostitution
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 Rural Life
 Sharecroppers
 Social Workers
 Soup Kitchens
 South, Great Depression in the
 Suicide
 Transients
 Tuskegee Syphilis Project
 Unemployment, Levels of

Values, Effects of the Great Depression on
West, Great Depression in the American
Work Ethic

Owens, Jesse
Radio
Sports

PROGRAMS

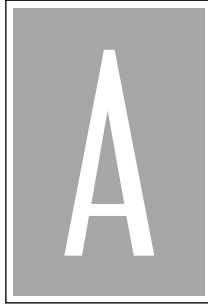
Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)
Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)
Civil Works Administration (CWA)
Conservation Movement
Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935
Farm Security Administration (FSA)
Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA)
Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC)
Greenbelt Towns
Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC)
Hopkins, Harry
Ickes, Harold
Kaiser, Henry
Kerr, Florence
Old-Age Insurance
Public Works Administration (PWA)
Resettlement Administration (RA)
Social Security Act
Subsistence Homesteads Division
Temporary Emergency Relief Administration, New
York (TERA)
Townsend Plan
United States Housing Authority (USHA)
Works Progress Administration (WPA)

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Hollywood and the Film Industry
Leisure
Literature
Louis, Joe
Monopoly (Board Game)
Music
Olympics, Berlin (1936)

WOMEN AND GENDER

Dewson, Mary (Molly)
Domestic Service
Earhart, Amelia
Fauset, Crystal Bird
Gays and Lesbians, Impact of the Great
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Gellhorn, Martha
Gender Roles and Sexual Relations, Impact of the
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Grapes of Wrath, The
Hellman, Lillian
Holiday, Billie
Hoover, Lou Henry
Hurston, Zora Neale
Kerr, Florence
Lange, Dorothea
LeHand, Marguerite (Missy)
Mason, Lucy Randolph
Men, Impact of the Great Depression on
Moskowitz, Belle
National Women's Party
Perkins, Frances
Prostitution
"Remember My Forgotten Man"
Roosevelt, Eleanor
Rumsey, Mary Harriman
Sanger, Margaret
Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs
Thompson, Dorothy
Tully, Grace
West, Mae
Women, Impact of the Great Depression on
Women's Emergency Brigade
Woodward, Ellen



AAA. *See* AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION.

AAPA. *See* ASSOCIATION AGAINST THE PROHIBITION AMENDMENT.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE

The name Abraham Lincoln Brigade refers to about 3,000 Americans who volunteered to defend the Spanish Republic during Spain's 1936 to 1939 civil war. The brigade included not only those who fought in the Abraham Lincoln Battalion, but also Americans who fought in other battalions or served in medical units. Although the average age of the American volunteers was twenty-seven, the brigade included three members as young as eighteen, and others as old as fifty-nine and sixty. Many volunteers were students or teachers, but others were seamen, autoworkers, steelworkers, electricians, and doctors or nurses.

The International Brigades that fought in the Spanish Civil War were entirely integrated, and more than eighty members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were African American. In fact, the Abraham Lincoln Battalion was commanded, until he

died in battle, by Oliver Law, an African-American volunteer from Chicago, marking the first time in American history that an integrated military force was led by an African-American officer. Most of the American volunteers were unmarried, although, as their letters reveal, many had relationships back home that they tried to sustain by correspondence. Most were from urban areas; about 18 percent came from New York. Perhaps a third were Jews, which was not surprising in view of Adolf Hitler's support of the rebel general Francisco Franco. About two-thirds of the American volunteers were Communists, but their primary motive for volunteering was antifascism. Many of them believed a world war would ensue if fascism were not defeated, and in fact the Spanish Civil War effectively signaled the opening of World War II.

The Abraham Lincoln Battalion officially entered the war when volunteers fought at Jarama in February 1937, though some American volunteers had fought in Madrid in the fall of 1936 before the International Brigades were organized. After Jarama, the Abraham Lincoln Battalion fought in unbearable heat in the battle of Brunete in July 1937. This battle was followed by battles at Quinto and Belchite in August and Fuentes de Ebro in October. Then, after a brief period of training, the Abraham Lincoln Battalion endured the snows of Teruel in January and February of 1938. In spring of that year

they faced continuous bombing from the air and Panzer-style massed tank assaults at key points. The battalion then crossed the Ebro River southwest of Barcelona during the summer of 1938 to initiate the largest battle of the war. Barcelona and Madrid fell to Franco's forces in early 1939, and the war ended on April 1 with the surrender of the Loyalist forces. About seven hundred members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade died in Spain.

During the war and after, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade symbolized internationalism for a country that was often isolationist. The heroism and self-sacrifice of the American volunteers, each of whom made a personal decision to join the war effort, became a model for succeeding generations. Although the surviving members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade were often hounded during the anticommunist McCarthy period of the 1950s, by the 1990s sentiment had changed, and several monuments were erected in their honor.

See Also: SPANISH CIVIL WAR.

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CARY NELSON

ACW. *See* AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS.

ADAMIC, LOUIS

The writer Louis Adamic (March 23, 1898–September 4, 1951) played a key role in the 1930s movement for ethnoracial democracy. A Slovenian immigrant, Adamic came to New York in 1913, but moved to southern California in the 1920s, where he made a name for himself as a chronicler of Los Angeles and established a lifelong friendship with

the California leftist Carey McWilliams before moving back to New York in 1929. Like many intellectuals, Adamic was attracted to left-wing ideas during the Great Depression, though he was suspicious of the Communist Party. In the 1930s, Adamic became one of the most prominent advocates of American immigrant groups. Traveling across the United States, he chronicled the experiences of “new Americans” from southern and eastern Europe, concentrating his attention on second-generation Americans. His Depression-era books, *My America: 1928–1938* (1938) and *From Many Lands* (1940), were combinations of autobiographical writings, political journalism, and stories he had collected in his journeys.

Though Adamic was a cultural pluralist who sought to win respect and tolerance for ethnic minorities, he bemoaned the cultural fragmentation of American life. He thus sought both to combat the discrimination faced by ethnic minorities and to craft a notion of American identity that associated the nation not with its Anglo-Protestant roots but with ethnoracial diversity and democratic norms. Like other left-liberals in the 1930s, Adamic saw the labor movement as the most significant political agency capable of achieving his goals. He believed that the new labor federation, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), much of whose membership came from the “new American” groups Adamic championed, would be an “important factor in the delicate and vital process of integration of our heterogeneous population” (*My America*). In 1940 Adamic founded *Common Ground*, the most significant World War II-era journal advocating ethnoracial democracy.

See Also: CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); MCWILLIAMS, CAREY; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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DANIEL GEARY

ADC. See AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN.

ADVERTISING IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION

“Every advertisement is an advertisement for success,” claimed an advertising campaign in 1926. During the Depression years of the 1930s, with successes hard to find, the advertising business faced severe challenges. Economic stringency, political attacks, and a need to recast their appeals all made the decade a difficult one for advertisers. Indeed, the advertising industry’s achievements during the 1920s in establishing its cultural and economic importance may have made the challenges of the Great Depression more severe.

Spending on advertisements—from local classified ads to major campaigns in national media—plunged by more than 60 percent between 1929 and 1933, and it did not rise above pre-crash levels until after World War II. Although advertising agencies stressed the foolhardiness of cutting back on promotion during hard times and argued that advertising could help lift the nation out of its slump, many businesses, with revenues plunging, viewed advertising as an unnecessary expense.

After initially attempting to slow the economic downslide by exhortation, advertising agencies themselves began to cut back. High-salaried employees were dismissed, and competition for accounts became more intense. Advertisers pressed agencies to accept lower commissions; agencies in turn wooed potential clients away from their rivals. Despite this anxious environment, several new advertising agencies made headway, some by borrowing the florid techniques of tabloid newspapers and comic strips. Other agencies pioneered in radio advertising as commercials became the main support of the medium.

As might be expected, advertising styles did not respond uniformly to the Depression. In the first few years, advertisers recycled themes of more prosperous times. By about 1932, however, there was a notable shift to hard-sell campaigns. Although ads still portrayed an unrealistically afflu-

ent, racially and ethnically homogeneous America, ominous threats, fear appeals, and insistent demands to buy became more prominent. As Roland Marchand observed in *Advertising the American Dream* (1985), campaigns adopted tropes like the “parable of the sickly child” or displayed images of defeated, prematurely aged fathers to warn of the dire consequences of failing to consume the appropriate products. Coupled with this, images of sunbeams promised a hopeful future and clenched fists symbolized the determination to persevere—and purchase—despite hard times.

While advertisements depicted consumers under pressure, the advertising business found itself beleaguered by a reinvigorated consumer movement and the threat of regulation by New Dealers. A bill introduced in 1933 proposed to give the Food and Drug Administration power to prohibit false and misleading advertising of the products it regulated. Advertising interests worked to kill the measure. The 1938 amendments to the Pure Food and Drug Act contained a less stringent definition of “misleading” than earlier versions. The Wheeler-Lea Act, also passed in 1938, gave the Federal Trade Commission explicit authority to act against advertising that deceived consumers. Previously, the Commission’s mandate had protected only competitors. The new laws themselves made no dramatic difference to advertisers, but industry efforts to preempt government control by self-regulation, along with public revulsion against the most vulgar publicity of the decade, seems to have reduced blatant dishonesty in advertising during the thirties. Still, as the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor approached, advertising leaders saw themselves under siege from power-hungry bureaucrats and radical ideologues.

Despite the Depression-era’s adversities, in several ways advertising and the consumer culture it promoted gained ground. In big cities, as Lizabeth Cohen demonstrated in *Making a New Deal* (1990), economic pressures on workers and their families weakened earlier loyalties to ethnic neighborhood retailers and brought consumers into chain stores offering low-priced, mass-produced products. Commercial radio provided an effective way to reach consumers with national advertising

campaigns. In the countryside, inducements to modernize through consumption accompanied drives for rural electrification. By 1940, nearly all homes served by Rural Electrification Administration cooperatives had radios and more than half had washing machines. Although wartime shortages soon replaced the privations of Depression-era America, the industry's struggles during the 1930s marked a delay, not a denial, of advertising's promises of fulfillment through consumption.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; CONSUMERISM; RADIO.

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DANIEL POPE

AFBF. *See* AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION.

AFL. *See* AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR.

AFRICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

African peasants were deeply affected by the steep fall in agrarian prices caused by the worldwide Depression of the 1930s. Like peasants in Asia, they would not have been affected by a fall in prices if they had relied solely on subsistence agriculture, but colonial taxation forced African peasants to produce for the market to earn cash for paying taxes. Unlike their counterparts in Asia, with its

elaborate land revenue systems, African peasants did not pay taxes on land; rather, they paid a poll tax or a hut tax. Such taxes did not require a sophisticated system of assessment or a record of rights in land. Colonial governments in Africa did not bother much about land laws and protected “customary law” if it suited them.

The export of African produce was controlled by large European trading companies, and a few major ports provided the channels through which such exports had to pass. By collecting export taxes in those ports, colonial rulers could conveniently raise additional revenue.

The African colonies did not have currencies of their own; they depended on the currencies of their respective colonial rulers. At the time of the Great Depression, this gave rise to differentiation in the economic fate of the colonies. Great Britain and Portugal left the gold standard in 1931, and their currencies depreciated. France, on the other hand, which had returned to the gold standard only in 1928 but at a much lower parity than other nations, stuck to the gold standard until 1936. This caused competition that was particularly keen when the same type of produce was exported by colonies that were adjacent to each other but used different currencies. In this context, African peasants were sometimes forced to grow cash crops that gave them no returns.

A few regional case studies illustrate the fate of the peasants and the problems of the export of produce at the time of the Depression.

WEST AFRICAN PEASANTS AND EUROPEAN TRADING COMPANIES

The Ivory Coast, the Gold Coast (Ghana), Togo, and Nigeria were producers of palm kernels and cocoa. These products were exported by European companies, which were also active in the import trade. In the latter capacity they were interested in maintaining the purchasing power of their African customers, and lobbied colonial governments for a reduction of the export tax, arguing that this would help African peasants. But when the export tax was lowered, the poll tax had to be increased, which the companies did not mind because it forced the peasants to produce for the market. If the peasants re-

belled, the government could suppress them. In the French Ivory Coast, everybody above the age of fourteen was required to pay a higher poll tax, a tax that had already been increased as recently as the late 1920s. At that time, the tax had been collected without difficulty, but when the government chose to raise rather than reduce it during the Depression, many Ivory Coast peasants left the countryside and disappeared into the slums of the towns.

The British Gold Coast levied no poll tax, and the government relied entirely on the export tax. The British departure from the gold standard gave the Gold Coast a competitive edge over the French colonies, and exports increased. The government in Togo, which was by that time a French mandate territory, relied heavily on the poll tax and had to repress a peasant rebellion in 1933. British Nigeria had a more diversified agrarian production, with palm kernels in the Southeast, cocoa near Lagos, and peanuts in the North. A poll tax, which had been introduced in southern Nigeria in 1927, was vigorously collected by 1931 and promptly caused peasant unrest.

The European companies, however, tried to make profits even at the worst of times. Many of them failed, and only larger companies, such as the United Africa Company and Lever Brothers, survived.

FORCED CULTIVATION IN THE BELGIAN CONGO

Sixty percent of exports from the Belgian Congo consisted of products from the mines; palm kernels and cocoa made up most of the remaining 40 percent. The colonial government in the Congo mainly depended on the poll tax; in 1930 this tax had only amounted to one-sixth of its revenue, but it had risen to one-fourth by 1932. Rebellions were brutally suppressed, and the government resorted to an old system of forced labor that had been replaced by the poll tax in 1910. During the Depression, the Congo's colonial rulers practically converted the whole colony into a huge plantation, ordering the peasants what to produce, dictating prices, and controlling delivery. While imposing this system of forced cultivation, the government also diversified production, pushing the cultivation of cotton, cof-

fee, rice, and peanuts, in addition to the traditional crops, such as palm kernels and cocoa. Cotton exports from this region tripled from 1929 to 1937. The government could be proud of its economic success, but the peasants suffered.

SETTLERS AND PEASANTS: KENYA AND SOUTHERN RHODESIA

The presence of white settlers had a special impact on African peasants because many of them had to provide the settlers with cheap labor. The case of Kenya's "white highlands" was particularly striking. This area had been extensively cultivated in the past by Kikuyu tribesmen, but when white settlers arrived, they introduced a modern capitalist system of agriculture. The tribesmen, who were tolerated as "squatters" on the settlers' large landholdings, had few options but to work for them at low wages. Under colonial legislation, the breach of a labor contract was a criminal offence, and those who had entered into such contracts were practically treated like slaves. In shifting the burden of the Depression onto the shoulders of their African laborers, white settlers could survive the Depression. But some of these settlers found it difficult to make ends meet, particularly if they produced maize and not the more profitable cash crops, such as sisal, coffee, and tea.

Maize had become so inexpensive that it was hardly worth growing any longer. The colonial government in Kenya subsidized its cultivation, however, because it was required as food for the African laborers. The maize subsidy ceased when the government could no longer afford it. White maize farmers petitioned for a maize control act to regulate production, but its passage was prevented by other settlers who would have had to pay higher wages to their laborers so that they could afford to buy maize. The maize farmers then stopped producing maize, and turned their land over to African tenants. When the Depression ended under the impact of World War II, the white settlers wanted to recover their land from these tenants, calling them "squatters" once more. This situation contributed to a growing unrest that culminated in the Mau-Mau rebellion.

In Southern Rhodesia maize was a major cash crop produced by white settlers. Since they did not

face the resistance of other settlers here, Rhodesian maize farmers did manage to get a maize control act passed. According to this act, output was severely restricted, produce was procured by the government at a fixed price, and consumers had to buy maize at a price well above the export price. The maize control was exercised in such a way that only white settlers benefited from it. But the government soon realized that the restrictions prevented African peasants from producing for the market, and they were thus unable to pay the poll tax. The government then commuted the poll tax, offering the peasants the option of working for twenty-three days on road construction instead. But so many poor peasants took up this offer that the government had to withdraw it. There could not have been a more striking testimony to the terrible poverty that had hit the peasantry.

FRENCH COLONIES IN NORTH AFRICA

The Arab countries of North Africa that were under French colonial rule also experienced a peculiar competition between European settlers and indigenous peasants. The main crop in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia was wheat, but there were two varieties of it, hard wheat (*Triticum durum*) and normal wheat (*Triticum vulgare*). The latter was mostly grown by European settlers, whereas hard wheat was produced by indigenous people. Both varieties were exported, hard wheat mostly to Italy, where it was used for the preparation of pasta. When wheat became the first major crop whose price fell due to the Depression, the French colonial governments were pressed by the settlers (mostly French) to support the price of normal wheat; they did this to some extent, but showed no interest in the price of hard wheat grown by the Arabs. Similarly the colonial authorities ignored the problems of the indigenous producers of olive oil in Tunisia, many of whom became heavily indebted during the Depression and lost their land to their creditors.

SOUTH AFRICA

At the opposite end of the continent South Africa provided another striking contrast to the rest of Africa. It was dominated by a white minority and enjoyed political independence as a dominion in the British Commonwealth. The country was rich in

natural resources and was the world's largest gold producer. The average annual production in the 1930s amounted to eleven million ounces (311 metric tons). Under such conditions it could hold on to the gold standard even after Great Britain had abandoned it in September 1931.

South Africa was governed by the Nationalist Party, which was caught in a dilemma. It represented the white farmers, who were affected by the fall in prices and stood to gain from a devaluation, but the party was also pledged to upholding national autonomy as embodied in the gold standard. There was a fear that if South Africa abandoned that standard, gold would be given up as a standard of value worldwide and that this would harm South African gold production. The mine owners did not share this fear. Gold prices had risen after September 1931 and this made the processing of low-grade ore profitable, which would extend the life of the mines considerably.

In the meantime, speculators invested their money in the depreciating pound sterling in the hope that they could shift it back to South Africa at a profit once the South African currency was taken off the gold standard. Banking business in South Africa was in the hands of two British banks, Standard and Barclays, whose headquarters was in London. Thus, South Africa was intimately linked with the British financial market. In December 1932, these various pressures combined and forced South Africa to abandon the gold standard. The speculators then repatriated their funds. The South African economy was reflat. In February 1932, the South African currency was pegged to the pound sterling and maintained this relationship for a long time.

Great Britain absorbed the total production of South African gold and built up massive reserves for the sterling area. The fears that going off gold would harm gold production proved to be unfounded. From 1929 to 1936 world gold production increased by 50 percent and the price of gold rose by 66 percent. Because Great Britain and the United States stored vast amounts of gold in their reserves, the increase in the price of gold was not reflected in commodity prices. Nevertheless, reflation did push up prices in South Africa, which helped the farmers. The black farmhands who worked for the

white farmers, and the miners in the gold mines did not share the benefits of reflation because the employers managed to keep wages down.

EGYPT

Egypt stood in contrast to the countries surveyed above. It had been a British colony but had achieved a kind of independent status in 1922. Its currency was still tied to the pound sterling, but the Egyptian government was free to impose a gold export embargo after Britain left the gold standard. In this way the distress gold of indebted peasants, which would have poured out of the country as it did elsewhere at that time, was retained by the Egyptian government and could be used for fighting the deflation of the national economy.

Another special feature of the Egyptian economy was its dependence on the cultivation of cotton. Cotton production was mostly controlled by absentee landlords, who relied on the state for protection of their interests. Egypt had expanded its cotton production from 0.27 to 0.38 million metric tons from 1920 to 1929, and cotton exports constituted about 75 percent of total Egyptian exports. The country was therefore particularly vulnerable to a fall in cotton prices. In June 1929 the world price of cotton stood at eighteen cents; by 1932 it had dropped to six cents per pound, its lowest price during the Depression. This two-thirds reduction within three years was more severe than the price drop for most other commodities. Nevertheless the rate of cotton production was not reduced because demand for it remained stable.

Egypt's system of taxation, a land revenue system of the Indian type, differed from tax systems in other African countries. The tax was fixed at about one-third of the rental assets, and was collected without remission even during the years of the Depression. The rigidity of this system was due to the fact that the income from this tax had been pledged to Egypt's foreign creditors.

Despite these problems there were attempts at sponsoring industries that produced goods such as textiles, which previously had to be imported. Egypt was the only country in Africa where such an industry existed. The availability of cheap cotton was a boon to an indigenous textile industry, and a

group of Egyptian entrepreneurs who had also been behind the establishment of the Bank Misr as a "national" bank now tried their hand at this type of industrialization.

It is difficult to gauge the deterioration of the standard of living in Egypt, and in other African countries, during the Depression years. There are only a few indicators that throw light on the conditions of the people: The per capita consumption of food and grain, for example, dropped by about 26 percent, even though wheat and barley became much cheaper; school attendance receded; and the number of Muslim pilgrims who performed the hajj dwindled in 1933 to about one-tenth the 1920s figure.

In Egypt, as elsewhere in Africa, the burden of the Depression was mostly shouldered by the rural poor, whereas the urban classes, particularly those who received salaries that had been fixed in better times, lived very well. Thus the gap between town and countryside widened considerably in the 1930s.

THE AFTERMATH OF THE DEPRESSION

In terms of the value of world trade, Africa suffered less from the Depression than other parts of the world. Whereas the value of world exports declined by 66 percent from 1929 to 1934, the value of African exports declined only by 48 percent. Agriculturists were affected by this drop in value more than mine owners.

The European colonists who depended entirely on export production were discouraged by the experience of the Depression, and the declining revenues affected colonial governments. The possession of colonies was no longer profitable, but colonial rulers were also creditors, who did not wish to relinquish their control. In the long run, the Depression contributed to the decolonization of Africa.

See Also: EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; ETHIOPIAN WAR; GOLD STANDARD; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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DIETMAR ROTHERMUND

AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression brought mass suffering to all regions of the country. National income dropped by 50 percent and unemployment rose to an estimated 25 percent of the total labor force. At the same time, twenty million Americans turned to public and private relief agencies for assistance. As the "Last Hired and the First Fired," African Americans entered the Depression long before the stock market crash in 1929, and they stayed there longer than other Americans. By 1933, African Americans found it all but impossible to find jobs of any kind in agriculture or industry. As cotton prices dropped from eighteen cents per pound on the eve of the Depression to less than six cents per pound in 1933, some 12,000 black sharecroppers lost their precarious footing in southern agriculture and moved increasingly toward southern, northern, and western cities. Mechanical devices had already slowly reduced the number of workers required for plowing, hoeing, and weeding, but now planters also experi-

mented with mechanical cotton pickers, which displaced even more black farm workers. Despite declining opportunities in cities, the proportion of blacks living in urban areas rose from 44 percent in 1930 to nearly 50 percent by the onset of World War II.

HARD TIMES AND RISE OF NEW DEAL FOR BLACKS

As the number of rural blacks seeking jobs in cities escalated, urban black workers experienced increasing difficulties. Black urban unemployment reached well over 50 percent, more than twice the rate of whites. In southern cities, white workers rallied around such slogans as, "No Jobs for Niggers Until Every White Man Has a Job" and "Niggers, back to the cotton fields—city jobs are for white folks." The most violent episodes took place on southern railroads, as unionized white workers and the railroad brotherhoods intimidated, attacked, and murdered black firemen in order to take their jobs. Nearly a dozen black firemen lost their jobs in various parts of the South. As one contemporary observer succinctly stated, "The shotgun, the whip, the noose, and Ku Klux Klan practices were being resumed in the certainty that dead men not only tell no tales, but create vacancies." For their part, in the North and South, black women were forced into the notorious Depression era "slave market," where even working-class white women employed black women at starvation wages, as little as \$5 per week for full-time laborers in northern cities. In their studies of the market in Bronx, New York, two black women compared the practice to the treatment of slaves in Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Despite mass suffering, the Republican administration of Herbert Hoover did little to aid the poor and destitute. Instead, the federal government established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which relieved the credit problems of large banking, insurance, and industrial firms. Although Hoover believed that such policies would create new jobs, stimulate production, and increase consumer spending, benefits did not "trickle down" to the rest of the economy and end the Depression. Still, African Americans rallied to the slogan "Who but Hoover" in the presidential contest of 1932. In the



During most of the 1930s, African Americans found it all but impossible to find jobs of any kind in agriculture or industry. The father of this impoverished family, photographed in 1937 by Lewis Hine, was a miner who lost his job in the Scott's Run area of West Virginia. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

eyes of blacks, the Republican Party remained the party of emancipation, partly because Democratic candidate Franklin Delano Roosevelt had embraced the segregationist policies of the Democratic Party.

Following his inauguration, Roosevelt's attitude toward African Americans changed little. He not only opposed vital civil rights legislation like the anti-lynching bill, designed to make lynching a federal offense, but showed little interest in challenging even the most blatant manifestations of racial injustice in the proliferation of New Deal agencies. The National Recovery Administration (NRA), Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), the

Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), to name only a few, all failed to protect blacks against discriminatory employers, agency officials, and local whites.

When the AAA paid farmers to withdraw cotton lands from production, county officials barred African Americans from representation and deprived them of government checks. For their part, by exempting domestic service and unskilled labor from minimum wage and participatory provisions, the NRA and the social security programs eliminat-



Many African-American children in the rural South, like these photographed by Dorothea Lange at their farm in Mississippi in 1936, lived in extreme poverty during the Depression years. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI

COLLECTION

ed nearly 60 percent of African Americans from benefits. When the jobs of African Americans were brought under the provisions of the NRA in southern textile firms, employers reclassified such jobs and removed them from coverage of the higher wage code.

As they encountered various forms of discrimination in New Deal Agencies, many African Americans concluded that the so-called New Deal was indeed a "raw deal." Only during the mid-1930s would African Americans gain broader access to the New Deal social programs. By 1939, income from



A group of young men study radio operations in 1933 at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp for African-American men in Kane, Pennsylvania. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

New Deal work and relief programs nearly matched African-American income from private employment. African Americans occupied about one-third of all federal low-income housing projects, and gained a growing share of CCC jobs, Federal Farm Security loans, and benefits from WPA educational and cultural programs. African Americans now frequently hailed the New Deal as “a godsend.” Some blacks even quipped that God “will lead me” and relief “will feed me.”

The emergence of a “new deal” for blacks was closely intertwined with the growth of the Communist Party, the resurgence of organized labor, and the increasing political efforts of blacks on their own behalf. When the Communist Party helped

save nine black youths, the Scottsboro Boys, from execution and secured the release of their own black comrade Angelo Herndon from a Georgia chain gang, the African-American community took notice. When the party helped to initiate hunger marches, unemployed councils, farm labor unions, rent strikes, and mass demonstrations to prevent the eviction of black families from their homes, its work gained even greater recognition within the African-American community. As one black newspaper editor, William Kelley of the *Amsterdam News*, reported, “The fight that they are putting up . . . strike[s] forcefully at the fundamental wrongs suffered by the Negro today.”

The rise of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1935 facilitated the emergence of a



During the Depression, thousands of black sharecroppers lost their precarious footing in southern agriculture and moved increasingly toward southern, northern, and western cities. This family was evicted from their farm in 1938 after drought caused their crops to fail. They were photographed while encamped along the highway in New Madrid county, Missouri. LIBRARY OF

CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

real New Deal for African Americans. Unlike the old American Federation of Labor (AFL), the CIO made a firm commitment to organize both black and white workers. The organization soon launched the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee (PWOC), the United Automobile Workers (UAW), and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC). The new unions appealed to civil rights organizations like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League, recruited black organizers, and advocated an end to unequal pay scales for black and white workers. Although most AFL unions continued to exclude black workers, the national leadership gradually supported a more equitable stance toward black workers. The union

finally approved an international charter for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) in 1935 and endorsed efforts to free the Scottsboro Boys and Angelo Herndon.

Following the lead of anthropologist Franz Boas and his associates, social scientists encouraged the lowering of racial barriers in American society. As early as the 1920s, they had gradually turned away from earlier biological definitions of race, which defined African Americans as innately inferior. The new social scientists challenged the biological determinists to “prove” that African Americans occupied a lower socioeconomic and political status in American society because of their hereditary inferiority. Legal change lagged significantly behind the new intellectual perspectives on race; yet, even



Three young African-American women, trained in office skills by the National Youth Administration, work part-time in the offices of the YWCA in Chicago, Illinois, in 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

here, African Americans witnessed the slow transition to a new deal. As early as 1935, the Maryland Court of Appeals ordered the University of Maryland to admit blacks to the state's law school or set up a new separate and equal facility for blacks. Rather than face the expense of establishing a new all-black law school, university officials lowered racial barriers and admitted black students to the all-white institution.

COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSES

Despite the rise of interracial alliances and the emergence of anti-racist movements among whites, African Americans developed their own

strategies for social change and helped to create their own "new deal." African Americans cared for each other's children, offered emotional support, and creatively manipulated their family's resources. As one Georgia relief official noted, "These people are catching and selling fish, reselling vegetables, sewing in exchange for old clothes, letting out sleeping space, and doing odd jobs . . . Stoves are used in common, wash boilers go their rounds, and garden crops are exchanged and shared." Urban blacks also maintained vegetable gardens, staged rent parties, played the numbers game, and expanded their church-based social welfare activities. While rent parties provided "down home" food, drink, music, and a place to dance for a small ad-

mission fee, the “policy” or numbers game employed large numbers of African Americans as runners and as bookkeepers. According to some observers, for example, Chicago’s south side employed seven thousand people in the numbers business and cushioned them from unemployment even as it provided hope for thousands of blacks seeking to make a “hit.” For their part, some “numbers kings” provided donations to black churches and charitable organizations, but religious organizations launched their own social welfare activities. In addition to the work of established denominations, new religious movements also expanded their efforts to feed the poor. Started during the 1920s, for example, Father Divine’s Peace Mission moved its headquarters from Sayville on Long Island to Harlem in 1932 and gained credit for feeding the masses and offering relief from widespread destitution. At about the same time, Bishop Charles Emmanuel Grace, known as “Daddy Grace,” founded the United House of Prayer of All People, opened offices in twenty cities, and offered thousands of people respite from suffering.

As African Americans used their community-based social networks and institutions to address their needs, they also turned toward the labor movement. Under the growing influence of the new CIO unions, African Americans expanded their place in the house of labor. Perhaps more than any other single figure, however, A. Philip Randolph epitomized the persistent struggle of black workers to organize in their own interests. Born in Crescent City, Florida, in 1889, Randolph had migrated to New York City in 1911 and spearheaded the formation of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and Maids in 1925. When New Deal federal legislation (the Railway Labor Act of 1934) legitimized the rights of workers to organize, Randolph and the BSCP intensified its organizing drive among black porters. By 1933, the union represented some 35,000 porters. Two years later, the union defeated a company union and won the right to represent porters at the bargaining table with management, which signed its first contract with the union in 1937. The BSCP victory not only helped to make African Americans more union conscious, but increased their impact on national labor policy.

The NAACP, Urban League, and other civil rights organizations also increased their focus on the economic plight of African Americans. In 1933, these organizations formed the Joint Committee on National Recovery (JCNR) and helped to publicize the racial inequities in New Deal programs. African Americans also launched the “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” campaign in New York, Chicago, Washington, D. C., and other cities. They boycotted white merchants who served the African-American community but refused to employ blacks except in domestic and common laborer positions. When Harlem store owners refused to negotiate, New York blacks formed the Citizens League for Fair Play and set up pickets around Blumstein’s Department Store. In 1938, their actions produced concrete results when the New York Uptown Chamber of Commerce and the Greater New York Coordinating Committee for Employment agreed to give African Americans one-third of all new retail executive, clerical, and sales jobs.

African Americans usually expressed their grievances through organized and peaceful action, but sometimes they despaired and turned to violence. Racial violence erupted in Harlem in 1935 when a rumor spread that a black youth had been brutally attacked and killed by police. Although the rumor proved false, African-American crowds soon gathered and smashed buildings and looted stores in a night of violence that left one person dead, over fifty injured, and thousands of dollars in property damage. Some blacks believed that radicalism offered the most appropriate response to the deepening crisis of African Americans. Some African Americans joined the Socialist Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU) and the Communist Alabama Sharecroppers Union. Nate Shaw (Ned Cobb), whose life became the subject of an oral biography, recalled that he had joined the sharecroppers union to fight the system that oppressed him. Shaw later recalled that he had to act because he had labored “under many rulers, just like the other Negro, that I knowed was injurious to man and displeasin to God and still I had to fall back.” In Birmingham, the Communist Party’s League of Struggle for Negro Rights (LSNR) and its energetic fight on behalf of the Scottsboro Boys also attracted unemployed workers, such as Al Murphy and Hosea

Hudson. As Hudson put it, "I always did resent injustice and the way they used to treat Negroes. . . . My grandmother used to talk about these things. She was very militant herself, you know."

BLACKS AND THE NEW DEAL COALITION

Although some blacks joined radical social movements and parties, most worked hard to broaden their participation in the New Deal coalition. As Republicans continued to take black votes for granted, blacks increasingly turned toward the northern wing of the Democratic Party. As early as 1932, the editor of the black weekly *Pittsburgh Courier* had urged African Americans to change their political affiliation: "My friends, go turn Lincoln's picture to the wall . . . that debt has been paid in full." By the mid-1930s, nearly forty-five blacks had received appointments to New Deal agencies. Referred to as the Black Cabinet, these black advisors included Robert L. Vann, editor of the *Pittsburgh Courier*, Robert C. Weaver, an economist, and Mary McCleod Bethune, founder of Bethune-Cookman College in Florida. In 1936, African Americans formed the National Negro Congress (NNC), which aimed to unite all existing political, fraternal, and religious organizations and push for policies designed to bring about the full socioeconomic recovery of the black community. Spearheaded by Ralph Bunche, a professor of political science at Howard University in Washington, D.C, and John Davis, executive secretary of the Joint Committee on National Recovery, the founding meeting of the NNC brought together some six hundred organizations and selected A. Philip Randolph as its first president. The NNC symbolized as well as promoted the growing political mobilization of the African-American community. In the presidential election of 1936, African Americans voted for the Democratic Party in record numbers; Roosevelt received 76 percent of northern black votes.

After the election of 1936, African Americans intensified demands on Roosevelt's New Deal administration. They placed justice before the law high on their list of priorities. As early as 1933, the NAACP organized a Writers League Against Lynching and intensified its national movement for a federal anti-lynching law. The Costigan-Wagner

anti-lynching bill gained little support from Roosevelt and failed when southern senators filibustered the measure in 1934, 1935, 1937, 1938, and 1940. Despite failure to pass a federal anti-lynching law, partly because of the campaign, the number of recorded lynchings dropped from eighteen in 1935 to two in 1939.

During the 1930s, black attorneys like Charles Hamilton Houston and William Hastie assaulted the legal supports of Jim Crow, while black historians, social scientists, and writers challenged its intellectual underpinnings. Under the leadership of historian Carter G. Woodson, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (founded in 1915) continued to promote the study of African-American history, emphasizing the role of blacks in the development of the nation. African-American intellectuals (e.g., E. Franklin Frazier, W. E. B. Du Bois, Charles S. Johnson, Langston Hughes, and Richard Wright) reinforced the work of Carter G. Woodson.

As suggested by the role of black intellectuals and attorneys on the one hand and the rent parties of poor and working-class blacks on the other, African-American responses to poverty were by no means uniform. They varied across class, gender, and generational lines. Women manipulated household resources, while black men predominated in the organized labor and civil rights movements. Moreover, elite men dominated the leadership positions of civil rights and social service organizations like the NAACP and the Urban League. Yet, African Americans during the period were united through a common history, color, and culture. The emergence of Joe Louis as a folk hero symbolized African Americans' sense of common plight, kinship, and future. The exploits of Louis helped to unify African Americans and gave them hope that they could demolish the segregationist system. When Joe Louis lost, African Americans lamented, as in his first fight with the German Max Schmeling, who symbolized Adolf Hitler's doctrine of Aryan supremacy. When Louis knocked out Max Schmeling in the first round of their rematch, black people celebrated. The singer Lena Horne later recalled that Joe Louis "was the one invincible Negro, the one who stood up to the white man and beat

him down with his fists. He in a sense carried so many of our hopes, maybe even dreams of vengeance.”

Despite the transition from a raw deal to a new deal between 1935 and 1939, the persistence of racial discrimination within and outside governmental agencies limited the achievements of the Roosevelt administration. As whites returned to full-time employment during the late 1930s, African Americans remained dependent on public service and relief programs. While the CIO aided blacks who were fortunate enough to maintain or regain their jobs during the Depression years, it did little to enhance the equitable reemployment of black and white workers as the country slowly pulled itself out of the Depression. The Communist Party helped to change attitudes toward racial unity, but the benefits of such changes were largely symbolic as racial injustice continued to undermine the material position of African Americans. As the nation increasingly mobilized for War after 1939, African Americans resolved that World War II would be fought on two fronts. They wanted a “Double-V,” victory at home and victory abroad.

See Also: AMERICAN NEGRO LABOR CONGRESS (ANLC); BLACK CABINET; BLACK METROPOLIS; BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS (BSCP); LYNCHINGS; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS; SCOTTSBORO CASE.

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AGEE, JAMES

James Rufus Agee (November 27, 1909–May 16, 1955) was a gifted man of letters who in his brief but intense life left an indelible touch on a variety of literary forms: poetry, novels, film criticism, screenplays, essays, and journalism. Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, Agee was one of America's best film critics (for *Time* and *The Nation*, 1941–1948), and the first to raise the mechanics of weekly reviewing to the level of prose art. His scripts for such films as *The African Queen* (1951) and *The Night of the Hunter* (1955) were generally judged superior to their novelistic sources. His posthumous autobiographical novel, *A Death in the Family* (1957), which won the 1958 Pulitzer Prize for fiction, remains a much-loved period evocation of southern Americana, as well as an aching memoir of parents, children, and the negotiation of loss. Arguably, his greatest achievement was a product of his late youth, the Depression-era classic *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941), co-authored with the photographer Walker Evans. Part anatomy of the impoverished conditions surrounding a tenant farmer's life, part poetic and metaphysical inquiry into the mysteries of existence, part intimate confession of the author's search for his aesthetic identity and family roots, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* is a book like no other. Admittedly unclassifiable, it is without doubt one of the most brilliant and original junctures of image and text in the annals of mixed media creation.

In the summer of 1936, *Fortune* magazine sent Agee and Evans to the South "to prepare an article on cotton tenantry in the United States." The co-authors spent approximately six weeks on assignment, much of the time actually living with three tenant families in Hale County, Alabama. Agee meant for the resulting text of almost five hundred pages and Evans's thirty-one plates (later expanded to sixty-two) to be understood as analogous but very different views of the same subject. Accordingly, the images were lucid, surgical, and selfless, while the prose was turbulent, extravagant, and self-reflexive. Evans's models were connoisseurs of fact, the photographers Eugène Atget and Matthew Brady; Agee's were visionary poets, William Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, and William Blake. Occasionally self-indulgent, the author's language is frequently breathtaking in its intellectual passion, moral force, and near holographic reproduction of the physical reality. Equally characteristic is the way Agee refuses to view the farmer as a ready-made protest symbol, or in any way as an applicant for the reader's pity or patronization. *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* remains honorably distinct in the literature of the Depression in its vision of the imperiled family as exalted in tragedy, inheritors of a moral aristocracy, and virtual gods in ruins.

See Also: EVANS, WALKER.

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ALAN SPIEGEL

AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT

The Agricultural Adjustment Act was signed into law on May 12, 1933, and was a crucial part of the New Deal recovery program of the First Hundred Days. It passed Congress after many weeks of debate between the Roosevelt administration, farm organization leaders, and agrarian militants and their representatives in Congress. Led by Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, the administration wanted a farm program based on voluntary production controls. Farmers who agreed to curtail production would receive a benefit payment financed by a tax on agricultural processors, such as flour millers. The amount the farmers would curtail production would be determined by a decentralized system of farmer committees in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. This system, Wallace and his advisers hoped, would reduce the massive surpluses glutting American markets and engage farmers themselves in the administration of the new farm program. Farm leaders wanted a price-raising measure to boost prices and incomes, but they were reluctant to endorse production controls for fear such measures would entail a large bureaucracy. Agrarian militants also opposed production controls and demanded some form of currency inflation and the power for government-mandated prices to bring about immediate increases in farm income. While Congress debated the bill, frustrated farmers in the Midwest launched farm strikes and mortgage foreclosure protests that sometimes turned violent.

In its final form, Title I of the act authorized the secretary of agriculture to create a production control program for eight major commodities and to impose a tax on the processors of these commodities. It also authorized the secretary to establish marketing agreements among producers of other commodities, such as dairy goods, in order to permit greater control over production and distribution. It committed the Department of Agriculture to raising farm prices to a level that would gain farmers the same purchasing power they had enjoyed for the years 1909 to 1914 in order to achieve “parity” between the farm and non-farm economies.

Title II became the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act, which authorized emergency mortgage loan refinancing. Title III, introduced by Senator Elmer Thomas, a Democrat from Oklahoma, granted the president discretionary power to undertake currency inflation and to reduce the gold content of the dollar. The act became the basis for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. On January 6, 1936, the Supreme Court ruled the processing tax and production control features of the Agricultural Adjustment Act unconstitutional in the *Butler* decision.

The act advanced farm policy beyond the failed actions of the Hoover administration’s Federal Farm Board, made possible programs that contained farm protest movements, and initiated a fundamental change in the role of the federal government in the American farm economy.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); FARM POLICY; HUNDRED DAYS.

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DAVID HAMILTON

AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA)

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) was established in 1933 to carry out the production control and marketing agreement provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Unlike the Federal Farm Board of the Herbert Hoover administration, the AAA was made a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The AAA was originally conceived as an emergency program to meet the farm crisis of the Great Depression, but it evolved



The Mattress Project Center in Newberry County, South Carolina, offered temporary work to low-income farmers and their families. The Center, pictured in early 1941, was established by the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in cooperation with the Surplus Marketing Administration and the Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

into a permanent system of price and income supports for American farmers. Although much criticized, the AAA was able to resuscitate a devastated system of agriculture and overcome the deep-rooted constitutional and political obstacles to an enlarged role for the federal government in American life.

THE CRISIS, CHALLENGES, AND PROGRAMS

At the start of the New Deal, agriculture's condition was grim. Prices of staple commodities and annual farm incomes were lower than they had

been in decades; the farm credit system had nearly ceased to function, and massive unemployment and a gnarled system of international trade were depressing prices and causing commodity stocks to pile up. The effects of the deflation were brutal because farmers could not shield themselves from credit and price risks in the increasingly capital-intensive farm economy of the twentieth century. How to respond to the immediate crisis and how to rebuild the farm economy posed formidable challenges because of deeply ingrained fears that governmental programs would mean the creation of

coercive bureaucracies, and maybe even a police state, in agriculture.

Deep divisions over the AAA's objectives further complicated its task. Farmers, farm leaders, members of Congress, and some USDA officials wanted the AAA to restore farm purchasing power to the more profitable levels of the 1909 to 1914 period, or what had come to be known as *parity* price levels. Major figures within the Department of Agriculture, including the economists M. L. Wilson, Mordecai Ezekiel, and Howard Tolley, saw the AAA as an short-term "adjustment" program that would stabilize the farm economy and serve as a transition to a long-term farm program based on trade liberalization, land use planning, and soil conservation. Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace hoped for both higher incomes and long-term adjustments.

From 1933 through 1935, the AAA focused on establishing production control programs for wheat, cotton, tobacco, hogs, corn, milk and milk products, rice, and potatoes. Participation was to be voluntary and farmers who agreed to cooperate would be paid a benefit payment for reducing acreage. The payments were financed by a tax on the processors of agricultural goods. The program would be administered through a decentralized system of farmer committees in collaboration with county extension agents, land-grant universities, and the USDA. Curtailed production would improve domestic prices while the benefit payments would supply desperate farmers with immediate income. The cooperative and voluntary nature of the program, Wallace and other USDA officials hoped, would create new forms of grassroots democracy within agriculture.

Implementing the AAA programs was an unprecedented undertaking. It required establishing a three-year production base for all participating farmers, determining how much each farm would have to cut back on acreage, ensuring compliance, allocating benefit payments, and adjudicating disputes. This array of tasks was made easier by the prior development of the Department of Agriculture's data-gathering capabilities, its county and state extension system, and its economic research divisions, but even so the AAA administrators faced constant challenges.

CONTROVERSY AND OPPOSITION

The AAA was engulfed in controversy from the start. Faced with gluts of hogs and cotton before production controls could be instituted, the AAA paid producers to slaughter pigs and plow up planted cotton. Critics denounced these attempts to create artificial scarcities when many millions of Americans were in need of food and clothing. Internal policy divisions marred the AAA's early months as well. Its first administrator, George N. Peek, was a prominent farm leader who objected to the emphasis on production controls and frequently clashed with Wallace. He resigned after seven months and was replaced by Chester Davis, also a farm leader, but one who was more sympathetic to reducing acreage. Under Davis, the AAA's cotton program became the center of a national controversy when southern landlords began exploiting the production control contracts to evict sharecroppers or deny them an equitable distribution of AAA benefit payments. Davis investigated but, in spite of extensive evidence indicating wholesale violations of the contracts by growers, he was unwilling to impose new rules that would protect the South's rural poor. When Jerome Frank, the head of the AAA's legal division, tried to impose a stricter interpretation of the contract for the benefit of tenants and sharecroppers in 1935, Davis responded by hastily firing Frank and many of his staff. The New Deal then tried to address rural poverty outside the AAA by creating first the Resettlement Administration in 1935 and then the Farm Security Administration in 1937.

Economic and political crises also forced frequent changes in AAA policies and programs. In October and November of 1933, a sharp increase in the prices of manufactured goods, caused in part by the policies of the National Recovery Administration, brought new threats of farm strikes and demands for currency inflation and price-fixing. President Roosevelt responded to the protests with an executive order creating the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) to make commodity loans to farmers and to serve as an adjunct to AAA programs. The CCC could establish loan rates for commodities, and if prices fell below the rate, farmers did not have to repay the loan. Political pressure from growers also minimized the voluntary features

of some commodity programs. Angry at the effect non-cooperators were having on prices, growers of potatoes, tobacco, and cotton succeeded in pressuring Congress in 1934 and 1935 to make participation in their acreage control programs virtually mandatory.

The processors and the Supreme Court posed a more formidable problem. Bitterly resentful at having to pay the processing tax, the middlemen challenged its constitutionality and in a six to three vote the Supreme Court ruled in their favor in the *United States v. Butler* decision of January 6, 1936. During the nearly three years before *Butler*, the AAA succeeded in injecting \$1.1 billion in benefit payments into the farm economy and contributed to a modest but desperately needed \$2.5 billion increase in gross farm income. The AAA did succeed in involving many thousands for farmers in its committee system, but the results were not always what the advocates of grassroots planning had envisioned. In the south, the committees empowered white landlords who took advantage of black and white tenants and sharecroppers. The AAA also encouraged a dramatic growth in American Farm Bureau Federation membership, which in turn fostered a narrow interest group orientation on the part of many farmers.

Following *Butler*, AAA programs shifted yet again. In response to the devastating droughts of 1934 and 1936, which had greatly curtailed grain production, Henry Wallace began to advocate the creation of an Ever-Normal Granary. This would involve extensive CCC commodity loans and storage operations, which, Wallace argued, would ensure stable food supplies and also help maintain higher levels of farm income. In addition, Congress approved the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act (1936), which authorized the AAA to pay farmers to shift some portion of their acreage to soil-conserving crops in place of surplus commodities. In 1937 Wallace campaigned for a more extensive farm bill, which became the second Agricultural Adjustment Act (1938). The act formally established the CCC commodity loans and crop storage programs, provided conservation payments for growers who restricted production, established a system of crop insurance, and provided mandatory

production controls, or marketing quotas, if two-thirds of the producers of a commodity voted to accept them. The act was a compromise between Wallace, who favored price supports as a means of establishing economic security for farmers, and the Farm Bureau, which wanted rigid production controls and high price-support loans to ensure parity prices.

Unlike the original Agricultural Adjustment Act, the second act envisioned the Department of Agriculture having a permanent role in supporting farm prices and incomes. The efficacy of the new tools, however, was almost immediately overwhelmed by the combination of an economic recession, favorable growing weather, and a deteriorating world trade situation. Faced with a new round of crises, the AAA and the CCC struggled to sustain prices and needed both supplemental appropriations from Congress and massive export subsidies for wheat, cotton, and corn to avoid sharp price breaks. Only the sudden increase in wartime demand prevented a major farm crisis at the start of the 1940s.

ASSESSMENT

Economists have criticized the AAA for its ineffective production controls, for limiting American agricultural exports by pushing U.S. prices out of line with world prices, and for impeding adjustments in crop and livestock specializations. Historians and other critics have criticized the AAA for programs that benefited successful commercial farmers at the expense of the rural poor and for spurring the growth of narrowly focused farm interest groups. Such criticisms have validity, but they should not obscure the fact that the AAA ended the catastrophic unraveling of the farm economy during the early Depression years, allowed many farmers to survive the 1930s, and stabilized the farm economy in ways that encouraged new investment in tractors and technology later in the decade. Nor should the AAA's critics overlook the limited tools and strategies available for devising a farm program amidst the Great Depression.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT;
COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION (CCC);
FARM POLICY; SUPREME COURT.

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AGRICULTURE

Agriculture underwent fundamental changes during the Great Depression because of the crushing need of farmers to find relief from severe economic hardship and their need to make adjustments to their new position in American society. American farmers had been shifting away from self-sufficiency to commercialism since the Civil War, but the speed of the process began increasing at the start of the twentieth century and particularly since World War I. In the mid 1920s the prices of commodities such as wheat and cotton slipped downward, and they fell harshly in 1930. Only with World War II did substantial improvement come.

During that interval the position of the farmer as an independent yeoman changed to that of a businessman dependent on government support. This development had been steadily creeping forward for the past generation, and the farmer now had to accept this role to remain a viable part of the American economy.

In 1930 agriculture found itself facing old and unresolved problems. To begin with, farm prices were simply too low. Cotton had been 28.7 cents per pound in 1924, but hit bottom at 5.9 cents in 1931, and never rose above 12.4 cents during the Depression. Wheat followed a similar pattern, rising in price but never reaching the level it had held in some years of the previous decade. Exports, long a vital part of the commodity market, also fell dramatically, but the loss of this market had begun in the 1920s, partly because of America's new position as a global creditor after World War I. This new condition, along with the country's protective tariffs, severely hampered the ability of foreign buyers to tap the U. S. market and led to the collapse of export sales in 1930. By the 1920s, furthermore, the United States had a surplus farm population, and with their incomes falling, farm workers were underemployed. In the South and Midwest, tenant farming reached high proportions, about 40 percent by 1930, and these farmers lived in extreme poverty. Once the Depression hit, consumer demand for farm produce dropped and sent agriculture spiraling downward. Since farmers had been steadily becoming less self-sufficient and more dependent on cash flow, they fell into one of their most extreme periods of hardship.

Wretched conditions in agriculture during the Depression had severe ramifications. For one thing, the rural farm population in 1930 made up about 25 percent of the total U.S. population, but a larger percentage of Americans depended on agriculture. During the past generation urban America had become more cosmopolitan, but rural residents lacked the amenities of modern living, such as electric lighting, radios, running water, adequate health care, and education. For this segment of the population, the standard of living was below the national level, and rural educational and cultural opportunities were not keeping pace. Until farm incomes im-



During the 1930s many farmers continued to rely on mules and horses to work their fields. These brothers, photographed in 1939, worked the land on their father's farm near Outlook in Yakima county, Washington. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS

DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

proved, the gap in lifestyles between urban and rural Americans would remain. For these reasons, the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt believed that agriculture had equal importance with industry in restoring prosperity to the nation, and therein lay one of the important Depression-era changes related to agriculture.

Under the aegis of the New Deal, numerous assistance and relief programs went into operation in hopes of bringing prosperity back to agriculture.

The price support programs, particularly the first, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), which started in 1933, and the second AAA of 1938, set a guaranteed minimum price under staple crops. New Dealers thought improvements in staple prices would also bring hikes in other agricultural goods. Along with the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), which offered farmers an opportunity to store their crops in government warehouses until commodity prices rose, the support



A Farm Security Administration country supervisor and his assistant examine the oat crop of a rural rehabilitation borrower in West Carroll parish, Louisiana, in 1940. Many farmers kept their farms running during the Depression with loans and other aid from the Farm Security Administration. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

programs managed to raise prices, but only modestly. On the eve of America's entry into World War II, the United States still had large surpluses, or carryovers, in cotton, corn, and wheat.

Price supports constituted only a portion of the federal assistance programs initiated during the Depression. In 1933 the Farm Credit Administration began refinancing mortgage loans at low interest. Two years later the Farm Mortgage Moratorium Act implemented a three-year moratorium against seizure of farm property, which helped debt-laden farmers refinance their farms. That same year the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) went into operation, and the Resettlement Administration (RA)

undertook to furnish assistance to small farmers trying to buy land or relocate into different areas. The RA also offered assistance to tenants and sharecroppers trying to establish their own homesteads. In 1935 Roosevelt created the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) by executive order, but Congress gave it statutory authority in 1936. The REA began a program using farmer-owned cooperatives to provide rural residents with electricity. In 1936 the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act temporarily replaced the first AAA, which had been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Later in 1937 the Farm Security Administration went into operation. It absorbed and expanded



This farmer in Door county, Wisconsin, stopped cultivating his field to discuss his plans with the Farm Security Administration county supervisor in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the operations of the RA by offering small landowners, tenants, and sharecroppers opportunities to buy land, refurbish their homes, and participate in rural health cooperatives.

These New Deal agencies represented a new effort to extend assistance and relief to agriculture. They offered help to all classes of farmers and landowners, large and small, and to tenants and sharecroppers. Not all the agencies survived past the New Deal, but a number of them, such as the REA, continued. What was probably the most important new concept of the Depression, the introduction of subsidized farming, became a regular feature of the American economy and continued into the twenty-first century. At the close of the Depression, agriculture relied heavily on federal supports in various

forms, ending the independence of farmers as individualistic yeomen. Farming was also on the road to becoming more commercial, a practice that had begun, however, prior to the Depression.

NEW AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGIES

Mechanization continued to advance during the Depression, though at a much slower rate. The Cotton Belt lagged drastically behind in the use of tractors and other implements owing to the technical difficulty of developing machines to pick cotton and remove weeds in cotton fields. Southern farmers continued to rely heavily on hand labor and animal power, but there were efforts nonetheless to develop a mechanical cotton picker by the Rust brothers and International Harvester. It was not

until after World War II, however, that a mechanical picker became available.

In 1937 rubber tires became available for tractors, which made them more attractive for a variety of chores and tasks other than the cultivation of crops. During the nine-year period after 1930, the number of tractors used in agriculture nearly doubled; most were general purpose tractors used in the grain belt, Corn Belt, and areas of specialized production, such as dairying and vegetable farming. Improvements in other devices like water pumps, irrigation systems, and small motors also greatly aided the farmer.

Advances in seed varieties greatly aided production. Hybrid corn replaced much of the open-pollinated varieties in the Corn Belt, and wheat that was resistant to "rust" began to be more widely cultivated during the Depression. Similar progress occurred with sugar beets, soybeans, and grain sorghum. New cotton varieties resistant to wind damage encouraged the spread of cotton on the Texas plains. And California began to expand its acreage of cotton with the development of the acala variety. Research into livestock production continued with advances in cross breeding, artificial insemination, nutritional feeds, and disease prevention. All of these advances enabled farmers to obtain greater yields and thereby increase the country's total production. As animal power declined, more land became available for food crop production rather than animal feed. By the late 1930s manpower needs were expected to drop, particularly in the southern states where advances in mechanization would soon occur.

Improvements in mechanization and technology caused farmers to have greater capital needs, shoving them into commercial operations. In order to earn profit, landowners needed to expand the size of their operations, meaning more land, larger herds of livestock, and the use of more hybrid varieties of crops. Higher production per acre and greater total volume of output became mandatory to remain a viable part of the economy.

CONCLUSION

Once war broke out in Europe in 1939 and the economy began to improve from the effects of the

war, agriculture was on the threshold of entering a new era. The federal government had become a partner in farming operations. Small family farms, or "dirt farmers," faced greater difficulty surviving in the competitive economics of commercial farming, and tenants and sharecroppers began to sense the draw of city life as the United States started industrializing for the war.

The Depression had brought recognition that agriculture needed to modernize and overcome its reliance on hand labor and animal power. It was clear that small family operations would no longer provide an adequate standard of living, and if farm residents intended to keep pace in the increasingly modern and cosmopolitan world, they would have to abandon farming or operate on a commercial basis. This process had been underway prior to the Depression, of course, but the compelling hardship of the era forced this realization upon agriculture.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT; AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION (AFBF).

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D. CLAYTON BROWN

AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN (ADC)

Aid to Dependent Children (ADC), Title IV of the Social Security Act of 1935, provided federal matching grants to state programs for poor, "dependent" children. Although it was one of the least controversial provisions of the 1935 law, ADC paved the way for the single-parent family entitlement ("welfare") that has provoked so much opposition and public criticism since the Depression.

ADC federalized the state mothers' aid programs that had been passed during the World War



The Aid to Dependent Children program was established to provide assistance to low-income families with minor children, like these in Hale county, Alabama, photographed by Walker Evans in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

I era. These were state laws mandating that local governments assist mothers in homes where the “breadwinner” was incapacitated. A product of the Progressive-era reform crusade, mothers’ aid programs were often justified as a way of keeping low-income families intact and keeping children out of institutional care. The caseloads were generally small, as authorities sought to restrict mothers’ aid to a few “deserving” recipients who conformed to middle-class norms. Mothers’ aid programs spread quickly and were implemented by nearly every state in the two decades that preceded the Great Depression. In most localities, mothers’ aid programs were administered separately from traditional public and private “general relief” programs that assisted impoverished families and single individuals.

During the early years of the Great Depression, however, it was general relief that absorbed the bulk of unemployed workers seeking aid. Mothers’ pension caseloads increased, but these programs were dwarfed by the national unemployment relief system, which by late 1932 was bankrolled in part by federal funds from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. Mothers’ aid programs were initially not eligible to receive federal funding under the New Deal’s relief program, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

When the Committee on Economic Security (CES), which wrote the Social Security Act, was created in June 1934, it was assumed that state mothers’ aid programs would receive federal funds under the new legislation. This fact, coupled with the decision later in the year to abandon the federal

general relief program, represented an abrupt about-face for the New Deal. Now so-called “categorical” programs (programs targeted to the elderly, children, and the disabled) would receive federal aid, and general assistance would be returned to the states.

The planning and legislative process that produced ADC attracted little public attention, yet there was a good deal of behind-the-scenes maneuvering for control of the program. Initially it was assumed that the United States Children’s Bureau, the federal agency that oversaw national child welfare policies, would administer ADC. Children’s Bureau officials actually wrote the initial policy draft for the CES. But these officials were a minority on the advisory committees that assisted the CES. Just prior to the submission of the legislation to Congress, the ADC program was taken from the Bureau and given to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the New Deal agency that had been administering relief since 1933. This was a small and short-lived victory for the new federal bureaucracy of the early New Deal.

Congress eventually decided to have ADC administered by a Bureau of Public Assistance located within the new Social Security Board. The Bureau of Public Assistance was also charged with administering the larger and more politically important grant program for the elderly (Old Age Assistance). ADC, as the name implied, was now targeted to children and the term “mothers’ pensions” was abandoned. Initially, federal grants provided for one-third of state program expenditures. This was expanded to a fifty-fifty matching grant in 1939.

The overall impact of the new federal program was to liberalize the mothers’ aid policies inherited from the Progressive era. To be eligible for federal aid, states were required to allocate funds for ADC and operate programs in all local areas. As a result, many states that had previously resisted appropriating funds for needy families were now forced to do so, and programs were established in many localities that had never implemented mothers’ aid. State and local policies that restricted aid to a limited number of “worthy” widows were weakened, particularly by the influx of single parents who had worked their way onto the federal general relief rolls during the early years of the Depression.

Still, ADC incorporated many of the restrictive features of the old mothers’ pension programs. No adequate standard of aid was established, and payments varied widely from state to state. States were allowed to keep traditional mothers’ aid provisions requiring that aid be given only to those who maintained a “suitable home” for their children. While such language could be used to increase benefit payments to make the homes more “suitable” (the approach federal officials advocated), it was also used to deny aid to needy applicants who did not conform to white middle-class norms. In southern states, suitable home requirements were widely used to deny aid to needy black families.

Some historians have argued that the limitations inherent in ADC and the flaws in its early implementation sowed the seeds of the modern welfare dilemma. The New Deal’s Social Security legislation, it is suggested, created a two-tiered welfare system: one set of popular national programs (old-age insurance and unemployment compensation) existing side-by-side with an unpopular and politically vulnerable welfare entitlement (ADC). Others argue that the New Deal established a limited but politically defensible entitlement for children and suggest that the “welfare explosion” of the 1960s altered the original intent of ADC. Yet all agree that the ADC policy, which received virtually no attention when the Social Security Act was passed in 1935, produced unforeseen consequences in social policy and politics

See Also: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

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JEFF SINGLETON

ALABAMA SHARECROPPERS' UNION

The Alabama Sharecroppers' Union was the largest Communist-organized, black-led mass organization in the Deep South during the Great Depression. Composed of African-American sharecroppers, tenant farmers, and agricultural wage laborers, the union at its peak numbered an estimated ten to twelve thousand members. However, due to persistent opposition from white southerners, shifts in agricultural production, unfavorable New Deal policies, and, ultimately, lack of Communist support, the union was never able to effect permanent change in working conditions for rural blacks in the South.

Founded in 1931, the Alabama Sharecroppers' Union was part of a larger Communist Party effort to organize African Americans as a separate group of Americans that required "liberation" from capitalist society. Most of the union's first members were semi-independent African-American farmers and sharecroppers who had been displaced by increasing farm mechanization and depressed commodity prices. Within months of the group's founding, many members and nonmembers had to go into hiding after local white authorities killed an African-American union leader, Ralph Gray, in a dispute over working conditions.

After Gray's death the organization regrouped and adopted the name Sharecroppers' Union. Fearing more white violence, the new secretary of the union, Al Murphy, an African-American Communist from Georgia, turned the group into a secret underground organization whose members were armed for self defense. Under Murphy's leadership, the union spread into Alabama's "black belt" counties and beyond to the Alabama-Georgia border; white violence spread along with it. A confrontation between white authorities and Sharecroppers' Union members in Reeltown, Alabama, in 1932 left

three dead and several others wounded; eventually, five Sharecroppers' Union members were convicted and jailed for assault with a deadly weapon.

Still, the Sharecroppers' Union continued to grow as African-American sharecroppers faced with evictions resulting from New Deal acreage reduction policies joined in large numbers. By June 1933 the union's membership was estimated at two thousand; fifteen months later estimates ran as high as eight thousand members.

In 1934, a new white Sharecroppers' Union leader, Clyde Johnson, tried to merge the group with the newly formed Socialist-led Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, but the effort failed when the leadership of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union denounced the Sharecroppers' Union as a Communist front. Meanwhile, white violence persisted. Two strikes in Alabama in the spring and summer of 1935 left six dead and dozens of strikers jailed and beaten.

In 1936 the Sharecroppers' Union, now at its peak membership, moved into Louisiana and Mississippi as its leaders tried again to merge with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. When that attempt failed, the Communist Party ordered the Sharecroppers' Union to disband. Sharecroppers and tenant farmers were transferred to the National Farmers' Union, while the agricultural wage laborers of the Sharecroppers' Union were told to join the Agricultural Worker's Union, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). However, some Sharecroppers' Union locals in Alabama and Louisiana chose not to affiliate and remained independent into the 1940s.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; COMMUNIST PARTY; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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MARY JO BINKER

ALEXANDER, WILLIAM. See FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA).

ALLEN, FREDERICK LEWIS

Frederick Lewis Allen (July 5, 1890–February 13, 1954) was a writer, magazine editor, and popular historian. The son of an Episcopalian minister, Allen was descended from a line of estimable New Englanders that went back to the *Mayflower*. He received a superb education at Groton School and then at Harvard University, where he helped edit the literary magazine, and earned a B.A. in English in 1912 and an M.A. in modern languages in 1913. In 1914, he was hired by the prestigious *Atlantic Monthly*. After working for the Council on National Defense from 1917 to 1918 and a stint as Harvard's publicity manager from 1919 to 1923, Allen was hired as an editor for *Harper's Magazine* and spent the rest of his career there, becoming *Harper's* editor-in-chief in 1941. A skillful and sensitive editor, Allen attracted distinguished contributors to *Harper's* and solidified the magazine's reputation for intelligence and literary brilliance. He stole evenings and weekends from his editorial duties, however, to write the books that were to make him famous.

In 1931, Allen published his best-known work, *Only Yesterday: An Informal History of the Nineteen-Twenties*. It was a remarkable survey of American popular culture from 1919 to 1929, written in a lively and engaging style, and filled with dramatic anecdotes and colorful personalities. Notable both for its acute perceptions of recent times and for its appeal to the general reading public, *Only Yesterday* sold more than a million copies and ran through twenty-two printings. Although Allen's book, along with numerous other influences, may have helped to fasten to the 1920s its exuberant, carefree, jazz-age image, it should not be dismissed as mere popularization: The historian William Leuchtenburg remarked that *Only Yesterday* was "written in such a lively style that academicians often under-rate its soundness."

Allen tried to duplicate his success with a look at the 1930s, *Since Yesterday: The Nineteen-Thirties*

in America, published in 1940. It was inevitably a more somber and serious portrait, emphasizing economic hardship, Franklin Roosevelt, and the darkening international scene. *Since Yesterday* retained the absorbing literary style of the earlier work and also became a best-seller, although it never reached the success of *Only Yesterday*. In addition to these two works, Allen wrote three important books in his trademarked manner: *The Lords of Creation* (1935) was a study of Wall Street high finance, centering on the figure of J. P. Morgan, a subject to which Allen returned in *The Great Pierpont Morgan* (1949). Finally, Allen attempted a survey of the first half of the twentieth century in *The Big Change: America Transforms Itself, 1900–1950* (1952).

Allen was respected and admired by his colleagues, not only for his literary talents, but also for his generosity, modesty, fairness, and compassion. He died in New York City at the age of sixty-three.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; HISTORY, INTERPRETATION, AND MEMORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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DAVID W. LEVY

AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS (ACW)

Founded in 1914, the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACW) was one of the nation's first independent industrial unions. Its leadership was largely drawn from the Jewish political left, including socialists like president Sidney Hillman, anarchists, syndicalists, and others. Targeting workers in the profitable men's clothing industry, the ACW actively organized women and immigrant—especially southern and eastern European—workers. The ACW experienced its first suc-

cesses in the 1910s, in an industry rapidly undergoing structural changes, where labor organizers were bedeviled by production divisions between “primary sector” firms like Hart, Schaffner & Marx that operated on a large-scale, rationalized shop basis, and garment industry subcontractors who engaged in the most exploitative forms of sweated-labor production. By the time of the Great Depression, the ACW had established itself as one of the leading independent industrial unions, although the most skilled workers in some shops, like cutters and tailors (called “labor aristocrats,” sometimes derisively), remained outside of the organization.

The economic contraction of the early Depression years devastated the ACW. By some estimates, only 10 percent of the members of the ACW were employed in January 1932, while union officials negotiated temporary wage cuts (euphemistically termed “loans”) to keep shops open and members employed. Both child labor and sweated labor expanded within the industry; in Baltimore, nearly 25 percent of women workers in the industry labored in illegal conditions, and enforcement of local labor codes proved impossible. Open shop employers organized to protect their interests. In New York, racketeering and criminal activity affected several locals; Hillman himself brought charges against corrupt union officials associated with the Jewish underworld. As conditions worsened, president Hillman vilified both the Herbert Hoover administration and the craft-based American Federation of Labor for their staunch adherence to the ethic of voluntarism. Militant leaders like Hillman called for a “new unionism” that linked workers’ demands to government intervention in the economy, a development realized with the 1932 election of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the institution of the New Deal.

The passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act coincided with aggressive ACW organizing drives. Hillman’s influence within the Roosevelt administration resulted in a men’s clothing code in the NRA that was advantageous to the ACW; consequently, homeworkers (sweated labor) were re-employed in manufacturing establishments, wages rose significantly, child labor was prevented, and membership surged within the union. Increasingly,

the union’s membership included not only Jewish, but also Italian workers; among the former, sectarian political differences sometimes threatened to disrupt relations between the union’s locals and its national officials, as in New York and Wisconsin in the late 1930s when Hillman prevented ACW locals from affiliating with state CIO councils heavily influenced by Communist Party members. There were some fascist tendencies among Italian workers, especially in New York and Boston. Although women were generally discouraged from pursuing leadership positions within the ACW, the organization’s elaborate cultural program, including labor colleges, helped to hold together an increasingly ethnically diverse membership.

The ACW was a founding member of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). With support from the CIO, the union expanded its membership, taking in garment workers in the manufacture of nightclothes, work pants, and coveralls, as well as workers in laundry and dry-cleaning establishments. The ACW successfully negotiated its first nationwide contract in 1937, including a significant wage increase. At the same time, Hillman and ACW organizers embarked on an ambitious plan to organize southern textile workers into the Textile Workers Organizing Committee (TWOC), an undertaking that achieved only moderate success despite favorable rulings from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) in North Carolina and elsewhere.

By the end of the 1930s, local ACW officials often found themselves at odds with national union officials, particularly in times of economic recession when local officials negotiated “local agreements,” often calling for lower wages or “give-backs,” to the national contract. On political issues, however, the ACW rank-and-file generally worked in concert with its leadership. Like Hillman and other leaders within the union, workers had flirted with third party movements, including New York’s American Labor Party, in the mid-1930s. But most had returned to the Democratic Party by 1940, when Hillman turned the ACW annual convention into a vehicle for Roosevelt’s reelection in a grand “labor unity” pageant. Members responded enthusiastically, voting in record numbers for Roosevelt and

thus helping to further solidify the labor-government coalition that characterized much of the ACW's activities during the Depression years.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); HILLMAN, SIDNEY; INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS UNION (ILGWU); ORGANIZED LABOR.

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NANCY QUAM-WICKHAM

AMERICAN EXODUS, AN

In 1939 photographer Dorothea Lange and sociologist Paul Schuster Taylor collaborated to publish a record of their social science observations and conclusions drawn from their experiences in the Great Depression. They had collected the data for that record, *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion*, over the previous five years and while traveling through rural America under the aegis of the Resettlement Administration and, after the agency's name changed on January 1, 1937, the Farm Security Administration (RA-FSA). The book is divided into five sections: Old South, Plantation Under the Machine, Midcontinent, Dust Bowl, and Last West. All but nine of the photographs in the book are Lange's.

Agricultural reform, the agenda of the RA-FSA, shaped *American Exodus*. Lange and Taylor concluded that the migrants who fled to California from devastated rural areas in the South and Midwest could be compared to Europeans who had fled agricultural disasters to immigrate to America.

Lange and Taylor saw a close parallel to one cause of European emigration: a process of agricultural consolidation known as *enclosure*, which dissolved small family-occupied or family-owned farms into large single-owner tracts. Enclosure in America was exacerbated by secondary hardships: agricultural mechanization and disfranchisement due to the poll tax. In addition, Lange and Taylor set the book in the wider cultural narrative of Frederick Jackson Turner's then-popular frontier thesis.

Many of the captions accompanying the photographs are descriptive of the subject of the photograph or of conditions that Lange and Taylor perceived had created the opportunity for the photograph to be taken; other captions consist of reported statistical data or historical quotes. Still others are quotations recorded by Lange and Taylor from the subjects in the photographs; some of these captions are extracts from longer statements, reproduced out of context.

Lange and Taylor had difficulty persuading a publisher to assume the expensive project. The success of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and widespread attention drawn by Carey McWilliams's *Factories in the Field* (1939) ultimately convinced Reynal & Hitchcock, Inc., to take the project on. The book's distribution on January 19, 1940, five days before the release of John Ford's highly popular film version of Steinbeck's novel, gave sales a boost. Nonetheless, contemporary critics unfavorably compared Lange and Taylor's self-styled social science reportage/argument to the compelling dramatic narrative of the Joad family, notwithstanding *American Exodus's* subsequent and enduring critical acclaim.

With national attention turning to World War II, *An American Exodus* went quickly out of print. It was reissued by Yale University Press in 1969 for the Oakland Museum of California and was published in a facsimile edition in 1999 by Jean-Michel Place.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; LANGE, DOROTHEA; MIGRATION; PHOTOGRAPHY.

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KATE SAMPSELL

AMERICAN FARM BUREAU FEDERATION (AFBF)

Organized in 1919, the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) initially sought educational and cooperative marketing solutions to the economic emergency gripping agriculture throughout the 1920s. However, as these failed and the crisis deepened, membership waned. From a 1921 high of 466,422 families, membership fell to 205,348 by 1932.

Desperate, the traditionally Republican AFBF offered its support to Franklin Roosevelt. Roosevelt repeatedly declared that insufficient farm income was at the root of the Depression and promised to direct the nation's attention to the farm crisis. Even before his election, Roosevelt met with farm leaders, including AFBF President Edward O'Neal, to discuss solutions to the emergency.

What ultimately arose was the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). Allotting each producer a share of the domestic market required the involvement of tens of thousands of farmers. Counting piglets, measuring ground, and examining productivity records dictated that extension agents enlist volunteers, most of whom were farm bureau members. Indeed, some argue that the AFBF's support for the AAA was predicated on the use of extension agents, assuming that their close association would revive flagging membership and finances.

Membership climbed steadily during the 1930s, particularly in the cotton states. Some farmers may

have been misled into joining the AFBF as a presumed prerequisite for participation in the AAA. Elsewhere, membership rose with the suggestion that dues be deducted from benefit checks. Others joined hoping membership would gain them favor from county agents. In 1937, the AFBF recorded 409,766 memberships.

The substitution of the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act for the AAA gained initial support from the AFBF. Both programs relied upon the oversight of county agents and their associated farm bureaus. The price supports and economic assistance provided by the Commodity Credit Corporation and the Farm Credit Administration also garnered AFBF favor. Members and leadership alike perceived of both agencies as relief mechanisms for commercially oriented, land-owning farmers. Support for the second AAA was similarly based.

Not all New Deal agricultural enterprises found favor with the AFBF. Particularly distasteful to the organization were the Resettlement Administration and its successor, the Farm Security Administration (FSA). According to the AFBF, FSA aid to tenant and small-scale farmers hindered agriculture's recovery and prevented its efficient growth. The FSA focused more on reform than relief and did not have a particular role for county agents or farm bureau members.

Whether a response to the increased visibility of the AFBF during the New Deal years, the perceived necessity of membership in the organization, or the improved farm economy of the 1930s, membership by 1940 reached 444,485 families. By 2003 the organization had grown to 5,000,000 members.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT (AAA); FARM POLICY.

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KIMBERLY K. PORTER

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL)

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) began as a conservative response to earlier labor unions in the United States. Late nineteenth-century labor leaders who opposed the socialist ideals of the Knights of Labor, as well as its belief in a centralized labor movement, organized what became the AFL. The organization's founders believed that each member union should have a considerable degree of self-rule and the power to bring its concerns and views to an executive board that would work to implement agreed upon goals. Toward that end, representatives of a number of craft unions met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1881 and formed the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions in the United States and Canada. Five years later at a meeting in Columbus, Ohio, this group reorganized and changed its name to the American Federation of Labor. Samuel Gompers was behind the move of the cigar workers and other craft unions to make a clean break from the Knights of Labor. Gompers became the first president of the AFL and held that post, except for one year (1895), from 1886 until his death in 1924.

Under the AFL's plan of organization, individual workers held membership in craft unions, while those unions belonged to, or were affiliated with, the AFL. These craft unions were made up of skilled workers, such as plumbers or electricians. The AFL resisted organizing or affiliating with industrial unions that were made up of all the workers in a particular industry, such as automobile workers.

In conformity with its conservative nature, the AFL refused to form a labor party, generally refrained from political action, and tended to emphasize its ability to promote labor-management harmony. Because the AFL opposed Socialist and Communist influence, it considered itself a truly

American labor movement. The fact that it obtained significantly improved working conditions for its members is undeniable, and the federation pointed to its record of gaining higher wages, shorter hours, workmen's compensation, laws against child labor, an eight-hour workday for government employees, and the exemption of labor from antitrust legislation as proof of the success of its conservatism in comparison with other unions of its day.

THE AFL DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

During the Great Depression, the AFL began to chart new paths while adapting older approaches to new conditions. At the beginning of the Depression, for example, the AFL called for a broad approach that took into account production, employment, and consumption. The AFL's program called for a federal employment service, public works, and a federal program to stabilize management and labor, with labor input. Moreover, the AFL called for the establishment of a federal bureau of labor statistics to compile accurate unemployment data.

The AFL also called on the president to establish a national relief committee, and supported Herbert Hoover's President's Emergency Committee on Employment. The AFL's member unions donated time and aid to get the relief movement working, and later in the decade the federation supported what became the Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act, 1935), which protected organization efforts and gave unions federal protection.

Although the AFL initially rejected unemployment insurance, branding it as un-American, member unions supported it and pressed the federation's executive council to do likewise. The council however, repeated its stand that unemployment insurance would foster idleness and retard recovery, citing the experience of Great Britain and Germany to support its opposition. During the year the AFL executive council indicated repeatedly that it would not alter its stand against unemployment insurance. The council's further argument against unemployment insurance was that it would require registration of every worker and lead to control by federal and state governments. This control would, the council argued, lead to a limit on the rights of union workers to fight for better conditions and

would weaken unions by forcing workers to take jobs in non-union plants.

The AFL, in sum, had three basic ideas about the Depression: (1) The Depression was caused by the failure of wages and salaries to keep up with industry's power to produce; (2) management caused the Depression because of its failure to maintain a balance between production and consumption; and (3) government had a responsibility to help workers find jobs and should push management toward adopting policies that promoted stability. To combat the effects of the Depression, the AFL urged that working hours be reduced to help stabilize industry. The federation also called for the government to establish a national economic council to maintain economic equilibrium through a national employment system, efficient industry planning for production, public works, vocational guidance and retraining, studies of technological unemployment and relief proposals, and a general program of education to meet the changing needs of industry. The AFL called, additionally, for a five-day workweek and six-hour workday. Finally, the AFL called on Hoover to convene a joint management-labor meeting to develop a plan to end the Depression.

During the Depression, the AFL began to take more notice of industrial unions. There were two major industrial unions in the AFL at the beginning of the Depression, the Brewery Workers and the United Mine Workers. The United Mine Workers, under John L. Lewis, began to push the AFL toward organizing other industrial workers, and the federation was receptive to this stimulus. The problems faced by the railway unions further moved the AFL into support of industrial unionism. The railway unions faced serious problems, including cuts in wages, when the railway industry underwent major reorganization, and railway workers became more radical. The AFL's advocacy of industrial stabilization with governmental aid made it important to foster industrial unionism. Moreover, the AFL changed its policy from one of opposition to government aid in union-management negotiations to one of advocating such government intervention. Federal protection for collective bargaining became one of the AFL's major goals.

During the Depression the AFL did not cling rigidly to conservative positions. Rather, it began to

embrace bolder views, reaching out for solutions to various segments of the labor movement. The fact that the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) embraced more radical positions long overshadowed the major changes that the Depression stimulated in the AFL.

THE CREATION OF THE CIO AND ITS CHALLENGE TO THE AFL

From its beginnings, the AFL had opposed industrial unions. Conditions, however, were greatly different in the United States of the 1930s. World War I had changed the country forever, and it had become a great industrial power. The Great Depression further changed social and economic reality, making clear how closely and inextricably social and economic conditions were intertwined.

A large minority of the AFL's members recognized the necessity of organizing industrial workers. The mass-production industries, including steel, automobiles, and rubber, required organization on an industry-wide basis. John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers of America, recognized the need for industrial unions, and he became leader of the group within the AFL that formed a Committee for Industrial Organization in 1935. The CIO left the AFL in 1938, and changed its name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations, immediately launching organizing drives in the industrial sector and achieving spectacular success with the aid of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's strong support.

The two confederations of unions remained separated until 1955 when George Meany of the AFL and Walter Reuther of the CIO led a drive to merge them. The new organization, the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), elected George Meany as its president. Despite some problems, including Reuther's withdrawal of the automobile workers and the expulsion of the Teamsters Union, the merger has held. The decline in union membership and power since the 1950s has been a major factor in keeping the AFL-CIO together.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); GREEN,

WILLIAM; INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION; LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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FRANK A. SALAMONE

AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES

Published between 1935 and 1943, the American Guide series of more than one thousand books and pamphlets provided travel guides of the American states, as well as the territories of Alaska and Puerto Rico. The state volumes average five hundred pages

in length, and include a brief history of the state, as well as descriptions of its geography, culture, industry, and agriculture. In addition to the state guides, the series also produced shorter guides and pamphlets for major cities, including Los Angeles, New Orleans, and Philadelphia; regional guides for such areas as the Oregon Trail and U.S. Route One, which ran from Fort Kent, Maine, to Key West, Florida; and local guides to such sites as Death Valley and Mount Hood.

Produced by the Federal Writers' Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the American Guide series, like other WPA ventures, aimed to give meaningful skilled work to unemployed Americans. No comparable guide series existed, while the seemingly neutral content of the guides promised not to attract controversy. Generically, the guides represent a combination of encyclopedia and travel narrative; their prose is economical. Although the writing in most guides is not credited, the American Guide series employed the talents of more than 7,500 writers, including major figures. For instance, the Illinois guide featured the work of Richard Wright, Saul Bellow, Nelson Algren, and Jack Conroy.

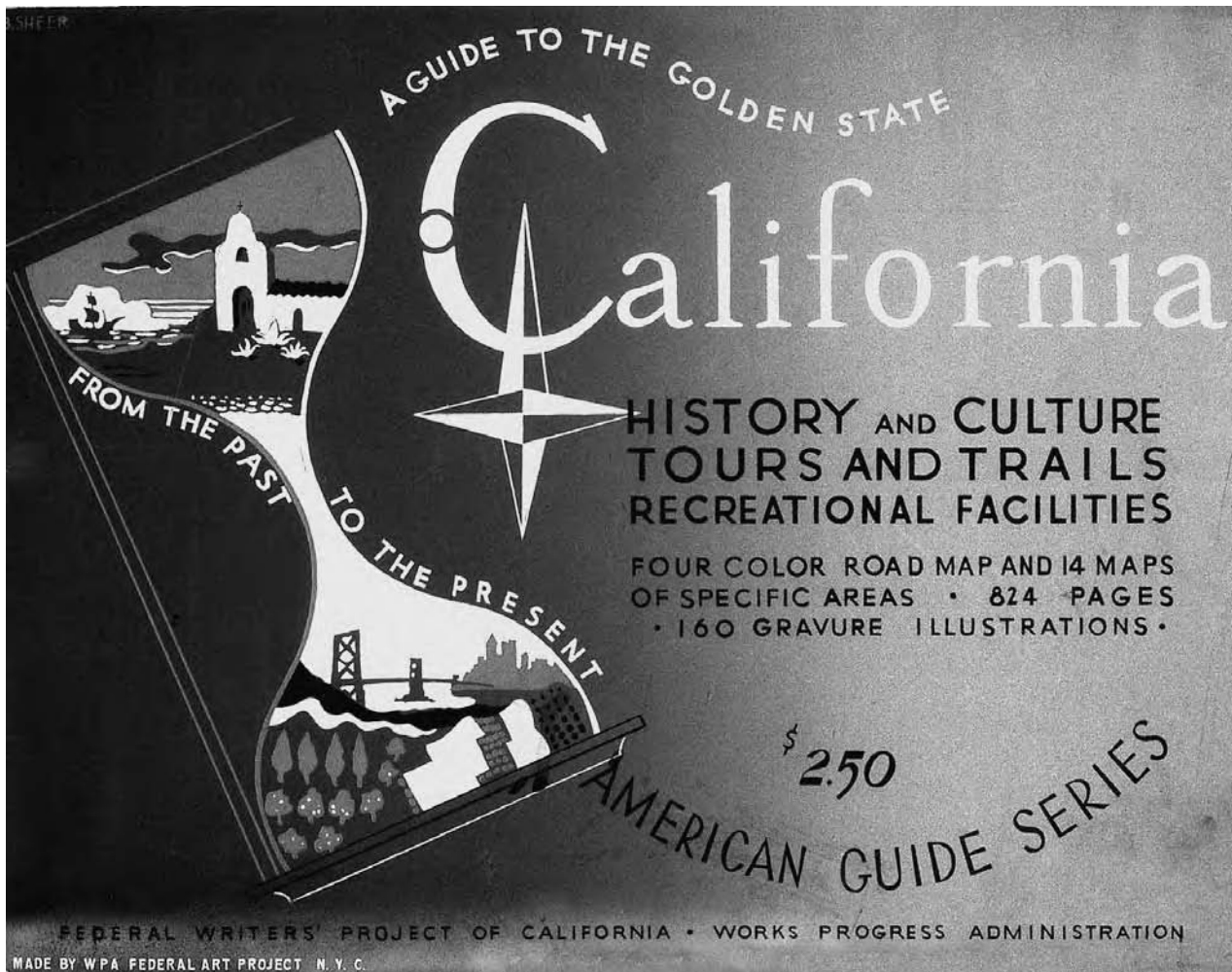
The guides demonstrate Americans' growing fascination with the country's regional variations and its history. Each guide includes detailed directions for recommended tours of each state, thus encouraging domestic travel and tourism. The guides also represent the New Deal's concern with regional interdependence and national planning. The series asserted the vitality of the nation during its worst economic crisis. Finally, because of its size, the series stands as a testimony to the New Dealers' faith in large-scale projects.

See Also: FEDERAL ONE; FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP); WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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TRENT A. WATTS



This Federal Art Project poster promoted an American Guide Series volume on California. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA POSTER COLLECTION

AMERICAN LABOR PARTY

In 1936 it was feared that traditional anti-Tammany Democratic voting habits among New York's immigrant and first generation working-class voters, especially Jews, might cost Franklin D. Roosevelt the electoral votes of his home state. Two pro-Roosevelt labor leaders, Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union and David Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, formed the American Labor Party (ALP) to appeal to voters who otherwise might have voted for Socialist and even Republican candidates. The effort was successful:

More than a quarter million voted for Roosevelt on the ALP line.

The formation of the ALP coincided with other third party efforts aimed at pressuring the New Deal from the left, especially the midwestern Farmer Labor Party movement. Many independent radicals, as well as members of the Communist Party, joined these movements. In New York, leftist trade unionists, Communists, and others organized local constituency clubs. In return, the ALP was courted by liberal candidates in both the major parties. In 1937, New York mayor Fiorello La Guardia, who had formed his own ad hoc "Fusion" party in his first election, and had previously run for Con-

gress on Republican and Socialist tickets, received nearly a half-million ALP votes, providing his margin of victory. *La Guardia* became an enrolled member of the party. The ALP also elected two New York city council members (something it continued to do for the next decade under New York's proportional representation laws). In 1938 the ALP secured the radical Vito Marcantonio's return to Congress.

Providing unions and community activists with an electoral voice—and maintaining an uneasy coalition of Communist and anti-Communist constituencies—the ALP championed racial equality in schools, housing, and employment, and subsidized public housing and an array of welfare programs, at the same time that it effectively muted the corrupt Tammany machine's hold on political life. The ALP's arrangement of constituent community service, pioneered by Marcantonio, replaced Tammany's corrupt system, involving bribes, payoffs, and election fraud. The party also played a central role in the election of African Americans and Hispanics to the New York city council, the U.S. Congress, and the New York state legislature.

But with the Nazi-Soviet pact in 1939, the Communist/non-Communist split became irreparable. Marcantonio and his pro-Communist supporters gained control of the party and in 1944 the anti-Communist wing left to form the Liberal Party. The ALP provided large vote totals for Roosevelt in 1944, for Henry A. Wallace's independent presidential candidacy in 1948, and for Marcantonio's mayoral race in 1949. But with the Cold War, anti-Communism, and suburbanization sapping the ALP's working-class voter base, the party vanished in the mid-fifties.

See Also: LA GUARDIA, FIORELLO H.;
MARCANTONIO, VITO; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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York, 1936–1954." Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1977.

JOHN J. SIMON

AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE

On August 22, 1934, spokesman Jouett Shouse announced the creation of the American Liberty League. According to Shouse, the group was formed to defend the Constitution, to protect private property rights, and to encourage the public to support traditional American political values. The league's founders were disgruntled business conservatives, Wall Street financiers, right-wing opponents of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, and defeated rivals within Roosevelt's Democratic Party. The league's benefactors included the du Pont brothers (Pierre, Irene, and Lamont); their business partner and former Democratic Party chairman, John J. Raskob; financier E. F. Hutton; and executive Sewell Avery of Montgomery Ward. Many of the politicians active in the league were Republicans, but more visible were anti-Roosevelt Democrats such as 1924 and 1928 presidential nominees John W. Davis and Alfred E. Smith. Many league activists had worked together earlier for the relegalization of the U. S. liquor industry through the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment.

Motivating league founders was a growing distaste of the expansion of federal power and of government intrusions upon the prerogatives of private businessmen. They condemned early New Deal relief and public jobs programs, agricultural production controls and subsidies, sponsorship of collective-bargaining rights, federal regulation of the banking and securities industries, and creation of public power facilities. Expansion in 1935 of federal regulation and taxation of business, promotion of labor rights, and income support for the poor and elderly through the Works Progress Administration, the Wagner Act, Social Security, and the Wealth Tax Act infuriated leaguers even more. But critics effectively lampooned league members as champions of privilege, ungrateful critics of an administration that had saved capitalism, and vindic-

tive and selfish individuals seeking revenge on a president for betraying his social class.

The Liberty League raised money and financed legal critiques of New Deal measures, published anti-New Deal pamphlets and political propaganda, and aided the effort to defeat Roosevelt in 1936. Despite the organization's help for Republican nominee Alfred M. Landon, the incumbent won in a landslide. With the 1936 election seen as a repudiation of the league, it rapidly faded into obscurity, playing but a minimal role in such battles as the 1937 court-packing fight. By 1940, the Liberty League had ceased active operation. However, its legacy of fund-raising tactics, ideology-driven issues research and public education, and coordination with partisan legislative and electoral campaigns foreshadowed today's political action committees and independent-expenditure organizations.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; ELECTION OF 1936; RASKOB, JOHN J.; SMITH, ALFRED E.

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ROBERT F. BURK

AMERICAN NEGRO LABOR CONGRESS (ANLC)

Organized in Chicago in October 1925 by the American Communist Party and its Trade Union Educational League, the American Negro Labor Congress (ANLC) sought “the abolition of all discrimination, persecution, and exploitation of the Negro race and working people generally.” In a significant shift from the party's earlier strategy to organize black laborers along separatist black nation-

alist or “Pan-Africanist” lines in the African Blood Brotherhood (ABB), the ANLC, led by former ABB proponents Lovett Fort-Whiteman, H. V. Phillips, Edward Doty, and Harry Haywood, planned to achieve its goal by bringing black and white workers and farmers together in a nondiscriminatory trade union movement—an interracial proletarian movement. The ANLC hoped to form local councils in all centers of African-American population, especially in the South. The councils in turn would form interracial labor committees to eliminate all practices that divided black and white workers and to support all efforts to unite them.

The few hundred black laborers who attended the ANLC's opening session, however, quickly became disenchanted with the organization when the evening's entertainment turned out to be a Russian ballet and a play by Alexander Pushkin, performed in Russian. Only a handful attended the next day's organizing meeting, and even fewer local councils were formed. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, and the African-American press each castigated the ANLC for being under the thumb of Communists. Lacking popular support, the ANLC's major activity became its opposition to the Socialist and anti-Communist A. Philip Randolph, the head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP). When the BSCP applied for affiliation with the American Federation of Labor in 1926, the ANLC criticized Randolph and the BSCP leaders for selling out: “They have forsaken the militant struggle in the interests of the workers for the policy of class collaboration with the bosses.” By then, however, the ANLC, beset by African-American indifference and disunity, as well as white hostility, barely existed. Outside of several tiny units in Chicago, only the ANLC's official paper, the *Negro Champion*, subsidized by the American Communist Party, struggled on. After several years of stagnation, its objectives never realized, the ANLC ceased existence in 1930, and was succeeded by the National Negro Labor Congress the following year.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS (BSCP); RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP.

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HARVARD SITKOFF

AMERICAN SCENE, THE

The American Scene emerged in the 1920s and was related to the earlier Ashcan school of New York realists. It became the prevailing form of fine art expression during the 1930s as the economic Depression and the developing international crisis prompted American artists to become more culturally introspective and more socially committed. Echoing the New Deal's own values, its most salient characteristics were nationalism and democracy.

The American Scene is associated most closely with the regionalist school of painters based in the Midwest, such as Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975) of Missouri, Grant Wood (1892–1942) of Iowa, and John Steuart Curry (1897–1946) of Kansas. The regionalist artists were committed to an art of the locality and produced engaging images of their region, its landscape, and its people. Their ideal of America was rural, and it is resonant in spirit of the significance that historian Frederick Jackson Turner attached to the frontier in molding American values and institutions. Such an American particularism was often sharpened by the fact that their practice drew upon the "naïve" school of nineteenth-century American art. Unlike the "Lost Generation" of the 1920s, their work was inspired by "commitment" and a determination to engage with their society. This involved not only relating their work to "the people," but also making it accessible for their subjects to appreciate. Its strong representational emphasis and the incorporation of readily recognizable symbols and images have given some

of their work lasting iconographic significance. Wood's *American Gothic* (1930), for example, has been copied, parodied, and recycled in diverse forms.

Visits to Europe during the 1920s reinforced the regionalists' determination to work with American themes and idioms. In 1932 Benton claimed that "No American art can come to those who do not live an American life, who do not have an American psychology, who cannot find in America justification for their lives." Modernism provoked the scorn of the regionalists. In 1935 Wood wrote a manifesto, "Revolt against the City," which proposed that American art free itself of European influences, especially from abstractionism. The regionalists' fierce patriotism, localism, anti-urbanism, and anti-Marxism provoked the scorn of some critics who regarded the group as parochial and complacent. Their celebration of such embattled qualities in Depression America as social order, organic community, and the work ethic was dismissed as an embittered restorationism. The regionalists were also resented because of their influence in New Deal agencies and the prestigious commissions that they received.

However, the regionalists' work was never as uncritical or unproblematic as is often claimed. Benton's decoration of the Missouri State Capitol in Jefferson City (1936) and Curry's murals for the Kansas Statehouse in Topeka (1937–1942) provoked considerable controversy. Despite the regionalists' identification with the people of the Midwest, some of their constituents complained that the murals presented them as caricatures and they objected to their states being associated with the James Brothers, John Brown, and tornadoes. Indeed, the regionalists' anti-modernism should not be overemphasized, their rhetoric notwithstanding. In the rhythmical lines and cartoon figures of Benton's canvases and the satirical and surreal aspects of Wood's work, influences other than American ones are readily apparent, and it should not be forgotten that Jackson Pollock was one of Benton's pupils. The work of Benton, Curry, and Wood was more diverse and less given to cliché than that of their many imitators who worked for the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts or the WPA's Federal Art Project.

While the American Scene is often associated with the midwestern regionalists, it should include, also, social realist artists whose outlook was more urban and whose point of view was more critical of existing institutions and values. The didactic paintings of Philip Evergood, Ben Shahn, Moses Soyer, and their metropolitan colleagues provided critiques of the capitalist system, and by affirming working-class lives and satirizing those of the upper classes, they sought to prompt militant political consciousness and action. Like the regionalists, they were committed to an aesthetic of place and to the principle of relating their work to ordinary people, although their focus was upon the everyday experience of the urban working class and the impact of the Depression upon them. Stylistic accessibility was also essential for art as a political project and the social realists condemned the development of modernist abstractionism as politically and socially irrelevant. Although some social realists hoped that the people would become their patrons under the auspices of the union movement, more artists gained the opportunity to communicate to a wider public through federal employment. Their style was ubiquitous, although necessarily politically constrained, and social realists received major commissions, such as Shahn's decoration of the Social Security Building in Washington, D.C. (1941–1942).

Both groups became objects of growing criticism as the decade progressed and they came to be associated with representational art in totalitarian states. According to the influential critic Clement Greenberg, "art for the millions" was tantamount to "kitsch" that could be manipulated by the state for its own purposes. He believed that cultural preservation and progress was possible only through the promotion of a politically innocent avant-garde. It is ironic that for all the strident Americanism of the 1930s, it would be abstract expressionism that would become recognized globally as the first truly authentic American form of art.

See Also: ART; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP).

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STUART KIDD

AMERICAN STUDENT UNION

The Depression decade witnessed the rise of the first mass student protest movement in American history. This movement, which crusaded against war and fascism, and initially promoted a political agenda to the left of the New Deal, was led by the American Student Union (ASU), the largest U.S. student activist organization of its time (1935–1941). At its peak years of influence in the mid and late 1930s, the ASU had some 20,000 members, mobilized almost half the nation's college students in antiwar protests, lobbied for greater federal aid to low income students and unemployed youth, became a campus voice for racial equality and workers' rights, championed student free speech rights, attracted the support of Eleanor Roosevelt, and even generated student activism in some of the nation's high schools.

Although it arose during the Depression, the ASU-led student movement's most massive mobilizations focused on peace rather than the economy. Convinced that World War I had served plutocracy rather than democracy, and had paved the way for the rise of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, many college students embraced isolationism, pacifism, and anti-interventionism. This antiwar mood facilitated the rise of a mass peace movement on campus, which beginning in 1934 featured the first

national student strikes in American history, annual one-hour peace rallies, and boycotts of classes held on the anniversary of U.S. intervention in World War I. These strikes, which mobilized 25,000 students in April 1934 and more than 100,000 students in 1935, were organized by the Communist-led National Student League (NSL) and the Socialist-led Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID). The success of these strikes, together with the Communists' new Popular Front movement, which urged unity against fascism, led NSL and SLID to merge into the ASU during a national unity convention of student activists in Columbus, Ohio, in December 1935. The ASU's biggest successes in its early life were the 1936 and 1937 antiwar strikes, each of which rallied more than 500,000 students for peace.

The ASU was emblematic of the shift leftward of American student politics in the 1930s, marking a sharp break with the conservatism that had dominated the campuses in the 1920s, when students endorsed Republican presidential candidates by even larger majorities than did the American electorate. Although its leaders were predominantly leftists, the ASU found much common ground with liberals as it urged students to show solidarity with the burgeoning labor movement, supported the New Deal's more egalitarian measures, and criticized racial discrimination both on campus and off. With this kind of left-liberal ideology setting the tone of campus politics, Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936 became the first Democratic presidential candidate in decades to win a plurality of the national student straw vote. It is little wonder, then, that Eleanor Roosevelt, attracted by their youthful idealism, befriended several ASU leaders, worked with them in their campaign to expand federal aid to needy students, and defended them when they were attacked by the red-hunting House Committee on Un-American Activities.

International events, most notably the Spanish Civil War, rocked the ASU and the student peace movement and undermined their anti-interventionist ethos. That war seemed to prove that U.S. neutrality could not preserve peace, for while the United States embargoed the Spanish Republic, Hitler gave military assistance to the fascist

rebels who ultimately crushed the young republic. The ASU, influenced by these events—especially by the deaths of several ASU members who joined the International Brigade in its fight to save the Spanish Republic—and by the Popular Front line of the Comintern, shifted its emphasis from anti-interventionism to collective security against fascism. Although this shift alienated left-wing socialists, pacifists, and isolationists, it conferred upon the ASU the elan of being at the forefront of the battle against Hitlerism.

The ASU's demise was rooted in the machinations of its Communist faction, which forced the organization into a series of disastrous flipflops on foreign policy. This began in fall 1939 when, in the wake of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, the ASU dropped its anti-fascism in favor of an isolationist "Yanks Are Not Coming" position at a time when Hitler seemed more threatening than ever. This, together with the ASU's refusal to criticize the Soviet invasion of Finland in 1940—which found an ostensibly antiwar organization unwilling to protest Stalin's military aggression—discredited the ASU with both mainstream students and such key liberal allies as Eleanor Roosevelt, who saw the organization as a puppet of the USSR and the American Communist Party, causing the collapse of the ASU by the time the United States entered World War II. Not until the 1960s would a student organization duplicate the ASU's initial success in leading a mass protest movement on American campuses.

See Also: AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS; COMMUNIST PARTY; FASCISM; PEACE MOVEMENT.

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ROBERT COHEN

AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS

Coming of age at a time of war crises abroad and economic crisis at home, Depression generation youth embraced new forms of political activism. They organized, for the first time in American history, a national youth lobby, the American Youth Congress (AYC), which promoted a left-liberal agenda, demanding expanded government assistance to underprivileged youth and rallying against war and fascism. At its peak in the late 1930s the AYC assembled a broadly based youth coalition, which claimed to represent some 4.5 million young Americans from civil rights, labor, student, religious, fraternal, political party, and peace organizations. Arising in an era when the voting age was twenty-one, and in a political system that had traditionally ignored young people—especially blue collar, unemployed, student, and minority youth—the AYC found daring and effective ways to give voice to the needs of the young. The AYC organized the first national youth marches on Washington (demanding jobs and education), held international congresses of young people, and sponsored its own youth assistance legislation—the American Youth Act. This activism made headlines and for a time attracted influential allies to the AYC, most notably First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who befriended AYC national officers, raised money for the Youth Congress, attended some its meetings, and defended the Youth Congress's leaders when they came under attack by the red-hunting House Committee on Un-American Activities.

Although the Youth Congress's founder, Viola Ilma, was a political moderate, the organization would be dominated by the Left, beginning at its first national meeting in 1934 when Ilma was ousted from the Congress's leadership by a coalition headed by young Communists and Socialists. Reflecting the radicalism of this new leadership, the AYC was initially critical of the New Deal for failing to solve the problems of unemployed youth and

needy students and for its other shortcomings, including its refusal to challenge the discriminatory racial practices of the Jim Crow South. Complaining that the National Youth Administration (NYA), the New Deal's primary youth relief organization, assisted only a fraction of the five to eight million unemployed young Americans and that NYA work-study jobs were too few to assist most low income students, the Youth Congress in 1935 wrote the American Youth Act as an alternative to the NYA. Unlike the NYA, the Youth Act would have helped all unemployed youth and needy students. But the Youth Act proved too expensive to ever get out of committee on Capitol Hill. Critics estimated that its annual cost would have been \$3.5 billion, as opposed to the \$50 million allocated to the NYA.

Even though the Youth Act never became law, the AYC's campaign for this legislation, which included a national march of some three thousand young people on Washington in 1937, helped to spotlight the problems of Depression-era youth, calling attention to the "youth crisis"—the lack of employment and educational opportunity that confronted millions of young Americans in the 1930s. By raising public awareness of the need for expanding federal aid to low income youth, the AYC helped to sustain a political climate friendly to the New Deal's youth program. Indeed, by 1938, the Youth Congress had dropped its advocacy of the American Youth Act and instead campaigned for an expanded NYA. This growing alliance with the New Deal emerged because the Youth Congress was concerned about Republican threats to cut the NYA and because the AYC's influential Communist faction—in accord with the new Comintern line advocating liberal-radical unity against fascism—embraced Franklin Roosevelt and stressed the need to defend the New Deal from the forces of reaction. The high point of the AYC's alliance with the Roosevelt administration came in summer 1938 when Eleanor Roosevelt played a prominent role at the AYC-sponsored World Youth Congress meeting, which united young people from around the world on behalf of a progressive antifascist platform.

The AYC's alliance with the Roosevelt administration collapsed in a very public way during the Youth Congress Citizenship Institute in February

1940, sending the AYC into a tailspin from which it would never recover. Five thousand Youth Congress delegates had come to Washington for this Citizenship Institute, which was supposed to be a pro-New Deal event, teaching young people about government and involving them in lobbying for federal jobs and student aid programs. But the AYC's Communist faction—having dropped its antifascism in the wake of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact—converted the Institute into a demonstration against Roosevelt's foreign policies, especially his opposition to the Soviet invasion of Finland. President Roosevelt, irritated that the Youth Congress had portrayed him as an imperialist war monger merely because he had criticized that invasion, responded by delivering an angry speech to the Institute delegates who had assembled on the White House lawn. Roosevelt told the delegates and a national radio audience that the Youth Congress's charge that he was seeking war with Russia was "unadulterated twaddle." This and other criticisms that Roosevelt made of the Youth Congress and of the Soviet Union provoked the Communists in the crowd to raucous booing, and a similar response followed when Eleanor Roosevelt addressed the delegates. This public relations disaster, the Youth Congress's flipflop on antifascism, and the organization's refusal to criticize Soviet policy, led young people to abandon what once had been Depression America's most dynamic youth lobby. With the collapse of the AYC both the American Left and the younger generation lost an invaluable political asset, for the Youth Congress had represented one of the most diverse movements of young Americans—uniting black and white, rural and urban, student and nonstudent, religious and secular, lower and middle-class, immigrant and old stock, liberal and radical—ever to organize on behalf of egalitarian social change.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA).

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ROBERT COHEN

AMERINGER, OSCAR

Oscar Ameringer (August 4, 1870–November 5, 1943) was a Socialist labor organizer, journalist, and architect of the Socialist Party in Oklahoma. Born in Germany, Ameringer immigrated to Cincinnati, Ohio, as a teenager, furthering his education at public libraries. He made unsuccessful bids for the Ohio legislature and mayoralty of Columbus. Married to Lulu Woods, he fathered three sons and supported his family by selling insurance. In 1901, Ameringer joined the Socialist Party and embarked on full-time labor activism.

In 1934 and 1935, H. L. Mitchell and Clay East, founders of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, turned to Ameringer's organizing tactics and writings for guidance. Ameringer had organized poverty-stricken Oklahoma tenant farmers by blending Jeffersonian theories, Socialist positions, Marxist philosophy, and homespun humor into a unique agrarian socialism. Ameringer reached rural people through speaker encampments and numerous publications. Although Ameringer lost the 1911 race to become mayor of Oklahoma City by a narrow margin, by 1914 he had so broadened the appeal of the Socialist Party that it won six seats in the state legislature. Rebuilding after World War I, Ameringer merged socialists with progressives in the Farmer-

Labor Reconstruction League to win the Oklahoma governorship for the Democrat fusion candidate, John Walton.

Throughout the 1930s, Ameringer, with his second wife, Freda Hogan, published a variety of newspapers, including the influential weekly *The American Guardian*. His acclaimed columns, written under the cryptic pseudonym Adam Coaldigger, reached across the United States. Ameringer supported Frank Farrington over John L. Lewis for control of the United Mine Workers, losing an Illinois publication because of the schism. Ameringer campaigned extensively for Socialist candidates in other states, and he testified about the desperation of labor before the House Subcommittee on Unemployment in 1932. Borrowing \$55,000, he launched an agricultural relocation project in Louisiana on behalf of destitute miners and farmers. The enterprise succeeded without endorsement from the New Deal Resettlement Administration. By the end of the 1930s, Ameringer had completed his memoirs, *If You Don't Weaken*, found rapprochement with John L. Lewis's leadership, and expressed interest in the War Resisters League.

See Also: SOCIALIST PARTY; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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LINDA REESE

AMES, JESSE DANIEL

Jesse Daniel Ames (November 2, 1883–February 21, 1972) was a southern progressive, suffragist, and proponent of rights for African Americans. Ames rose to national prominence as an anti-lynching

advocate during the 1930s. She was born in Palestine, Texas, the third of James and Laura Daniel's four children. Three years after graduating from the "ladies annex" of the local college in 1902, she married army surgeon Roger Post Ames. When Roger died in 1914, Ames entered into a life of social reform, eventually holding a leadership position in the Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC). In 1930, Ames founded the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching (ASWPL). As historian Jacquelyn Hall explains, Ames believed that lynchers justified their crimes on cultural assumptions that degraded white women as well as black men. A women's campaign to end lynching, Ames contended, could be particularly effective in exposing the myths that gave rise to "lynch law" in the South.

Historian Christopher Waldrep notes that Ames's narrow definition of the crime was central to her efforts to achieve a lynchless year in the United States. She held to the popular view that a murder could be considered a lynching only if it received community sanction. Her reform tactics thus centered on efforts to deprive lynchers of a supportive environment in which to operate. Ames believed that whites would cease to lynch if they thought they no longer had the community's backing. A strict definition ensured that newspaper accounts of lynching would be rare, suggesting that most southern whites did not consider the practice normal or routine. Stripped of a supportive environment, whites would hesitate to lynch, according to Ames. The ASWPL's goal of a lynchless year, as Waldrep notes, demanded this narrow definition.

Ames's insistence on a strict definition of lynching increasingly put her at odds with other anti-lynching activists. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), for example, pushed for a broadened definition as it vied for members with rival organizations on the left that sought to eclipse it as the premier anti-lynching organization and defender of African-American rights. The NAACP eventually abandoned the established view of lynching, arguing instead that race-based murders perpetrated by individuals who operated without community support should be considered lynchings. The dispute be-

tween ASWPL and the NAACP revealed a fundamental difference in the way in which the two organizations understood the nature of the crisis confronting the New South. Ames and the ASWPL saw lynching as a blight on an otherwise healthy southern society, whereas the NAACP regarded the crime as merely symptomatic of a larger problem. The NAACP recognized that the abolition of lynching would not necessarily signal an end to the pervasive and intractable racism that plagued the South. Ames's definition, however, proved the more persuasive.

On May 9, 1940, Ames announced that for the first time in the history of the New South a year had passed without a single lynching. Defenders of the more expansive definition, however, argued that Ames's pronouncement was premature. As Waldrep suggests, the debate has endured.

Ames's 1940 announcement that the ASWPL had reached its goal signaled the beginning of the end of the organization. Ames returned to her work in the CIC but felt increasingly at odds with those directing the course of modern liberalism. Ames, forced to retreat from the national political scene, turned her attention to local reform and to the strained relationship with her family. She died in an Austin, Texas, nursing home in 1972.

See Also: ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION; LYNCHINGS; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP).

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SARAH E. GARDNER

AMOS 'N' ANDY

Amos 'n' Andy, the first and most popular daily series in the history of radio, made its debut on the NBC Blue network in August 1929, some ten weeks before the stock market crash. The comedy series, in which two white actors played a pair of African-American migrants to the big city, sometimes commented on the Great Depression. The program's characters occasionally talked about the need for citizens to spend money to boost the economy, and some of their adventures in the mid-1930s revolved around a fictional New Deal-era model town called Weber City. Andy's self-important but incompetent performance as "president" of the pair's perennially cash-strapped one-car Fresh Air Taxicab Company seemed to satirize the pretensions of business executives who had promised the moon in the 1920s and then helped lead the country into economic disaster.

Amos 'n' Andy's creators developed their major themes and characterizations and built the show into a national sensation before it reached NBC, and before the Depression began. Though some historians identify the series as the quintessential Depression comedy, the mid and latter 1930s actually saw the show's nightly audience of forty million dwindle.

Amos 'n' Andy's history began when Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, former professional directors of minstrel shows, created a series called *Sam 'n' Henry* for a Chicago radio station in 1926. They changed stations and renamed the show *Amos 'n' Andy* in 1928, and moved to the network the following year. The pair adopted many comic stereotypes of African Americans from minstrel shows and vaudeville. But Gosden and Correll also used their continuing storyline to develop vivid characters with universal human traits; they won listeners ranging from ultra-racists to outspoken racial egalitarians such as Eleanor Roosevelt. *Amos 'n' Andy's* creators were also the first popular artists to depict, however distortedly, characters experiencing the era's most profound change in African-American life—the great migration to northern cities, which had begun during World War I and renewed itself in the 1930s.



Freeman Gosden (left) and Charles Correll perform as Amos 'n' Andy for a radio broadcast in 1935. BETTMANN/CORBIS

The responses of African Americans to the series likewise reflected Depression-era tensions that had deeper roots. Many eagerly tuned in to *Amos 'n' Andy*, hearing in it elements of genuine African-American humor, while other black individuals and institutions protested that the series slandered African Americans' intelligence and economic strivings. That debate, like *Amos 'n' Andy* itself, outlived the Great Depression; the show remained on radio in one form or another until 1960 and spawned a televised version, and a new black protest, in the early 1950s.

See Also: RADIO.

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MELVIN PATRICK ELY

ANDERSON, MARIAN

Marian Anderson (February 27, 1897–April 8, 1993), best known as an opera singer, broke the color barrier when she performed on Easter Sunday in 1939 at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington,



Marian Anderson, 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

D.C., marking the symbolic beginning of the civil rights movement. Born in Philadelphia, Anderson began her singing career in church, where her congregation dubbed her the “baby contralto.” She gained public recognition in 1924 after winning a New York Philharmonic voice competition. Racism, however, forced her to study and perform in Europe, where she met the impresario Sol Hurok, who became her manager. While she was performing at the Salzburg Festival in 1935, conductor Arturo Toscanini, impressed by her voice, said, “A voice like yours is heard once in a hundred years.” That year, Hurok brought her back to the United States for a successful New York concert. Thereafter, she toured the United States, singing at the White House in 1936 and performing seventy recitals in 1938.

Although Anderson had become an internationally famous recitalist and opera singer, racism

denied her many opportunities. Hurok tried to shelter her from mounting racial hostilities by only booking her in certain cities. In 1939, the Daughters of the American Revolution refused to allow her to perform at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., claiming that the venue was for “white artists only.” The incident created such a surge of protest that First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt publicly resigned from the organization. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), along with African-American leaders at Howard University and Mrs. Roosevelt, worked to find Anderson another setting for her concert. In the end, Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes invited Anderson to perform at the Lincoln Memorial. On Easter Sunday, April 9, 1939, Anderson sang before a crowd of 75,000. The performance was broadcast over national radio, making it one of the most noteworthy concerts in American history. In addition to inspiring a generation of African-American artists and activists, Anderson’s performance at the Lincoln Memorial caught the attention of Hollywood. Twentieth Century Fox, which was producing John Ford’s *Young Mr. Lincoln* starring Henry Fonda, invited her to sing at the film’s premiere in Springfield, Illinois, on May 30, 1939. On July 2, at the NAACP conference in Richmond, Virginia, Anderson was reunited with Mrs. Roosevelt, who presented her with the Spingarn Medal to celebrate her accomplishments as a singer.

After World War II, Anderson resumed touring abroad and in 1952 made her television debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. In 1955 she sang the role of Ulrica in Verdi’s *A Masked Ball*, making her the first African American to perform with New York’s Metropolitan Opera. In 1957, she traveled throughout Asia as a goodwill cultural ambassador for the U.S. Department of State. She also performed at the inaugurations of presidents Dwight D. Eisenhower and John F. Kennedy. In 1963, Anderson returned to the Lincoln Memorial to sing at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, at which Martin Luther King, Jr., delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech. That same year, she won the presidential Medal of Freedom. She died from congestive heart failure in 1993.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ELLINGTON, DUKE; HOLIDAY, BILLIE; MUSIC.

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MARY L. NASH

ANDERSON, SHERWOOD

A business man turned writer, Sherwood Anderson (September 13, 1876–March 8 1941) was called by H. L. Mencken, “America’s most distinctive novelist.” Anderson grew up in a series of Ohio towns, the second of seven children of an unsuccessful harness maker and itinerant house painter and a long-suffering mother. His spotty education ended when at age twenty-three he graduated from Wittenberg Academy. He sought his fortune in advertising and then the mail-order business, and found it with an Ohio company that manufactured roof repair materials. By 1907 he was its president.

In fiction that he wrote at night, Anderson sought to transcend the world in which he worked by day. The worlds clashed in 1912 when he walked out of his office in a fugue state and wandered for days, ending up in a Cleveland hospital, not knowing who he was. When he recovered he dedicated his life to writing. His midlife crisis became legendary. Anderson was heralded as proof that America was growing out of its infatuation with material prosperity.

Anderson wrote seven novels, several autobiographies and plays, and innumerable prose pieces. He was at his best in his four volumes of short stories, the most famous of which is *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919). In the late 1920s he bought and edited two rival weeklies in southwestern Virginia.

It was there that he met Eleanor Copenhaver, a social worker in the Industrial Division of the

YWCA. He accompanied her in her travels to textile and steel mills, union halls, and workers’ homes throughout the South. In 1933, Eleanor joined him in a happy marriage (his fourth) that lasted until his death. Although drawn to radical causes and meetings, he was too much the artist to toe any party line; instead he wrote about workers’ conditions and the governmental and company policies that improved or worsened them. In *Perhaps Women* (1931) Anderson glossed his accounts of the dislocations southern workers were experiencing with the theory that men were being emasculated by their machines and needed to turn to women for their salvation. In *Puzzled America* (1935) he was content to let those workers, the unemployed, preachers, and the down-and-out speak for themselves. He discovered no prospect of revolution, no danger of fascism, but instead “a hunger for belief,”

a determination to find and follow the leadership “we are likely to get out of democracy.” The result, according to Irving Howe, was “one of the few books that convey a sense of what it meant to live in depression America.” In the years that followed, he wrote *Kit Brandon* (1936), a novel about a female bootlegger, and several plays. He died en route to South America, where he had hoped to learn and write about communal life in a version of his famous Winesburg.

See Also: LITERATURE.

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KIM TOWNSEND

ANLC. *See* AMERICAN NEGRO LABOR CONGRESS.

ANTICOMMUNISM

Domestic anticommunism—fear of “red” subversion—had once reflected the apprehensions of economic and political elites of an insurrection from below, but in the aftermath of the Russian Revolution and between the two world wars the red menace was redefined. The threat now seemed to lie less in class revolt than in conspiracy, directed from Moscow and using infiltration and ideological seduction. This image of an invisible red menace underlined the need for systems of surveillance, whether by government agencies or by patriotic groups. With the communist movement apparently controlled by a hostile power, the issue increasingly became one of national security, and hence of compelling interest to politicians and bureaucrats. From the 1930s, party competition became a primary engine of anticommunist politics, but an array of interest groups—the American Legion, the United States Chamber of Commerce, the American Federation of Labor, among others—also urged action against the dangers of domestic communism.

During the Depression the Soviet experiment won some sympathetic interest among U. S. intellectuals, and the American Communist Party itself enjoyed a new vitality. At the same time the New Deal’s expansion of government and its closeness to the labor movement evoked right-wing accusations that it was subject to communist influence. The Republican platform in the 1936 election claimed that American liberties were for the first time “threatened by government itself.” Labor activists and political dissidents had long been denounced for their alleged communist proclivities, but now the federal government itself was being targeted. Such charges had little effect in that election, which Franklin Roosevelt resoundingly won, but the course of events soon enhanced their plausibility. U. S. communists were associating themselves with the Democratic Party and its allies, and popular front formations (in which liberals, radicals, and communists made common cause) appeared in some states and among industrial union, farmer-labor, and welfare groups. By 1938 a conservative reaction was underway against the New Deal, whose popular front associations rendered it vulnerable to red-baiting tactics. What is sometimes known as “the little red scare” focused largely on these popular front alignments, and was promoted by conservative Republicans and Democrats and right-wing patriotic and fringe groups. The scare was aided in 1939 by the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the outbreak of war in Europe, when U. S. communists suddenly seemed to be the accessories of Nazi aggression. While the pact devastated the popular front formations, it left U. S. communists isolated and encouraged the development of a liberal (as well as conservative) anticommunism. The Roosevelt administration itself began to act against domestic communists (Communist Party leader Earl Browder was arrested on a passport charge) and liberal leaders of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) began exploring ways of easing communists out of CIO positions. As it turned out, the gathering anticommunist momentum was stalled by the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941; when the United States joined the war in December it found itself an ally of the Soviet Union, and U. S. communists enthusiastically joined the war effort. But the varieties of anticommunism—

corporate, patriotic, liberal, labor, Catholic, and others—did not disappear, and anticommunist politics were to emerge more strongly than ever with the coming of the Cold War.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (HUAC).

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M. J. HEALE

ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION

Because certain white people in the United States chose mob terrorism as a means of interracial social control, 3,445 of the 4,742 lynching deaths reported between 1882 and 1964 were black men and women. Local and state governments might have provided some protection, but Jim Crow laws had stripped African Americans of basic citizenship rights, especially the right to vote. Consequently, white officials felt no political obligation to defend a beleaguered minority or prosecute lynchers.

Often less concerned about black rights than about the harm that violence could do to a state's reputation nationally and to its citizens' respect for the law, forty states from the 1890s to the early 1930s adopted codes to deal with lynching and race riots. Not uniform by any means, some addressed the protection of prisoners once in custody, some held sheriffs liable if a lynching occurred, and some established dependents' rights to sue the town or county for damages or specified grounds for invoking state militia help against an impending mob. Especially in the South, these laws proved largely

ineffectual. Officials too often condoned mob action; whites pretended that the victim had not been in police custody, thereby absolving the county and its leaders; coroners' juries compliantly ruled that death had come "at the hands of parties unknown"; and in the 1930s lynchers increasingly utilized small death squads to avoid public detection. Since the states had failed to halt lynching, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) launched its own crusade for a federal anti-lynching statute.

Founded in 1909, the NAACP gathered evidence to inform the public of racist inequities, lobbied legislators, and initiated litigation in pursuit of liberal reforms. In 1919, the association held a national conference on lynching and published its famous *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889–1918*, which was followed by annual supplements into the mid-1940s.

Under James Weldon Johnson's leadership, the NAACP helped to formulate a model anti-lynching bill that Republican Congressman Leonidas Dyer from Missouri sponsored throughout the 1920s. These NAACP-Dyer bills provided fines and imprisonment for local officials who allowed a lynching or failed to prosecute mob members, and they set a fine of up to \$10,000 on the county in question. In January 1922 the Dyer bill passed the House of Representatives but died under threat of a lengthy filibuster in the Senate. House passage, nonetheless, indicated the growing strength of black voters in northern and midwestern districts, brought about by the heavy migrations of blacks from the South during the preceding three decades.

With their emphasis on federal remedies, the New Deal and Fair Deal eras seemed a suitable time to renew the drive for a federal anti-lynching law, and the NAACP, then headed by Walter F. White, did so vigorously in the years from 1933 to 1950. The chief House sponsor in the 1930s was Democrat Joseph Gavagan from New York, while Robert F. Wagner, also a New York Democrat, headed the Senate effort. The NAACP mobilized impressive support among ethnic minorities, labor unions, women, liberal churches, and civil rights and civil liberties groups, a coalition that effectively set in motion the mid-century civil rights movement. Al-



Anti-lynching activists demonstrate in Washington, D.C., in 1934 to draw attention to the failure of the U.S. government to include lynching in the program of the national crime conference. BETTMANN/CORBIS

though opposed to lynching, the Communist Party-USA distanced itself from the anti-lynching bills because of ideological differences with the NAACP. The Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching also stood apart from the NAACP bills for fear of federal intervention in southern life. Eleanor Roosevelt, however, lent the NAACP her open support and consulted regularly with Walter White about strategies in the Capital. She urged her husband and his White House advisers to back the cause, but the administration gave only tacit encouragement rather than offend southern Democrats who largely controlled both houses of Congress through committee chairmanships.

The NAACP bill passed the House in 1937 and in 1940, but the customary alliance of northern conservative Republicans and southern segregationist Democrats stopped its progress in the Senate. They protested that a federal law would violate states rights prerogatives, but they really worried that expansions of federal authority would undermine the economic and social controls that their various supporters had long enjoyed.

NAACP anti-lynching bills suffered the same obstructions after World War II, despite being part of President Harry S. Truman's civil rights packages from 1947 to 1952. Nevertheless, the threat of a federal law had put the South on notice and helped to

hasten lynching's decline after the mid-1930s. In the expansive social justice climate of the 1960s, Congress enacted a section of the 1968 Civil Rights Law that established some federal protections against lynching.

See Also: AMES, JESSE DANIEL; LYNCHINGS; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP).

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ROBERT L. ZANGRANDO

ANTI-SEMITISM

Anti-Semitism during the Depression and into World War II reached levels that had not been seen before in the United States and have not been seen since. The fear and insecurity that accompanied the severe economic downturn exposed and fueled a hostility and distrust of Jews that escalated as the economy tumbled. Moreover, the hatred in the United States was intensified by Adolf Hitler's assumption of power in Germany in 1933. The viciousness of hate mongering on both sides of the Atlantic grew throughout the 1930s, only to abate in the United States well after the fall of Hitler and the end of the World War II.

Anti-Semitism in the United States was not a new phenomenon. Immigrant Americans had not been immune to the prejudices of Christian Europe

that saw the Jews as perverse and stubborn in their rejection of Christ and ultimately responsible for his death. These notions had led over the generations to all manner of discrimination, persecution, and outright violence. Yet the United States was different. Ancient prejudices had been submerged in the business of nation building. Although negative religious images had persisted, the promise of American democracy and opportunity had lured Jews and so many other immigrants to its shores. However, the levels of anti-Semitism escalated in the last two decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century as several million Jews from Eastern Europe came to the United States fleeing Russian persecution. Americans of various stripes, including Henry Ford, had raised their voices against Jews, who were increasingly seen as unassimilable and even a threat to the United States.

Yet the anti-Semitism of the 1920s was to pale in comparison to its shrillness in the 1930s. The Depression set the stage for the search for scapegoats and for extensive Jew baiting by a variety of demagogues, such as William Pelley, the leader of the Silver Shirts, who fancied himself the American counterpart of Hitler. Gerald B. Winrod headed up the Defenders of the Christian Faith, another of more than one hundred anti-Semitic organizations formed mostly after 1933. One of these organizations, the German American Bund, was directly financed by the Nazis. An exposé by *Look* magazine in 1939 indicated that there were sixty-two offices in the United States that were distributing material coming from Hitler's propaganda ministry in Germany.

The most popular anti-Jewish preacher of the era however, was a homegrown product, Father Charles Coughlin. Through his weekly radio program and his publication *Social Justice*, Coughlin reached millions of people. By 1938 he was attacking Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, and claiming that the United States and Christianity were being threatened by a vast conspiracy of bankers and Communists whom he increasingly identified as Jews. His Christian Front organization urged sympathizers to "buy Christian," and his followers on occasion attacked Jews on the streets of



Marchers parade through Cleveland, Ohio, on May 16, 1933, to protest Nazi persecution of Jews in Germany. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

several cities and desecrated synagogues. Since Coughlin was not silenced by his Church superiors until after the war started, his words carried weight, particularly among many Catholics.

Jew baiting was not just a phenomenon of the streets; it was a practice in upper-class circles, in the halls of Congress, and in American political discourse in general. Anti-Roosevelt partisans, in their attack on the New Deal, blasted it as the "Jew Deal." Moreover, in what they deemed a smear on Roosevelt, they claimed he was of Jewish origin (which he was not). The 1936 presidential election and particularly the 1940 election were rife with allegations of a Jewish conspiracy and untold Jewish

power endangering the United States. Charles Lindbergh and other members of the America First organization accused Jews, along with the British and the Roosevelt administration, of trying to push the United States into an unnecessary and ill-advised war against Hitler.

Although card carrying anti-Semites numbered in the thousands rather than in the millions, their hate literature was widely disseminated in the United States. Jews were likened to octopuses controlling much of American government, industry, and public opinion. They were seen as Communist conspirators bent on takeover. The so-called "Jewish problem" became a topic in the general press. The

level of anti-Semitism reached such proportions that *Fortune* magazine in 1936 investigated the extent of "Jewish control." They found that, to the contrary, Jews had virtually no control in major manufacturing and banking sectors, and they represented no more than 15 percent of the members of the Communist Party. In fact, Jews faced discrimination in getting jobs in corporate America and there were quotas limiting the number of Jews in many institutions of higher learning.

But despite the reality of American Jewish life, suspicions persisted. In a public opinion poll in March 1938, 41 percent of Americans believed that Jews had too much power in the United States. When asked what to do about it, 18 percent were in favor of restricting Jews in business, 24 percent believed Jews should be kept out of government and politics, and 20 percent were ready to drive Jews out of the United States. By April 1940, the percentage of those in favor of restricting Jews in business had risen to 31 percent. In August 1940 the question was "what nationality, religious, or racial groups in this country are a menace to America?" Jews were cited by 17 percent of the respondents, whereas Germans were cited by 14 percent and the Japanese by 6 percent. Ironically even at the end of the war, after six million European Jews had been brutally murdered, 20 percent of Americans still believed that Jews in the United States had too much power.

For the 4.5 million American Jews, many of whom were immigrants or second-generation Americans struggling like other Americans to earn a living during hard times, the anti-Semitism that accompanied the Depression and the rise of the Nazis in Germany provoked profound anxiety. How different was the United States after all? Could the persecution evidenced in Europe take hold here? What did the future hold? How much would pushing for the cause of Jews overseas subject American Jews to charges of disloyalty and provoke an even greater anti-Semitic backlash in the United States?

The Jewish community in the United States faced serious challenges as it sought not only to respond to anti-Semitism at home, but to events overseas as the number of Jewish refugees desper-



A Nazi storm trooper stands at the entrance of the Jewish-owned Tietz department store in Berlin, Germany, in April 1933. The sign beside him urges German citizens to boycott Jewish stores.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

ately trying to escape Hitler and find a new home dramatically escalated. Over a decade earlier, in response to what was perceived as unwanted hordes of Jews and Catholics coming in from Southern and Eastern Europe, Congress had passed the Johnson-Reed Immigration Act, which not only had sharply curtailed the total numbers of immigrants allowed into the United States, but had specified where they had to come from. Countries from Eastern Europe were only allotted several thousand immigrants each, while the total German-Austria quota was about 27,000 places. There was no special allowance for refugees fleeing persecution. During the 1930s, when refugee advocates wanted to urge

Congress to liberalize the immigration law, they were warned that if anything, an unsympathetic Congress would act to cut the numbers, not increase them. Neither Congress nor the American public had an interest in increasing immigration into the United States, particularly if some of those immigrants would be Jews. Thus, the indifference, suspicion, and outright anti-Semitism palpable to so many American Jews in the 1930s had an impact on the country's response to Hitler and the Holocaust. Ultimately, American Jews were stymied in this cause by their own fears and impotence, and by the determined opposition of the American public to offering any more Jews a refuge in the United States.

See Also: CASTE AND CLASS; COUGHLIN, CHARLES; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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BARBARA S. BURSTIN

APPALACHIA, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression came early in Appalachia, a mountainous region of the southeastern United States. The lumber industry faded soon after World War I, and two other major regional employers—textiles and coal—struggled with overproduction, low wages, and rising unemployment throughout the 1920s when most industries were enjoying prosperity. Moreover, subsistence-oriented mountain agriculture ceased to provide a viable livelihood

for large numbers of people well before the stock market crash of 1929. Fifty years of industrial abuse of the environment and the lack of a scientific approach to agriculture and forestry had left much Appalachian land exhausted.

Mountain farm families struggled to survive on subsistence family farms that produced food but little cash. Often the burdens of tending the farm fell upon women and children as men worked elsewhere to earn needed cash. By the 1920s, many families had abandoned the farms for work in coal or textiles (in mills both within Appalachia and beyond the southeastern periphery). The coal industry excluded women but employed African Americans and immigrants, broadening the racial and ethnic mix in the region. The textile industry employed white men and women, but excluded African Americans. Both industries faced bitter interregional competition, and management in both insisted that survival required non-union operations. Sympathetic state and local governments supported the anti-union efforts.

As industrial employment both inside and outside the region collapsed in the late 1920s, workers who had earlier abandoned farming returned, increasing pressure on land already unproductive and overpopulated. The great southern drought of 1930 hit Appalachia especially hard, adding to the woes of mountain farmers and stranded refugees from the region's faltering industries.

In 1929, violent strikes erupted in mill towns of the Appalachian foothills like Gastonia, Elizabethton, Marion, and Danville. Young mountain women emerged as prominent leaders among the strikers. Embittered by the low wages, long hours, poor working conditions, and demanding production goals (the "stretch-out"), many workers welcomed organizers of the American Federation of Labor's United Textile Workers (UTW) and the Communist-led National Textile Workers. The coal fields also stirred as the National Miners Union and the West Virginia Mineworkers Union sought to steal the march on the United Mine Workers of America (UMW), which was left virtually moribund by its falling membership and failed organization drives of the 1920s.

The election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and the coming of the New Deal had immediate



A family pose with their hoes on the porch of their farmhouse in Knox county, Kentucky, in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

political consequences as Democrats ousted an entrenched Republican regime in West Virginia, and Democrats generally prevailed in other parts of the traditionally Republican region. While congressional Democrats usually supported the New Deal, such conservative state governors as Guy Kump of West Virginia and Ruby Laffoon of Kentucky clashed bitterly with federal relief administrators.

Before 1933, organizing efforts in both coal and textiles failed. The New Deal's National Industrial Recovery Act affirmed labor's right to organize and to bargain collectively. Soon after passage, the UMW conducted a successful organizing drive throughout the region. On September 21, 1933, union and industry representatives signed an agreement that set the eight-hour workday as stan-

dard and ended mandatory payment in scrip and the requirements that employees live in company houses and trade at company stores. Soon thereafter, West Virginia ended its practice of deputizing mine guards.

Coal operators in Bell, Harlan, and Whitley counties in eastern Kentucky remained defiant of public opinion and pressures from the state and federal government. Violent clashes characterized labor-management relations as operators crushed organizing drives of both the National Miners Union and the UMW. Not until 1941 did the coal operators of "Bloody Harlan" accept UMW contracts. Despite a vigorous effort in 1934, neither the UTW nor, later, the Congress of Industrial Organization's Textile Workers Organizing Committee



This young son of a poor Appalachian miner steals coal from rail cars for use at his family's home in Chaplin, West Virginia, in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

had much enduring success in breaking the anti-union tradition in textiles.

By 1930 both agricultural and industrial counties reported growing unemployment and distress. Local governments and community agencies sought to fill their traditional roles as relief providers, but agents of President Herbert Hoover's unemployment committee found the efforts inadequate. Hoover, hoping to avoid direct federal action, enlisted the Red Cross and the American Friends Service Committee to provide emergency relief, especially food for children, in the hardest-hit Appalachian counties. In 1932, federal loans through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation moved the states to establish relief agencies for the first time.

Relief workers were shocked to discover the extent of need in Appalachia. Unemployment rates in

some counties reached as high as 80 percent. Even with moderate economic recovery, welfare dependence became an intractable problem. New Deal programs provided much needed help through both work relief and direct payments, and, with Social Security, these programs sounded the death knells of the orphanage and the poor house. In generating work relief, the federal government also invested heavily to help upgrade roads, bridges, and public buildings. In addition, relief agencies took care to see to work relief for women. African Americans, although suffering discrimination from some agencies, received desperately needed work relief from the Works Projects Administration. The effort to build a modern welfare system, however, was compromised by the persistence of spoils politics and the reluctance of states to adequately fund welfare agencies.



This farmer living near Barbourville, Kentucky, built this new barn in 1940 with assistance from the Farm Security Administration and the Southern Appalachian Project. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

New Deal policy toward Appalachian agriculture reflected New Deal economic ambivalence, tending at first to favor planning ideas, and later seeking a suitable setting for capitalist enterprise to flourish. Some tobacco growers benefited, but most Appalachian farmers found the early New Deal's main agricultural legislation, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, irrelevant to their needs. Resettlement ideas flourished for a time, but subsistence community experiments, such as Sublimity Farms in Kentucky, which relocated farmers from poor lands, and Arthurdale in West Virginia, which relocated stranded miners, aroused much conservative opposition. Beginning in 1937 with the Farm Security Administration, the focus shifted to rehabilitating poor farms rather than moving farmers. The

planning concept reemerged in the later New Deal years in combination with the idea of organizing farmers for land-use planning and the removal of land with excessive slopes from agricultural uses. Federal and state parks absorbed some lands judged agriculturally submarginal. New Deal policies helped some mountain farmers and promoted erosion prevention and soil conservation, but the long-term decline of mountain agriculture continued.

Another New Deal program that profoundly affected a large part of Appalachia was the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), authorized by Congress in the early days of the New Deal. TVA built dams to control floods, encouraged farmers to combat soil erosion, promoted reforestation, and sought to

remove submarginal lands from agriculture. Most important, the TVA provided hydroelectric power, despite the philosophical opposition of some in Congress and the opposition of private utility companies. TVA's many useful improvements came with a substantial cost. Thousands of rural residents were compelled to sell and relocate as TVA dams inundated their homes and farms. Paradoxically, TVA, whose purpose was largely conservation, also became in time a major consumer of strip-mined coal to generate power, contributing to the principal source of environmental degradation in the region.

The Depression years brought great trials to the people of Appalachia. The New Deal provided relief, but only the coming of World War II brought a business recovery. Mountain agriculture continued to fade, however, and for many, migration to wartime industrial plants outside the region provided the best hope of a better future.

See Also: ARTHURDALE, WEST VIRGINIA; GUFFEY-SNYDER ACT OF 1935; GUFFEY-VINSON ACT OF 1937; HARLAN COUNTY; LEWIS, JOHN L.; RURAL LIFE; TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA); UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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JERRY BRUCE THOMAS

ARCHITECTURE

The economic crisis in the 1930s upstaged but did not alleviate the upheaval within the architectural profession. A new austere, ahistoric architectural language, imported from Europe, won fiery adherents who proclaimed that tradition had no place in the production of contemporary architecture. The term *modernism* is used to denote this new style. Despite the zeal of the converts, others, with equal passion, rejected the new vocabulary. The debate over modernism polarized the architectural community as a new generation of architects not only rebelled against historic styles but also challenged the privileged place held by prominent and established practitioners. Patronage patterns also shifted as the federal government, responding to the economic distress, commissioned an unprecedented body of work. While the production of architecture for the private sector did not entirely cease, the federal government gave new prominence to specific building types and activities. Federal and civic buildings, as well as regional planning and its attendant architecture, constituted important arenas for New Deal design. The 1930s reshaped American architecture and the national landscape. By the end of World War II, modernism had triumphed, a new elite occupied the pinnacle of the architectural profession, and the federal government had blanketed the country with emblems of the federal presence.

STYLES AND THE ARCHITECTURAL PROFESSION

Formally, the most striking characteristic of the architecture of the period was the diversity of expressions competing for the label *modern*. Three styles dominated. Classicism remained a viable architectural language throughout the decade. John

Russell Pope's National Gallery of Art (1935–1941), on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., reaffirmed the time-honored notion that American public architecture should be classical. Pope's classicism, however, was restrained and sober rather than lavish and opulent. He simplified and reduced the classical apparatus. Orders were suggested by slightly projecting planes, and the whole was bound together by sleek horizontals and delicately scaled moldings. Despite the austerity of Pope's classicism, proponents of modernism labeled his continued commitment to the past as reactionary. The style most often associated with the period was an even more restrained, spartan interpretation described as *modernized classicism*. Paul Cret's Folger Shakespeare Library (1928–1932), also in the national capital, was a seminal work. The library was a simple rectangular mass of taut, thin planes. The orders, reduced to a series of fluted piers, were detailed in a stripped, simplified manner. Twin entry pavilions flank the screen of piers, which distill to a minimal essence the image of a classical colonnade. Cret's modernized classicism served as the model for many federal buildings in the New Deal period.

In the commercial realm, the comparatively reserved *streamlined moderne* tempered and replaced the flamboyant Art Deco of the 1920s. Exuberant flourishes, such as the telescoping spire of semicircular aluminum panels articulated with radiating lines and punched triangular openings of William Van Alen's Chrysler Building (1926–1930) in New York City, seemed out of place in the bleak economic climate. Streamlined moderne originated in the work of industrial designers such as Norman Bel Geddes and Walter Dorwin Teague. For designers of the period, the characteristic flat planar wall surfaces, rounded corners, banded windows, thin decorative horizontal stripes, and flat roofs gave built form to the idea of speed. Streamlined moderne appeared on buildings ranging from vernacular roadside diners to Frank Lloyd Wright's high-style Johnson Wax Building (1936–1939) in Racine, Wisconsin. Like Art Deco, streamlined moderne represented an attempt to create a language appropriate for the machine age.

Unlike the promoters of revival architecture or Art Deco, proponents of modernism insisted that

all connections to the past be broken. As a style, modernism burst onto the architectural scene in the United States through Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson's exhibition on "Modern Architecture" at New York's Museum of Modern Art in 1932. Photographs, models, and drawings of recent buildings, primarily by European architects, supported Hitchcock and Johnson's claim that a new language, which they named the *International Style*, had emerged. The new vocabulary, characterized by exposed structural framing, non-load-bearing walls, and absence of applied ornament, constituted a self-conscious rejection of tradition. In addition to the architecture of the Europeans, the two curators identified George Howe and William Lescaze's Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building (1929–1932) in Philadelphia as a seminal work. The first American skyscraper inspired by European modernism pointedly turned its back on the aesthetics that had guided the design of the relatively new building type. The architects gave the Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Building's functional components distinct expressions on the exterior. The base, containing shops and the banking hall, the shaft for the offices, and the service tower were each distinguished by different materials and window treatments. The building was defiantly asymmetrical. The presence of the structural frame was clearly expressed on the exterior. There was no traditional ornament or detailing at door and window openings. The building and others included in the exhibition redirected American architecture in the subsequent decades. The influence of modernism was broad as well as deep.

Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater (1936–1937) at Bear Run, Pennsylvania, was an idiosyncratic blend of romantic rusticity and influences from the International Style. Eliel and Eero Saarinen and Robert F. Swanson's 1939 competition-winning but ultimately unrealized design for the Smithsonian Gallery would have defiantly placed a fully modern building directly opposite Pope's National Gallery on the Mall in the federal capital. Supplanting the stylistic diversity of the 1930s, modernism triumphed as the appropriate language for high-style buildings following World War II.

Within the architectural profession, the ascendance of modernism represented more than the tri-

umph of a novel architectural language. Aesthetic allegiances polarized the profession along generational lines. The economic distress of the 1930s exacerbated the breach, as architects, like much of the country's workforce, faced the bleak lack of employment opportunities. Older, established architects, who were also most likely to receive commissions for prominent buildings, clung to traditional modes of expression. Aspiring architects, eager to make a mark in the field, championed modernism as they also challenged the privileged place that their established colleagues held. At the convention of the American Institute of Architects held in Washington, D.C., in 1939, the Smithsonian Gallery design served as the rallying point for the younger architects eager to overturn professional as well as aesthetic hierarchies. At stake was the design of buildings not only in the private sector but also for the architecturally activist federal government.

PATRONAGE AND BUILDING TYPES

To stimulate the depressed economy, the federal government emerged as the primary architectural patron of the period. Government agencies commissioned and produced a staggering body of work during the Depression decade. The most well-known fruit of government patronage was the federal building program that placed thousands of post offices and courthouses in cities and towns across the country. The Office of the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department oversaw the vast building program. The style most often associated with the Supervising Architect in the 1930s was modernized classicism. Shreve, Lamb, and Harmon's post office (1931–1932) for Chattanooga, Tennessee, was one of many reinterpretations of Cret's facade composition for the Folger. However, the Office of the Supervising Architect produced federal buildings in a range of revival styles. Reginald Johnson's post office (1936–1937) for Santa Barbara, California, was a moderne Spanish colonial revival. Donald G. Anderson's Petersburg, Virginia, post office (1934–1936) was a federal reinterpretation of a fanciful, contemporary reconstruction. The facade drew heavily from the rebuilding of the colonial capitol (1928–1934) at nearby Williamsburg, Virginia. Federal architects and their collaborators made

revival architecture the language of New Deal federal buildings.

Where Hitchcock and Johnson's International Style was a purely aesthetic language divorced from ideology and social purpose, a utopian tradition that extended from the English garden city movement to twentieth-century Radburn, New Jersey, inspired the New Deal's suburban town program. The project brought together a talented group of landscape architects, planners, and architects, including Henry Wright, Clarence Stein, and Catherine Bauer. The goal was to use architecture as a tool of both economic and social reform. While the work did provide models for city design, ultimately, the numbers diminished the influence of the idealistic experiment. Of the several satellite cities planned, only Greenbelt, Maryland; Greendale, Wisconsin; and Greenhills, Ohio, were built.

The boldest act of New Deal planning was the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in 1933. Treating the entire 900-mile river valley that cuts through seven states as a single unit, the government corporation planned and erected a string of dams to control flooding, create inexpensive electricity, repair adjacent damaged forest and agricultural lands, and stimulate industry. The goals of the ambitious and visionary project were to bring the backward and blighted region into the twentieth century and to demonstrate the power and benefits of coordinated regional planning. At Norris Dam, Roland Wank, the authority's first chief architect, played off architecture treated as severe rectangular masses against the dynamism of water in the massive spillway beyond. Wank's grave, simple buildings of textured concrete ornamented only with crisply cut rectangular openings containing bands of windows or integral sans-serif lettering created an architectural image that vividly expressed strength, efficiency, and faith in the power of technology to produce change.

The period of the Great Depression witnessed the transformation of the architectural profession. On the other side of the decade, modernism emerged as the style of choice for high-style American buildings. A new group of talented designers, promoters of modernism, replaced the masters of academic architecture as the new leaders of the

profession. The Depression-driven Roosevelt administration had commissioned an extensive body of architecture that also attested to the expanded presence of the federal government in the daily lives of its citizens.

See Also: ART; PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION (PWA); TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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SARA A. BUTLER

ARMSTRONG, LOUIS

Louis Armstrong (August 4, 1901–July 6, 1971), also known as Pops and Satchmo, pioneered jazz music

as both a trumpet player and vocalist. Armstrong created a musical style and image that reflected his times and served as a catalyst for cultural change. His early life was characterized by a struggle to overcome poverty and racism. Growing up penniless in New Orleans' red light district, Armstrong received his first formal musical training at the Colored Waifs' Home. By 1918, he was playing cornet in the Ory Creole Orchestra, replacing King Oliver, who had moved to Chicago. Before long, Armstrong began playing on steamboats that sailed north up the Mississippi River. He followed Oliver to Chicago in 1922 and played second trumpet in his band. Armstrong made his recording debut during his tenure with Oliver. Legend has it that Armstrong was instructed to stand twenty feet behind the band during recording sessions because of the magnitude of his sound.

Armstrong developed an unerring sense of swing and a virtuoso range. By 1925, he was leading his own groups, which showcased his melodiousness, edgy rhythms, and breathtaking harmonic leaps. These influential smaller ensembles became known as the Hot Fives and the Hot Sevens. In 1929 Armstrong traveled to New York, where he began to experiment with singing. His vocal work included a rendition of Fats Waller's "Ain't Misbehavin'" that was featured in the 1929 Broadway revue *Hot Chocolates*.

During the Great Depression, jazz helped to lift the spirits of the country and created a popular culture that broke down many social barriers. At the beginning of this era, Armstrong faced one of the problems that threatened the nation—warring gangster factions. Now a hot musical commodity, Armstrong was courted by several potential managers, including representatives from key crime families in New York and Chicago. In order to avoid the conflict, and guarantee his own safety, Armstrong toured the United States in 1930, carefully side-stepping New York and Chicago. In 1933 he embarked on the first of what would be many European tours. By 1935, the dispute was resolved when he began a long association with manager Joe Glaser. But Armstrong's challenges were far from over. Years of touring had injured his lip and hampered his recording career, leaving him without a recording contract.

Under the management of Glaser, a nightclub manager associated with the gangster Al Capone, Armstrong began to brand himself as an entertainer. Armstrong's musical style changed as he began leading larger bands, which would back him on popular songs. In 1936 he became the first jazz musician regularly featured in Hollywood movies, appearing with Bing Crosby in *Pennies from Heaven*. Although he often performed for segregated audiences and played movie roles that perpetuated racial stereotypes, his music transcended racism and appealed to audiences of all races. Armstrong's hit 1932 version of "All of Me" became closely associated with the trials and losses that Americans faced during the Great Depression, and his noble spirit and dignity became a model for facing these challenges.

Critic Stanley Crouch argues that Armstrong intensified the "central ethos of American culture"—be yourself and do it well. After the Depression, Armstrong expanded his audience through world tours, and he served as a spokesperson for racial equality during the civil rights era. His popularity was such that in 1964 he even replaced the Beatles atop the Billboard charts with a recording of the song "Hello Dolly." By the time of Armstrong's death in 1971, he had served as musical innovator, cultural ambassador, and entertainer.

See Also: JAZZ; MUSIC.

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WILLIAM R. BETTLER

ARNOLD, THURMAN

Thurman Wesley Arnold (June 2, 1891–November 7, 1969), lawyer, social theorist, and government official, was born in Laramie, Wyoming. After earning a bachelor's degree from Princeton in 1911 and a law degree from Harvard in 1914, Arnold took up the practice of law in Chicago. Following military service in Europe, he returned to Laramie and entered local politics. He won election to the Wyoming House of Representatives in 1921, and served as its sole Democratic member. He later served as the mayor of Laramie. In 1927, he was appointed Dean of the University of West Virginia Law School. From this post, he launched an ambitious program of procedural reforms in the state's courts. Arnold was called to a professorship at the Yale Law School in 1930. His activities there included the publication of two books—*Symbols of Government* (1935) and *The Folklore of Capitalism* (1937)—that gained a national audience.

Arnold emerged on the Washington scene in 1938 when he was appointed to head the antitrust division at the Department of Justice. His qualifications for this post were not immediately evident; in *The Folklore of Capitalism* he had ridiculed antitrust laws as largely symbolic exercises in "economic meaninglessness" that enabled politicians to mount "crusades, which were utterly futile but enormously picturesque, and which paid big dividends in personal prestige." Once in office, however, he embarked on a vigorous campaign of antitrust enforcement. During his five-year tenure, he initiated nearly half of the proceedings brought under the Sherman Act during the first fifty-three years of its existence and he increased the division's professional staff nearly five-fold. Far more than had any of his predecessors, Arnold brought criminal indictments against perceived antitrust violators, but was prepared to drop them in favor of consent decrees when alleged offenders agreed to change their behavior. Arnold was convinced that his attacks on market power in price-making contributed to increased production and employment. In 1941, when economic mobilization for war was pending, he maintained that antitrust enforcement was essential "to prevent restrictions of production,

particularly conspiracies which are blocking the defense effort.”

Arnold was never part of President Roosevelt's inner circle of policy advisers. He was brought to Washington when the Temporary National Economic Committee's investigations into business practices were underway, and senior members of Roosevelt's economic team were uncertain about the future direction of industrial policy. For a time, Arnold was allowed to operate with a relatively free hand. However, longstanding veterans of the New Deal's economic bureaucracy, such as Leon Henderson, became increasingly dissatisfied with Arnold's publicity-seeking and with the economic perspective that informed his decisions. After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941, when policy makers were attempting to promote business-government cooperation, little welcome was left for Arnold's approach. In 1943, he was effectively kicked upstairs with an appointment to the U. S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, a position from which he resigned in 1945.

Arnold then returned to the private practice of law. In the early 1950s, he again came into national prominence when representing a number of persons whose loyalty had been challenged during the McCarthy period.

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WILLIAM J. BARBER

ART

The character and value of art produced in the United States during the 1930s has been the subject of continuing controversy within the discipline of art history since the 1960s. Though it is true that all art is necessarily accounted for retrospectively, in par-

tial and selective histories, it is especially significant that art from the Depression continues to present a range of intellectual, political, ideological, and aesthetic problems for historians and critics.

In orthodox survey histories, 1930s U. S. art is represented as realist or documentary in form and intention, highly parochial in relation to developments in European modern art, and mostly contaminated by left-wing political motivations. The artists Andrew Wyeth, Ben Shahn, and Edward Hopper are claimed to be the most significant in the period, producing paintings, drawings and photographs that supposedly transcend the specific sociopolitical circumstances of their production. But many others who worked in various neoabstract, expressionist, naturalist, realist, social-realist, or socialist-realist styles, motivated by an equally wide set of artistic and sociopolitical interests and values, have little, if any, presence in post-1945 art-history accounts of the so-called “dirty decade.” William Gropper, Lucienne Bloch, Jerome Klein, William Zorach, Raphael Soyer, and Berenice Abbott, for example, were all artists with reputations already established by the mid-1930s, and their exhibitions and views were discussed and advertised in contemporary mainstream art magazines such as *The American Magazine of Art* and *Art Digest*, but they virtually dropped out of history as work of the 1930s was repressed or villified in the Cold War climate of the later 1940s and 1950s.

By the mid-1960s there was a reappraisal, for a variety of complex and interrelated reasons. President Lyndon B. Johnson's creation of the National Endowment for the Arts evoked Franklin D. Roosevelt's subvention of the arts in the United States as part of the New Deal. The emergence of the New Left, organized around civil rights for minorities and women and opposition to U. S. involvement in the Vietnam War, sparked interest again in the left politics and debates of the 1930s in which artists, through such organizations as the Artists' Union (AU) and the American Artists' Committee Against Racism and Fascism (AACARF), played an important part. The high modernism of U. S. art in the 1950s, symbolized by abstract expressionism, had begun to give way to a wide range of styles and an interpenetration of art forms and practices that, in



This Art Center in Gold Beach, Oregon, was established during the 1930s by the WPA. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

turn, led to a less, or at least differently, prejudicial reassessment of 1930s art and art debates.

Unsurprisingly, when scholars turned back to the 1930s they found aspects that linked art practice then to developments in the post-World War II period. These included the art of the proto-abstract expressionists, many of whom had used relatively realist styles during the Depression, often as employees of the WPA's Federal Art Project (for example, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Willem de Kooning). Other 1930s artists who produced relatively abstract paintings, prints, and drawings, such as Stuart Davis, Balcombe Greene, Hans Hofmann, and Georgia O'Keeffe, also found their latter-day champions, though for Stuart Davis the cost of this revival in his artistic reputation was substantial neglect of his pivotal role in left-wing art politics in New York in the late 1930s. Francis V. O'Connor's research into art in the Depression, conducted in the later 1960s and published in the early 1970s,

highlighted the sociology and demography of U. S. artists, and reconfirmed the significance of New York City as the home and inspiration of perhaps a third of all professional or aspiring professional artists in the country. Study of black and women artists active in the 1930s, including Vertis Hayes, Aaron Douglas, Marion Greenwood, and Minna Citron, reflected the growth of 1960s civil rights and feminism as political and scholarly movements for radical social change. What the 1930s meant in art-historical terms had changed dramatically by the end of the 1970s, though the determinants within this process of reassessment were broadly social and political.

No other decade in the last century attracts such questions or analytic problems, nor commands such putative coherence. To be called a 1930s artist is no mere chronological label: The term implies that artist and his or her paintings or sculptures somehow reflect or embody the combi-



The New Deal, a mural in the auditorium of the Leonardo Da Vinci Art School in New York City, was painted as a WPA project in the mid 1930s by Conrad Albrizio, who dedicated the work to President Roosevelt. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

nation of realist intent, style, and socialist or Marxist political motivation associated with the Depression and the New Deal. Edward Hopper, then, though active in the 1930s, is not a 1930s artist and his painting *Early Sunday Morning* (1930) is not in any significant way a piece of art of the 1930s. Georgia O'Keeffe, similarly, though productive in the decade, created works such as *Ram's Skull with Brown Leaves* (1936) whose value *escapes* the ideological posturings and political machinations of the

1930s. In contrast, Stuart Davis, socialist chairman of both the AU and the AACARF (but always highly skeptical of the U. S. Communist Party doctrine on art and political matters), will never escape his association with the 1930s. His *Swing Landscape* (c. 1938), for instance, is far more in debt to Piet Mondrian and Fernand Leger than to any indigenous social art influence, but it remains a permanent prisoner, too, of the "art of the 1930s." The 1930s, then, means the Great Depression, the optimism



This relief at the Forest Hills Station post office in New York was completed by Sten Jacobsson in 1937 as part of the Federal Art Project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

(or naiveté, depending on one's perspective) of the New Deal, the moral disaster of the U. S. left's alignment with Soviet communism, and the early moves toward disengagement from ideological commitment toward what Arthur Schlesinger influentially called "the vital center" (Schlesinger 1962).

Roosevelt's reorganization and direction of the Democratic Party and the federal government in the 1930s shaped significant aspects of both artistic production and major art institutions and agencies. The Federal Art Project (FAP, 1935–1943) and the Public Works of Art Project (1933–1934), run by two faithful New Dealers, Holger Cahill and Edward Bruce, respectively, are examples of *sui generis* New Deal activity. Bruce purchased art works for the nation throughout the decade within United States Treasury-funded programs, though he always claimed that acquiring masterpieces was his goal,

rather than developing what more radical New Dealers called the "democratization of culture." The progressive and populist image of the New Deal attracted Thomas Hart Benton, one of the regionalist painters of the period (along with Grant Wood and John Steuart Curry). Benton's mural cycle *America Today* (1930–1931) describes and celebrates small town American life. The Museum of Modern Art in New York City, though indebted to European artists and styles for its major exhibitions from the decade, supported aspects of New Deal arts policy with its 1936 show of federal art, *New Horizons in American Art*. The Whitney Museum of American Art was much more programmatic in its support of contemporary artists in the United States, and had initiated economic support for Depression-hit artists before the federal government intervened in 1933.

The FAP and other agencies that employed artists, designers, and photographers in the 1930s had considerable autonomy from federal government policy, perhaps because, on the whole, New Deal administrators had little or no interest in culture initiatives, which only ever received a minute proportion of federal money. Even this support was often cut off for a variety of political and budgetary reasons, undermining the efforts of artists and people in arts management who wished to see culture become a central element in what they believed was a genuine New Deal revolution. But this autonomy/lack of interest meant that, for the most part, art created by federal employees was free of any required propagandistic meaning. If anything, federal art was accused of left-wing bias. This was the case with August Henkel's *Mural* (1938) at Floyd Bennett Field in Brooklyn, New York, which was censored by the FAP on the doubtful grounds that it contained communist symbolism, and with Diego Rivera's *Man at the Crossroads* (1933–1934) at Rockefeller Center in New York City, which also was embroiled in ideological controversy.

By 1940, the network of organizations (overwhelmingly based in New York City) set up by artists to lobby for the extension of federal aid, or to support socialist and communist activities against fascism in Europe and capitalism in the United States, had begun to unravel under the weight of



The Federal Art Project sponsored free art classes for children and adults in many cities, including these underway in 1941 at the WPA Art Center in Oklahoma City. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

state-supported anticommunism. But throughout the 1930s, the thriving of complex and intellectually rich debates formed what was arguably the most significant activity of these groups. This vitalization had never been entirely, or even mostly, dominated by the U. S. Communist Party; it involved independent thinkers and artists such as Meyer Schapiro and Stuart Davis, and it supported and sponsored diverse art forms, ranging from the highly abstract to the doctrinally socialist-realist. This creative plurality is the real legacy of the art of the 1930s.

See Also: AMERICAN SCENE, THE; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP).

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This homestead in West Virginia was built during the mid-1930s as part of the Farm Security Administration's Arthurdale project. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

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JONATHAN HARRIS

ARTHURDALE, WEST VIRGINIA

The groundbreaking for the small new town of Arthurdale, West Virginia, in late 1933 inaugurated one of the New Deal's most ambitious and eventually most notorious projects in economic and social engineering. The project began with efforts led by Eleanor Roosevelt to expand American Friends Ser-

vice Committee relief work in Scott's Run, a long-depressed coal mining area near Morgantown, West Virginia. Mrs. Roosevelt helped turn Arthurdale into the showcase effort of the recently established Division of Subsistence Homesteads. Arthurdale was a prototype for a rural-urban synthesis in which destitute farmers and miners from the area were resettled into new homes with enough land to maintain a household subsistence, while planners also sought to provide homesteading families with newly decentralized industrial jobs.

Beyond such economic schemes, Mrs. Roosevelt herself saw the new town as a "human experiment station." She led a coterie of social and cultural reformers aiming to build "community" among residents, particularly by enlisting them in an array



Some Arthurdale residents, including these employees in a vacuum cleaner factory in 1937, were given the opportunity to combine farming with part-time work in local industries. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

of cooperative ventures that eventually included a health clinic, a general store, a cemetery, an inter-denominational church, a forge, a weaving room, and a furniture factory, along with various agricultural projects. But at the heart of the community's experimental first years lay the school, designed by educator Elsie Clapp around philosopher John Dewey's pragmatic pedagogy. The school mirrored the project by seeking to integrate a progressive social and economic agenda with revivals of residents' "folkways," presumed lost over decades of industrial expansion. This emphasis on cultural rehabilitation was abetted when planners acceded to local pressures to select families of largely Scotch-Irish descent, despite intense interest on the part of local non-native and African-American applicants.

During the 1930s, Arthurdale's political reputation, and to some extent its residents, suffered from

confused and over-optimistic planning during the ongoing Depression. Clapp's experimental school closed in 1936 due to lack of private funding. Worse, homesteaders endured years without steady wage work after Congress denied plans to give federal manufacturing contracts to homesteaders, citing unfair competition with private industry. Through the 1930s, Resettlement Administration and later Farm Security Administration officials struggled to maintain employment at Arthurdale, until the coming of the war effort brought lasting jobs. By then, the government had begun selling off the 165 homes and other properties built there, at a significant loss against its total outlay.

In following decades, Arthurdale's families prospered in relative anonymity. Following its fiftieth anniversary in 1984, however, residents created Arthurdale Heritage, Inc., a small nonprofit organi-

zation that maintains the town's remaining community structures and offers a look back on its storied past.

See Also: APPALACHIA, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR; SUBSISTENCE HOMESTEADS DIVISION.

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STUART KEITH PATTERSON

ASIA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

All Asian countries were deeply affected by the steep fall of agrarian prices that began in 1930 and reached its lowest point around 1933. There was a slight upward trend in subsequent years, but in general, prices stagnated at a low level until they rose again during World War II. Wheat and cotton, which were widely traded in the world market, led the downward trend, and they were soon followed by other types of produce, such as millets, which were grown only for local consumption. Normally, prices reflect supply and demand; in the Depression years there were no major changes in this respect in Asia, but the prices were halved nevertheless. The contraction of credit was the main cause of this catastrophic decline. It upset forward trading, which otherwise served to stabilize prices. Panic sales spread like wildfire. Rural marketing was disrupted and it took years to overcome this upheaval.

Economic historians have hardly taken note of this Asian crisis of the 1930s. Theoretical assumptions caused this neglect: If a country did not experience industrial unemployment and a balance of payments crisis, it was supposedly not affected by

the Depression. Most Asian countries were only marginally industrialized at that time and the balance of payments was settled by an outflow of gold, so on these two counts there was no depression in Asia.

The fate of the Asian peasant has been disregarded, too. If the peasants had only practiced subsistence agriculture, prices would have been irrelevant, but most Asian peasants were forced to market much of their produce because they were indebted and had to pay taxes. Debt service and taxation were not adjusted to their reduced income. There was widespread agrarian distress in Asia, but governments faced serious peasant revolts only in a few areas. Long-term political effects that were not immediately evident turned out to be more important than these incidents of violent revolt.

GOLD AND SILVER: THE FATE OF ASIAN CURRENCIES

Before World War I the international gold standard had maintained an automatic equilibrium in the world market, due to the powerful position of London, which controlled the flow of gold worldwide. After the war the United States emerged as the arbiter of the flow of gold, but instead of letting it flow, it hoarded it in the interest of internal price stability. In spite of this, there was a concerted effort, led by London, to restore the international gold standard. Great Britain returned to it at the prewar parity in 1925 and had to abandon it again in 1931. Japan returned to it as late as 1930, only to abandon it again in 1932; its currency then experienced a dramatic devaluation.

British India was completely at the mercy of the currency policy made by the secretary of state for India in London. India's silver currency had served its colonial rulers very well, because it absorbed a large amount of the silver that became redundant in Europe when most countries demonetized it and shifted to the gold standard. But the colonial government of India collected taxes in depreciating silver while it had to pay its "home charges" (such as debt service) in gold. When it could not make both ends meet any longer, the Indian mints were closed to the free coinage of silver in 1893. The silver rupee became a token currency that was managed by the

secretary of state. In 1927 a currency act was passed that pegged the rupee to the gold standard at a rate above the prewar parity. This feat had been accomplished by a slow and steady deflation. Used silver coins were not replaced by new ones but melted down. The silver was quietly sold abroad by the British. When the Depression hit India, the exchange rate of the overvalued rupee was defended by further deflationary measures. This finally led to an enormous outflow of "distress gold" (mostly gold coins and ornaments) that indebted peasants turned over to the moneylenders. Since the respective colonial governments did not impose gold export embargoes, this gold flowed freely to London and other centers. This export filled the gap caused by the decline of the value of commodity exports and thus cured India's balance of payments problem with a vengeance.

In the meantime, China was shielded against the initial impact of the Depression by its silver currency, because the price of silver fell like that of all other commodities. Whereas some countries that were in full control of their respective currencies resorted to competitive devaluation, China's currency was devalued automatically. Overseas Chinese then converted their savings (in gold) into silver, which they invested in China in a big way. But this spree did not last long. President Roosevelt helped the U. S. silver interests by means of a silver purchasing policy that dramatically increased the price of silver in the world market. The silver that had poured into China around 1930 left it again in 1934, and the Depression hit China in a delayed but very dramatic action.

Other Asian countries that were colonies of different European powers were affected by the peculiarities of the currency policies of their respective masters. France had joined the gold standard only in 1928—and at one-fifth of the prewar parity. It was thus in a more comfortable position than other countries and could stay on the gold standard until 1936. In Indochina, the French maintained a colonial currency, the piastre, which they pegged to the French franc in 1931 in order to protect French investments. This aggravated the impact of the Depression on Indochina. In the Netherlands East Indies (now Indonesia) there was no colonial

currency. The Dutch currency circulated in the colony, but here, too, a deflationary policy led to an outflow of gold that benefited the colonial power.

Most Asian countries suffered from the combined impact of deflationary policies and credit contraction. Both were caused by creditors in the central places of the world market who wanted to prevent the depreciation of Asian currencies so as to protect their investments, but also did not want to provide fresh credit. This depressed prices, and also subverted the old argument that access to colonial raw materials was essential for the European powers, and could only be secured by political control. In a world where raw materials were available at very low prices, colonialism did not pay any longer. Colonial control was required only to keep under control debtors who might cancel their debts. The deflationary policy was an integral part of this control of debtors. Its immediate effect was the sharp decline of prices of agricultural produce.

WHEAT, RICE, AND SUGAR: THE FALL OF AGRARIAN PRICES

All Asian crops were affected by the fall in prices in the 1930s, but wheat, rice, and sugar were by far the most important. Wheat was grown and traded globally. Its overproduction in the United States was one of the chief causes of the Depression. For some time the storage of wheat in the United States had helped to keep prices at a comfortable level, but when credit contracted in the United States due to the monetary policy of the Federal Reserve Board, wheat poured out of the storage houses in an avalanche of panic sales. Credit signals then reached India, Australia, and other wheat-producing regions very quickly.

Rice was not immediately affected by these events. Wheat could not be easily substituted for Rice: This was not just a matter of taste, but also of the skills and implements required for preparing the respective foods. Thus the rice price remained high everywhere in Asia in the summer of 1930. Moreover, rice was only marginally traded in the world market. It was almost exclusively an Asian crop, produced and consumed locally. Japan was a crucial exception, and it played a decisive role in triggering the global fall of the rice price. After

World War I, Japan was a rice-deficit country. Rice riots had shaken the government and arrangements were made for a timely import of rice. In Japan rice is harvested at the end of summer, whereas in monsoon Asia (South and Southeast Asia) the main harvest reaches the market in January. Rice from Burma (now Myanmar) and, to a lesser extent, from Thailand and Indochina, would reach Japan in March when it was needed most. But by 1928 Japan had achieved self-sufficiency and imposed an import embargo on rice. In 1930 Japan had a very plentiful rice harvest. At that time the Japanese government was pursuing a deflationary policy in order to support the yen, which had just been pegged to the gold standard. The double impact of deflation and the rich harvest caused the rice price to fall by about one-third in October 1930. This should have been a purely domestic concern since Japan did not export or import rice, but grain traders all over the world interpreted this as a signal that the rice price would now share the fate of the wheat price. In November 1930 the rice price in Liverpool was reduced by half, and Calcutta followed the Liverpool precedent in January 1931. At that point, the rice price experienced a free fall, and by 1933 rice was cheaper than wheat in India. Actually, the production, consumption, and export volume of rice did not decline very much in this period—only the price remained low, and so did the income of the producers.

In 1930 in lower Burma, the world's major rice export region at that time, the peasants rose in a violent revolt led by the charismatic Saya San. Burmese peasants had to pay both poll tax and land revenue. The poll tax was collected before the winter harvest, forcing the peasants to market their rice. Moneylenders and grain dealers usually eagerly provided credit for the tax payment against the coming harvest, but in late 1930 they knew that the price of rice would fall in January and thus they did not provide any credit when the tax collector pounced on the peasants. In response, Saya San, who had earlier petitioned the government on behalf of the peasants, led the peasants in a violent rebellion that took the British two years to suppress. Other rice-growing provinces of British India remained quiet during the period because peasants did not have to pay poll tax or even land revenue,

but only rent to landlords. A peasant could get away with paying no rent for some time, but then the landlord could sue him and he would forfeit his occupancy right. This produced an atmosphere of smoldering discontent but no immediate revolt. Unrest was more pronounced in India's wheat-growing region, where peasants were in more direct contact with the revenue authorities. The National Congress, an Indian political party, had sponsored agrarian campaigns in this region in 1930, and this contributed to the subsequent emergence of the Congress as a peasant party.

Sugarcane was a major cash crop in several Asian countries, particularly in India, the Netherlands East Indies, and the Philippines. Before the Depression, the Netherlands East Indies was the major exporter of refined white sugar. Much of this white sugar was exported to India, where sugarcane was mostly converted into brown sugar for rural consumption, and imported refined sugar was in demand in urban areas. In 1931 the British Indian government imposed a prohibitive tariff on sugar, thus greatly encouraging Indian sugar production. By 1937 India was ready to export sugar, but the International Sugar Agreement of that year classified India as a sugar importing country, so India was denied an export quota. The protective tariff of 1931 did not affect British imperial interests. But if India had been permitted to export sugar in 1937, the (British) Caribbean sugar planters would have faced Indian competition. Thus the year 1937 marked a setback for India. On the other hand, sugar production expanded in the Philippines because of its free access to the U. S. market.

ASIAN INDUSTRIES: LIMITED POSSIBILITIES OF IMPORT SUBSTITUTION

Some scholars of Asian history have tried to prove that the Depression was a boon in disguise for Asian countries because they benefited from import substitution (the replacement of imported industrial products such as cotton textiles by indigenous production). Actually, the scope of import substitution was severely limited by the reduced buying power of the rural masses. The textile industry was the only major industry in Asia in the early twentieth century. Japan did make a major advance in the Depression years by buying cheap Indian

cotton and using the cheap labor of Japanese peasant girls to produce textiles. The devaluation of the Japanese yen by about 60 percent in 1932 gave Japanese products an enormous competitive advantage. The British in India responded to this by instituting protective tariffs and securing preferential access to the Indian market for their own products. Under these arrangements the Indian textile industry progressed somewhat in the 1930s, but the main beneficiaries were the handloom weavers who got cheap food and cheap cotton and competed with the mills, which could not cut their costs easily. Actually, the Depression remains the only period in which the real wages of labor increased in India. China experienced similar developments. The investment spree of the early 1930s encouraged industrial growth. Even the Japanese invested in Chinese mills. But all this was soon engulfed by the delayed impact of the Depression, and then by the ravages of war after the Japanese invasion of China. Other Asian countries had hardly any industry that could have profited from import substitution.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; GOLD STANDARD; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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DIETMAR ROTHERMUND

ASIAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression had important political, economic, and cultural implications for "Asian-American" communities. In the United States, the ethnic label *Asian American* encompasses groups of people with diverse geographical, cultural, and historical backgrounds, and ancestral roots in a number of different countries. The earliest Asian immigrants arrived in the United States from China, with the first massive wave coming in the mid-nineteenth century. As with other ethnic minorities, the Chinese—and later the Japanese, Filipinos, Asian Indians, Koreans, and a host of other groups—emigrated to the United States to serve primarily as a source of cheap labor. These migration patterns were related to larger global transformations initiated by industrial capitalism and Euro-American colonialism. By the beginning of the Great Depression, these groups formed the largest Asian populations in the country. According to U.S. census data and other published reports, there were close to 75,000 Chinese, 140,000 Japanese, 56,000 Filipinos, and several thousand Asian Indians and Koreans living in America in 1930, most residing on the West Coast.

Like most other Americans, Asian Americans endured hardships related to and caused by the economic fallout of the late 1920s, with its effects lasting well into the 1930s. Stories of massive unemployment, housing evictions, lost savings, starvation, and in some cases suicide, were reported throughout Asian-American communities in the United States. In her autobiography, *Quiet Odyssey: A Pioneer Korean Woman in America* (1990), Mary Paik Lee, a Korean immigrant, describes the devastating impact of the Depression on her and her family. She recalls how her family's savings, generated from over a decade of operating a fruit stand in southern California, were completely wiped out during those years, forcing the family to move from place to place in search of available land to support a minimal level of subsistence. Preexisting levels of racial hostility in most industries in California led many Asian immigrants, such as the family of Mary Paik Lee, to be disproportionately represented in



Japanese-American agricultural workers, photographed by Dorothea Lange in 1937, pack broccoli near Guadalupe, California.

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agriculture as laborers, farmers, and small entrepreneurs. Unfortunately, as the Depression dramatically reduced the demand for specialized agricultural goods (agricultural profits in California dropped by more than 50 percent from 1929 to 1932), the economic fallout of the Depression led to particularly harsh consequences for Asian Americans in the region. The economic effects of the Depression were also felt by Asian Americans on the East Coast. Chinese hand laundrymen, operating more than three thousand such businesses in New York City, saw their earnings and wages decline by about one-half during the Depression.

As the economic crisis of the early 1930s deepened, its impact, at least for Asian-American communities, was felt beyond the boundaries of America's borders. Many Asian immigrants, despite being separated by long distances and long periods between visits, maintained close ties to their families and villages in their homelands. In particular, the Chinese, as a result of international migration, developed what some historians have called "transnational communities." The combination of exclusionary immigration laws, cultural norms in China, and the prohibitive costs involved in the immigration process created an immigration population overwhelmingly male, leading some observers to

mistakenly characterize the Chinese communities in America as “bachelor societies.” Familial ties across vast physical spaces were sustained by letters, occasional visits, and scheduled remittances. These remittances went to building new homes, schools, hospitals, and orphanages for families and villages back in China. However, the Depression substantially reduced the funds that Chinese immigrants were able to send home, undoubtedly worsening conditions for their families and villages in China, which had come increasingly to rely on these remittances. In short, for Asian immigrants, the impact of the Great Depression was experienced on both sides of the Pacific.

THE IMPACT OF RACISM

For Asian Americans, the debilitating effects of the economic crisis were compounded by the historical legacy of racism. During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the American public increasingly charged Asian immigrants, beginning with the Chinese, with being “unassimilable,” “racially inferior,” and a threat to the “American” way of life. These anti-Asiatic sentiments were eventually encoded into American law. In 1882, the U.S. Congress passed the Chinese Exclusion Act, making Chinese immigration to the United States illegal. By 1924, Asians, which by law included peoples from countries stretching from Afghanistan to the South Pacific, were effectively excluded from the United States as immigrants (with the exception of Filipinos and certain exempt classes including merchants, diplomats and students), were deprived of the right to own land, and were denied the legal right to citizenship. This history of exclusion and oppression by racial and national proscription profoundly effected the way Asians Americans and their children experienced and responded to the Depression. For example, Asian Americans, along with other ethnic minorities, occupied the bottom of a racially stratified labor market, making them especially vulnerable during times of economic crisis. Community histories describing, for instance, New York City’s Chinatown, have shown that the unemployment rate among the Chinese population was considerably higher than state and national averages during the peak years of the Depression. Furthermore, racist employment practices preclud-



This Filipino-American man found work in the lettuce fields of California’s Imperial Valley in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ed many university educated Asian Americans from entering the professional and white-collar ranks. The comments of a certain college educated Nisei (the American-born children of Japanese immigrants) reflected the frustrations of a generation of educated Asian Americans: “They go to college, learn a heterogeneous body of facts relating to anything from art to architecture and end their days in a fruit stand.”

As with previous periods of economic crisis in American history, racial antipathies toward Asian Americans were expressed more frequently and with greater intensity during the Depression. In the face of an ever-diminishing labor market, white Americans throughout the West Coast systematically and violently drove out Asian-American laborers, with Filipinos being the most frequent targets. As colonial subjects, Filipinos were given the juridical status of U.S. nationals, which allowed them, unlike other Asian groups, to move freely back and forth from the Philippines to the United



Many Asian Americans earned a living as itinerant field hands during the Great Depression. This Chinese-American laborer worked in a potato field near Walla Walla, Washington, in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

States. However, Filipinos did not begin to arrive on American shores in significant numbers until the 1920s and 1930s. During this period, Filipinos experienced the same pattern of treatment as previous generations of Asian immigrants; initially, they were frequent victims of physical violence, and eventually, they were excluded through governmental legislation. During the Depression, the U.S. government offered to repatriate Filipinos with the stipulation that they forfeit the right to reentry into the United States; not surprisingly, few Filipinos took up the offer, though there were reported cases of coerced repatriation. In 1935, Filipino immigration to the United States was all but halted with the

passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act. Economic uncertainty also produced similar efforts to discriminate against Asian Americans on the East Coast. For example, in 1933, a group of businessmen in New York City, in an attempt to eliminate Chinese competition from the industry, unsuccessfully advocated for a city ordinance that would require U.S. citizenship to obtain a laundry license.

ASIAN-AMERICAN RESPONSE TO THE DEPRESSION

Asian-American communities responded to these difficult times in a variety of ways. Like many Mexican Americans, some Asian immigrants sim-

ply decided to return to their homelands; some returned with the hope of finding better prospects, and others returned as a temporary strategy, at least until the situation improved in the United States. A small number of Asian immigrants and their children relocated to Central and South America. The vast majority of Asian Americans, however, looked to ethnic institutions and organizations to survive the Depression. Long before the 1930s, mutual aid societies, welfare agencies, and business organizations provided resources and services, such as relief, job placement services, and legal counsel. Such organizations were generally located in ethnic enclaves in large cities—the most notable being in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, and Seattle—where, due in part to racism in the housing and employment markets, the highest concentration of Asian Americans resided. In addition, there were informal community networks through which families and friends could mutually assist one another in times of emergency. These institutions and networks worked to shelter Asian-American communities from the most debilitating effects of the Depression. In San Francisco's Chinatown, for example, the expanding tourist industry (which was facilitated by the repeal of prohibition laws in 1933), together with New Deal federal assistance, helped dramatically reduce Chinese unemployment in the city by the late 1930s. Growing numbers of Chinese men and women began finding jobs in newly renovated restaurants, bars, and coffee shops. Similarly, in Little Tokyo in Los Angeles, Japanese merchants and community leaders organized the "buy in Lil' Tokio" campaign, through which they hoped to revive slumping Japanese-American businesses by appealing to the community's sense of ethnic loyalty.

However, the depth of the Depression crisis severely tested the limits of ethnic institutions and networks, leaving them, in many instances, unable to adequately address the unprecedented levels of need to be found in their respective communities. As a result, Asian Americans, many for the first time, turned to the federal government for assistance. Government reports indicate that the rate at which Asian Americans participated in public assistance varied widely from city to city. For example, San Francisco's Chinatown had the highest per-

centage of Chinese receiving relief benefits, nearly approaching the national average. On the other hand, in Chicago and New York, only 2 to 5 percent of the Chinese population was on relief. In general, Asian Americans were less likely to seek relief assistance for a number of reasons. First, as frequent victims of state powers in the past, Asian Americans understandably feared government authorities. Moreover, discriminatory federal policies excluded them from certain government programs and benefits. One clear example of this was the statutory requirement that an individual must be an American citizen to be eligible for a job through the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Consequently, Asian Americans, many of whom by law were ineligible for citizenship, composed a disproportionately small percentage of people on WPA employment rolls. Based on the calculations of one historian, among the three largest Asian-American groups in California in 1940, less than 14 percent of their unemployed had jobs with the WPA as compared to more than 60 percent of unemployed black Americans. In addition to all of this, many Asian Americans were simply unaware that they were entitled to relief assistance, which also helps to explain their lower participation rates.

Despite these shortcomings, the federal government did make positive contributions to Asian-American communities during the Depression, and in doing so, may have helped to bring about a change in these groups' attitudes and perceptions of the state. In San Francisco's Chinatown, for example, New Deal legislation improved housing conditions, established public health clinics, and expanded educational and job-training programs, in addition to traditional public relief allowances. Furthermore, many of these federal programs provided professional opportunities for Asian-American women in the fields of education and social work in a time when few professional occupations were considered suitable for women.

The growing emergence of women professionals was part of a larger trend in which Asian-American women were gradually to become more visible in the workplace and in the public more generally. As a result of the Depression, many Asian-American women were forced to find employment

outside of the home, mainly in low-wage, service-oriented industries. For some, this development only created additional work—wage labor during the day and household chores in the evening. Asian-American women, like many women across the country, had to work increasingly hard to keep the family together in these trying times. Yet, for other women, some of whom became household breadwinners, the Depression presented opportunities to challenge traditional gender roles. Indeed, some Asian-American women, albeit a limited number, actively participated in public affairs such as local politics, union organizing, and community reform.

As all this suggests, Asian Americans were active participants in the unfolding drama that was the Great Depression. Certain everyday scenarios—Japanese-American families applying and receiving federal aid, Chinese-American women walking to the garment factory to begin their workday, and Filipino-American workers organizing in California's strawberry fields—reflected important social and cultural changes taking place within Asian-American communities at this time. Yet these developments, prompted by the Great Depression, were only a prelude to even larger changes and struggles that lay ahead for Asian Americans. Nevertheless, the crisis of the 1930s prepared them for a future that included World War II, wartime internment, and the postwar struggle for equality.

See Also: ASIA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; MIGRATORY WORKERS; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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ASSOCIATION AGAINST THE PROHIBITION AMENDMENT (AAPA)

The Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) was the leading political pressure group helping to secure repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Historians credit the AAPA with fostering Republican-Democratic polarization on the issue, giving repeal greater respectability, and greatly speeding up the repeal process.

Founded in 1918, the AAPA became the first anti-prohibition organization operating outside the affected industry. Its founder, William H. Stayton, was a former naval captain concerned about centralized encroachment on state and local rights. Although unable to block the Eighteenth Amendment, he kept the organization alive, had it

incorporated, and by 1926 was claiming 700,000 members. Initially, Stayton worked to secure voter pledges, but he soon began stressing quality over quantity and seeking members whose stature and resources could sway public opinion and enhance respectability. Among such recruits were John J. Raskob, James W. Wadsworth, Henry H. Curran, and Lamot, Pierre, and Irene du Pont; in 1928 these men restructured Stayton's association. Stayton became chair of a showcase board, while Curran became president, and operating power went to a small committee headed by Pierre du Pont.

Following its reorganization, AAPA influence grew, in part because Raskob became national chairman of the Democratic Party and worked to link the party with repeal. An outpouring of publicity, stressing prohibition's costs and tying repeal to economic recovery, also helped to change public opinion. In addition, cooperation with upper-class women, particularly the new Women's Organization for National Prohibition Reform, produced positive images of repeal's supporters. In 1932 the AAPA succeeded in getting repeal into the Democratic platform, and subsequently Jouett Shouse, having moved from Democratic headquarters to become president of the AAPA, worked to make repeal a central campaign issue and took encouragement from the sweeping Democratic victories. Lawyers associated with the AAPA helped to shape the Twenty-First Amendment and get it through Congress; state ratification, completed in December 1933, proceeded largely according to AAPA guidelines.

Its mission achieved, the AAPA disbanded. Its leaders, however, later became the core of the American Liberty League, dedicated to fighting New Deal centralization. This time they soon became discredited, lending support to charges that repeal had come through undemocratic manipulation by selfish plutocrats. For a time this became the standard historical interpretation, but further study of the AAPA has brought greater appreciation of its anti-centralist philosophy and its effectiveness and influence in the context of changes being wrought by the Great Depression.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE;
PROHIBITION; RASKOB, JOHN J.

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AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

The Great Depression began in Australia and New Zealand with a collapse in demand for their primary products, which caused export prices to fall 40 percent from 1929 to 1932. The loss of earnings caused a severe liquidity crisis from mid-1929 in two countries that relied heavily on foreign borrowing to finance economic development, while disequilibrium in the balance of payments forced a reduction of imports in 1930 to half their pre-Depression level. The gross domestic product, measured in constant prices, fell by nearly 10 percent between 1929 and 1932 in Australia and 20 percent in New Zealand.

Both countries had enjoyed prosperity as enterprising and progressive colonies of British settlement. The United Kingdom was the principal market for Australian wheat, wool, and agricultural products, as well as for New Zealand meat, wool, and dairy products; these rural exports accounted for over 20 percent of their nations' production. Yet both countries were highly urbanized: The majority of wage earners lived in the four principal cities of New Zealand, while Sydney and Melbourne both had more than one million inhabitants. Australia, with a population of 6.5 million in 1930 (when the New Zealand population was 1.7 million) was the more ambitious in promotion of secondary industry by tariff protection and government assistance. Both sought to guarantee living standards through national tribunals that determined minimum wage levels.

A Labor government took office in Australia at the onset of the Depression and responded to the crisis by encouraging greater production of rural exports and raising tariff levels to reduce imports. But the serious deterioration in the balance of payments caused difficulties in servicing the foreign debt, and the Bank of England sent Sir Otto Niemeyer to advise on appropriate remedies. With the support of the Australian banks, he made the federal and state governments agree to reduce expenditures, balance their budgets, and curtail borrowing. The Arbitration Court cut the minimum wage by 10 percent in January 1931, and the Australian currency was simultaneously devalued against sterling by 30 percent. The federal Labor government suffered defections and lost office at the end of 1931 to a

reconstituted United Australia Party, which maintained the retrenchments. The Labor premier of New South Wales, Jack Lang, who defied the financial arrangements, was dismissed from office in 1932.

In New Zealand, two non-Labor parties with rural and urban bases of support, the United and the Reform parties, dominated the parliament and came together in a coalition in 1931, leaving Labor in opposition. The government followed deflationary policies similar to those in Australia, though New Zealand resisted devaluation until January 1933, when a 25 percent cut in the exchange rate with sterling was made. The New Zealand Court of Arbitration imposed a 10 percent wage cut in May 1931.

Recovery began in Australia and New Zealand by 1933, assisted by the increase in the volume of exports. The Ottawa Agreement of 1932, which gave preferential trade arrangements to the British Dominions, probably assisted Australian and New Zealand producers. Their Depression was less severe than in the United States. Estimates of unemployment vary, ranging from 20 to more than 30 percent of the workforce in Australia; the New Zealand economy had a smaller proportion of employees, so its rate of unemployment was lower. There was less work rationing than in the United States and a high incidence of long-term unemployment. Relief measures in Australia were initially in the hands of local government and charities, and took the form of food handouts. From 1930 state governments levied emergency income taxes to finance sustenance payments and enlist unemployed men in public works. The New Zealand government fol-

lowed similar policies, with a strong emphasis on working for the "dole."

These measures were barely sufficient. Eviction and homelessness became common. Shanty towns sprang up on the outskirts of cities, while many unemployed resorted to an itinerant existence in the rural interiors. Protest demonstrations erupted occasionally into violent city riots in 1931 and 1932, and encouraged governments to provide public works. The requirement that married men work for the dole on such projects, often far from home, imposed strains on marriages, and younger men were especially vulnerable to the social dislocation of prolonged hardship. Marriages were deferred, and the birthrate fell to an unprecedented low. Those indigenous peoples of the two countries, the Aborigines and Maori, who were in the paid workforce were mostly rural, casual workers, and were hit hard. There were some cases of antagonism to

foreign workers, mostly southern Europeans employed in mining and agriculture, though the cessation of migration during the Depression defused such animosities. In societies that had valorized the male breadwinner, there was also criticism of the displacement of men by female workers, but the trade unions were powerless to prevent such changes in employment policy.

Several regional studies of the Depression suggest that the unequal sacrifices it imposed on different classes strained social cohesion and dented the egalitarian ethos of these new-world nations. Oral history and fictional treatments attest to the humiliations the Depression inflicted as well as the resourcefulness of its victims. The failure of the Australian Labor Party allowed the previously ineffective Communist Party to channel discontent into its Unemployed Workers Movement. Communism and the defiant radical populism of the premier of New South Wales alarmed conservatives, who formed secret armies to defend God, king, and empire. That was unnecessary in New Zealand, where the Labour Party first gained office in 1935. Its extensive program of economic management

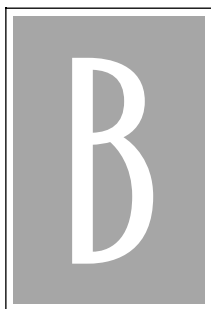
and social welfare was heavily influenced by the lessons of the Depression.

See Also: CANADA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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STUART MACINTYRE



BACK-TO-THE-LAND MOVEMENT

The back-to-the-land, or back-to-the-soil, movement of the 1930s was a collection of relief and reform projects that sought agrarian solutions to the decade's social and economic crises. A single basic goal united the various groups and schemes associated with the movement: to open the nation's unused lands to a new class of small producers. But this common theme found expression through initiatives ranging greatly in practical scope and intellectual sophistication.

In the broadest sense, movement back to the land in the United States began soon after the stock market crash of 1929, when the country saw a temporary but significant reversal of decades of urbanward migration as city jobs dried up and millions sought what seemed simpler, cheaper living on old family farms or bits of unused, marginal land. The popular press fueled this widespread but largely unorganized upwelling of interest in subsistence gardening and small farming through a drumbeat of articles from such leading figures as longtime physical culture advocate Bernarr Macfadden.

A more organized movement took shape as a variety of public and private initiatives to resettle and retrain families for small production on both individual and collective small farms. A number of

such programs were mainly ad hoc efforts by states and municipalities to reduce relief rolls, reprising similar efforts during previous depressions to use open lands as a safety valve for urban overcrowding and unemployment. But some leaders envisioned more concerted, long-term land use planning, often seeking to combine industrial decentralization with workers' gardens in small new towns. Franklin Roosevelt proposed such a plan as governor of New York, as had industrialist Henry Ford in his 1926 book *Today and Tomorrow*.

Indeed, much of 1930s back-to-the-land activity predated the Depression, though the crisis lent it new impetus. Sectarian groups like the American Friends Service Committee, the rural life sections of the Catholic church and various Protestant churches, and the Jewish Agricultural Society brought an emphasis on economic and social cooperatives to their own long-standing efforts at communal rural rehabilitation. Newly mobilized county agricultural and domestic agents revived a program for rural improvements codified in 1908 by Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission. But all of the foregoing strands of the movement had their culminating expression in a series of resettlement colonies built by the New Deal's Division of Subsistence Homesteads beginning in late 1933, which joined plans for regional and cultural rehabilitation to a

new rural-urban synthesis of part-time farming and factory work in localized, cooperative settings.

Beyond rural resettlement and rehabilitation projects, the movement offered intellectual updates to the tradition of Jeffersonian agrarianism. The movement's unifying ideological positions included ambitious calls for a general redistribution of property and a return to localized production and government. These common themes found their most forceful expression through the Southern Agrarians, a group of intellectuals at Vanderbilt University in Nashville who argued for a return to the institutions and traditions of the landed Old South in their volume *I'll Take My Stand* (1930), and Ralph Borsodi, who had begun in the early 1920s to preach and practice household production as an alternative to unhealthy, wasteful mass consumerism.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; SOUTHERN AGRARIANS.

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STUART KEITH PATTERSON

BAKKE, E. WIGHT

Edward Wight Bakke (November 18, 1903–November 22, 1971) was a sociologist and professor of economics at Yale University. Bakke is best known for his investigations of long-term unemployment in the Great Depression, published in the two-volume 1940 study *The Unemployed Worker and Citizens without Work*. He played an important role in shaping the fields of industrial relations, human resource management, and labor economics as they were emerging in the 1930s through the post World War II decades. As director of Yale's Labor and Management Center, Bakke strove to bring an em-

pirically grounded, "real world" perspective to union-management relations and labor market policy. Bakke held key advisory positions on the New Deal Social Security Board, the National War Labor Board, and in the Department of Labor, among other government appointments. Amidst this distinguished record, Bakke's study of Depression-era unemployment remains his most influential and far-reaching work.

Conducted while he was director of Unemployment Studies at Yale's interdisciplinary Institute for Human Relations, Bakke's eight-year study explored the social psychological, cultural, and economic impact of joblessness on unemployed men in New Haven, Connecticut. The study combined methods of survey research, case study, ethnographic observation, and personal interview, through which Bakke tracked how workers who fully embraced broader cultural values of work and self-reliance coped with "the task of making a living without a job." While capturing their frustration, loss of dignity, fear, and, eventually, despair as the Depression lingered on, Bakke also emphasized the resourcefulness with which workers and their families made "adjustments" to long-term joblessness. Especially striking to contemporary readers was the degree to which traditionally male providers would exhaust every possible alternative—turning to savings, credit, cutting back on necessities, and finally to the earnings of their wives and children—before accepting public assistance, or "the dole." While frequently invoked to shatter the stereotyped imagery of the unemployed "welfare chiseller," for Bakke this pattern was also a sign of something more troubling: the unemployed worker's tendency to blame himself for a situation over which he had little control.

In its time and for future generations, Bakke's study stood as a powerful statement of the importance of stable, adequately-paying work opportunities for individual well-being, as well as broader social well-being. For Bakke himself, it was also a statement of the need for a strong and lasting public sector commitment to making those opportunities available and protecting workers' rights to achieve them.

See Also: SOCIAL SCIENCE; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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ALICE O'CONNOR

"BALLAD OF PRETTY BOY FLOYD"

Dust Bowl balladeer Woody Guthrie wrote the "Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd" in March of 1939. Guthrie, best known for singing and composing songs about the plight of people dislocated from their homes by poverty and the Dust Bowl, wrote a series of ballads about outlaws, celebrating them as populist heroes, poor people who preyed on the rich. He composed songs about the Dalton gang, the brazen female outlaw Belle Starr, and most famously, Charles Arthur Floyd, a bank robber and killer known as Pretty Boy Floyd.

Born in Bartow County, Georgia, in 1904, Floyd began his life of crime in the 1920s as a bootlegger and petty gambler, but his criminal activities had escalated to armed robbery and murder by the 1930s. During the Great Depression, poor individuals frequently lost their homes and property to banks, and criminals like Pretty Boy Floyd, who robbed the banks that foreclosed on their homes and farms, became popular figures of the era. Even before Guthrie immortalized Floyd in song, he was already known as "the Sagebush Robin Hood."

When Guthrie first composed the "Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd," the song was intended to mock the government, banks, and wealthy people. Guthrie's Pretty Boy was transformed into a heroic figure, a victim of circumstance who killed a deputy sheriff in a fair fight, and then had to seek refuge in the backwoods and live as an outcast because "every crime in Oklahoma was added to his name." Although the police considered Pretty Boy Floyd to be a criminal, he was a hero to the poor farmers,

who gave him food and shelter and, in return for their hospitality, often discovered, according to the song, that their mortgage had been paid off or a thousand-dollar bill had been left on the dinner table.

Guthrie's song describes a hero who, like an American Robin Hood, sent a truckload of groceries to provide Christmas dinner for all the families on relief in Oklahoma City. The last lines of the song made Guthrie's message clear: "And as through your life you travel/Yes, as through your life you roam/You won't never see an outlaw/Drive a family from their home." Songs such as the "Ballad of Pretty Boy Floyd" helped victims of the Great Depression vocalize their anger against banks, while reinforcing growing class tensions. In a time of abject poverty, this song offered hope, as well as a cathartic release of indignation.

See Also: GUTHRIE, WOODY; HEROES.

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MARY L. NASH

BANKHEAD-JONES FARM TENANT ACT OF 1937

The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act was passed by Congress on July 22, 1937. It authorized a modest credit program to assist tenant farmers to purchase land, and it was the culmination of a long effort to secure legislation for their benefit. The law was one part of the New Deal's program to address the massive problems of rural poverty and landlessness, but its impact proved to be so limited that its importance was mainly symbolic.

Federal financing of farm purchases by tenants was first considered in Congress as the Bankhead bill of 1935. That measure proposed a billion-dollar bond issue to enable the government to purchase

land, evaluate its suitability for cultivation, and resell it on easy terms to tenants and sharecroppers whose loans would be secured by mortgages and supervision of their farming. Although promotion of small farm ownership was hardly a radical concept, the bill received strong conservative opposition. The Senate passed it in June 1935, but it died in the House of Representatives.

By 1936 farm purchase lending was an administration objective, advocated by the Resettlement Administration (RA) and supported by the president. But the Bankhead-Jones Act of 1937 was far short of what the RA desired. Instead of a large bond issue, it appropriated a token \$10 million for loans for fiscal 1938, rising to a maximum of \$50 million per year by fiscal 1940. Provision for government purchase and resale of land, regarded as crucial by the RA, was eliminated; instead, all loans and farms being financed required approval by committees of local farmers. No farms could be financed unless they were deemed viable family units by local standards. Credit preference went to an upper stratum of tenants who owned implements and who could make down payments. Although not satisfied with such limited legislation, RA leaders considered it the best that could be obtained at the time. The new lending program was assigned to the RA, which was renamed the Farm Security Administration (FSA).

The Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act was passed near the end of the New Deal, as conservative opposition increased in Congress. Beginning in 1941, Congress tied loans to average farm values in each county, a restriction that shut down the program in hundreds of poor counties. From 1938 until Congress terminated the FSA in 1946, the agency made only 44,300 purchase loans. Moreover, analyzing the program in 1949, economist Edward Banfield concluded that many of the farms financed by the FSA had proved to be inadequate units as requirements for successful farming rapidly increased.

See Also: FARM POLICY; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA).

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PAUL E. MERTZ

BANKING ACT OF 1933. *See*

GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933.

BANKING PANICS (1930-1933)

More than nine thousand banks failed in the United States between 1930 and 1933, equal to some 30 percent of the total number of banks in existence at the end of 1929. This statistic clearly represents the highest concentration of bank suspensions in the nation's history. The data reveal at least four separate intervals when there was a marked acceleration and deceleration in the number of bank failures: November 1930 to January 1931, April to August 1931, September and October 1931, and February and March 1933. Milton Friedman and Anna Schwartz designated these four episodes as banking panics, only one of which had causal macroeconomic significance. If the 3,400 banks that were not licensed by the Secretary of the Treasury to reopen in March 1933 are excluded, only two out of five bank suspensions occurred during banking panics. It is well to bear in mind that 60 percent of bank closings between 1930 and 1932 were not panic induced and that the problem of understanding why so many banks failed during the Great Depression goes beyond simply explaining what happened during banking panics. For example, one of the causes of the nonpanic-induced failures during the

Great Depression may have been related in part to the over expansion of small, rural banks in the twenties as well as to the distressed state of American agriculture following World War I. These factors may have operated during banking panics as well but would have by no means been confined to panic episodes.

Unlike previous banking panics of the national banking era, the banking panics of the Great Depression occurred during the same cyclical contraction from 1929 to 1933, each compounding the effects generated in the previous panic.

DEFINITION AND CHARACTERISTICS OF BANKING PANICS

A banking panic may be defined as a class of financial shocks whose origin can be found in any sudden and unanticipated revision of expectations of deposit loss and during which there is an attempt, usually unsuccessful, to convert checkable deposits into currency. There are two principal characteristics of banking panics: an increased number of bank runs and bank suspensions and currency hoarding as measured by the amount of Federal Reserve notes in circulation seasonally adjusted. Table 1 shows the number of bank suspensions, amount of hoarding, and panic severity in each of the panics of the Great Depression, 1933 excepted. Panic severity is measured by the number of bank suspensions in each panic divided by the total number of banks in existence.

BANKING PANIC OF 1930

During the banking panic of 1930, over eight hundred banks closed their doors between November 1930 and January 1931, and Federal Reserve notes in circulation seasonally adjusted increased by \$164 million, or 12 percent (see table). The largest number of bank closings was concentrated in the St. Louis Federal Reserve District with approximately two suspensions out of every five banks. These closings were related to the failure of the largest regional investment banking house in the South, Caldwell and Co. of Nashville, Tennessee. The firm controlled the largest chain of banks in the South with assets in excess of \$200 million and also the largest insurance group in the region with as-

Table 1
Number of Bank Suspensions, Domestic Hoarding, and Panic Severity

(in Millions of Dollars)

Panic Dates	Suspensions	Domestic Hoarding	Panic Severity
Nov. 1930-Jan. 1931	806	164	3.4
April -Aug. 1931	573	348	2.95
Sept.-Oct 1931	827	270	4.27
Feb.-Mar. 1933	Bank Holidays	1502	

sets of \$240 million. The failure of Caldwell and Co. had immediate repercussions in four states: Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, and North Carolina. The collapse of Caldwell's financial empire raised expectations of deposit loss throughout the surrounding region. The 1930 panic was region specific, inasmuch as at least one-half of the twelve Federal Reserve Districts had fewer than 10 percent of bank suspensions. Four Districts accounted for 80 percent of total bank suspensions and slightly over one-half of the deposits of suspended banks. The consensus view in the early twenty-first century was that the 1930 banking crisis was a region specific crisis without perceptible national economic effects.

THE TWO BANKING PANICS OF 1931

No more than two months elapsed between the end of the first banking crisis in January 1931 and the onset of the second in April. The number of bank suspensions was lower (573), but the amount of hoarding doubled. One-third of the bank suspensions were in the Chicago Federal Reserve District; there was a mini panic in Chicago in June and a full scale panic in Toledo, Ohio, in August. The Cleveland Federal Reserve District had two-thirds of the deposits of suspended banks. Nevertheless, in six Districts there was little or no change in currency hoarding.

The onset of the third banking panic coincided with Britain's departure from the gold standard in September 1931. Bank failures, deposits of failed banks, and hoarding rapidly accelerated after the



Police stand guard outside the entrance to the closed World Exchange Bank in New York in March 1931. HERBERT HOOVER LIBRARY

British announcement. The immediate response of the Federal Reserve was to raise the discount rate in October 1931; this action was followed by an increase in interest rates. The harmful effects of the increase may have been exaggerated since increased bank suspensions and hoarding had preceded the increase. Mini panics in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Chicago with their reverberating effects occurred between September 21 and October 9, before the discount rate was increased. Sixty percent of the increase in hoarding occurred before the rate increase. The discount rate increase played no causal role in precipitating the panic. Nor did the Fed's failure to offset the decline in the money stock represent ineptitude. Knowledge of the role of the

currency-deposit ratio as a determinant of the money stock was simply unavailable. In sum, 60 percent of the 2,291 bank closings in 1931 occurred during the two separate banking panics.

THE BANKING PANIC OF 1933

The 1933 panic was idiosyncratic. In no other financial panic was there such a widespread use of the legal device of the "bank holiday," whereby a state official, usually the governor, closed all of the banks for a short time. In March 1933 one of the first acts of Franklin Roosevelt, the incoming president, was to announce a nationwide banking holiday, an event without precedent in U.S. history. Prior to Roosevelt's action many states had de-



Worried depositors gather outside the Bank of the United States in New York after its failure in 1931. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

clared their own bank holidays. Such action was the mechanism through which depositor confidence was further eroded and was spread to contiguous states. Officials in the individual states panicked. Uncoordinated state initiatives led to a nationwide banking debacle. The use of statewide moratoria was not new. Five states had declared banking holidays during the 1907 panic. What was new was its use by the president.

The timing of the national banking holiday was dictated by two considerations simultaneously. First, a banking system had virtually collapsed without any prospects for recovery in the absence of national leadership. The outgoing president,

Herbert Hoover, and the Federal Reserve had abdicated their responsibility for what was happening. Second, an external drain of gold allegedly threatened gold convertibility of the dollar.

CAUSES OF BANKING PANICS

The importance of banking panics for understanding the Great Depression resides in determining their causal significance. Did bank failures cause the decline in income and interest rates or did the decline in income and interest rates cause bank failures? To have exerted a causal role, panic-induced bank suspensions would have had to be independent of interest rate and income changes. Friedman



Like many banks around the country that closed during the Great Depression, this small bank in Haverhill, Iowa, remained deserted when it was photographed by Arthur Rothstein in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

and Schwartz assigned a causal role to bank suspensions in order to explain why the money stock fell; an autonomous increase in the currency-deposit ratio, a money stock determinant, provoked a rash of bank suspensions that caused the money stock to contract, income to decline, and the conversion of a mild recession into a major depression. James Boughton and Elmus Wicker, in 1979 and 1984, showed that interest rates and income were, in fact, important determinants of the money stock. Their finding that the currency-deposit ratio was sensitive to interest rate and income changes is consistent with Peter Temin's view that causation went from income and interest rates to the money

stock and not vice versa. As of the early twenty-first century, a consensus was slowly emerging that panic-induced bank suspensions were not causally significant.

Why, people may ask, were there any banking panics at all? Had not the Federal Reserve been established to eliminate banking panics? Yet the worst banking panics in U.S. history occurred thereafter. How was that possible? Did the fault lie in imperfect legislation creating the Fed or was Fed leadership culpable? Friedman and Schwartz attributed panics to inept Fed leadership. But they rejected a compelling alternative explanation that

deserves serious reconsideration. Structural weaknesses in the original Federal Reserve Act can explain equally well, if not better, why the Fed failed to prevent the panics of the Great Depression. There were at least three important structural weaknesses in the original Federal Reserve Act: 1) membership was not compulsory for state bank and trust companies, 2) paper eligible for discount by member banks was too narrowly defined and restricted access to the Fed, and 3) power was so decentralized between the twelve Federal Reserve Banks and the Board in Washington that leadership was weak and ineffective. These combined structural weaknesses contributed to the Fed's poor performance.

EMERGENCY BANKING ACT OF 1933

The Emergency Banking Act of March 9, 1933, granted the government the necessary powers to reopen the banks and to resolve the immediate banking crisis. Only one-half of the nation's banks with 90 percent of the total U.S. banking resources were judged capable of doing business on March 15; these banks were presumably safe, meaning that they were solvent. The other half remained unlicensed. Forty-five percent of those were placed under the direction of "conservators" whose function it was to reorganize the banks for the purpose of eventually returning to solvency. The remaining 5 percent (about 1,000) would be closed permanently. The reopening of the banks on March 13 witnessed a return flow of currency into the banks for first time since the banking panic of 1930. By April 12, some 12,817 banks had been licensed to open with \$31 billion of deposits.

See Also: FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933; MONETARY POLICY.

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ELMUS WICKER

BARUCH, BERNARD

Bernard Mannes Baruch (August 19, 1870-June 20, 1965) was a Wall Street financier and adviser to numerous presidents. He was born in 1870 in Camden, South Carolina, but moved to New York in 1881. After graduating from the City College of New York, he began working on Wall Street as an office boy. By 1900 Baruch had become a millionaire through speculation and stock trading.

Baruch financially supported Woodrow Wilson's presidential campaign in 1912. During World War I, Baruch's developing relationship with Wilson led to his becoming a member and, in 1918, chairman of the War Industries Board (WIB), the principal government agency involved in the war-time economic mobilization effort. Adept at self promotion, Baruch gained a lasting reputation as an effective public servant, though historians have raised questions about the WIB's performance. Baruch advised Wilson on economic matters at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919.

During the twenties, Baruch contributed heavily to Democratic congressional candidates, gaining significant influence with such party leaders as Senator Joseph Robinson. In response to the Great Depression, Baruch quickly called for the establishment of a government agency modeled on the WIB to spearhead recovery efforts. He initially opposed Franklin Roosevelt for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1932, but when Roosevelt initiated the New Deal, two men closely associated with Baruch, Hugh Johnson and George Peek, were appointed to head the National Recovery Administration and Agricultural Adjustment Administration, respectively. Both men had worked on the WIB and had business ties to Baruch during the 1920s, but Baruch had little to do with either man's appointment and did not approve many of their actions in

office. Although Baruch's position in the Democratic Party made him too important for Roosevelt to ignore, the two men never had a close relationship and Baruch's influence over the New Deal was often exaggerated in press accounts.

After 1938, Baruch hoped to play a central role in the nation's mobilization for war. He had influence in the War Department and in the various mobilization agencies that were established, but the only official position he held during World War II was as head of a 1942 committee to make recommendations for dealing with a critical rubber shortage. Following the war, President Harry Truman entrusted Baruch with developing a plan to present to the United Nations for controlling all forms of atomic energy. Failure to reach agreement with the Soviet Union over the Baruch Plan contributed to the emergence of the Cold War. Baruch retained the status of elder statesman until his death in 1965, but his influence in Washington was minimal during the last fifteen years of his life.

See Also: BUSINESSMEN; JOHNSON, HUGH; NEW DEAL.

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LARRY G. GERBER

BASIE, "COUNT." See BIG BAND MUSIC.

BAUER, CATHERINE

Author of the acclaimed *Modern Housing* (1934), a renowned "Houser" and urban planner, during the mid-1930s Catherine Bauer (May 11, 1905–

November 22, 1964) served as the activist executive secretary of the Labor Housing Conference. She was the driving force behind passage of the 1937 Wagner-Steagall Housing Act, which established public housing in America.

Born in 1905 in Elizabeth, New Jersey, Bauer traveled extensively in Europe after graduating from Vassar in 1926, writing articles for *Vogue*, *Ladies Home Journal*, and the *New York Times*. Her fascination with Europe's modern housing drew her abroad again in 1930 and 1932, the second time with author-intellectual Lewis Mumford (then her lover), whom she met while working at the publishing company Harcourt-Brace and who enlisted her in the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA). Bauer's 1934 book *Modern Housing* extolled Europe's experiment with government-aided shelter, much of which, like Romerstadt in Frankfurt, Germany, and Vienna's Karl Marx Hoff, featured the streamlined, functionalist Bauhaus architecture of the period. The United States, exhorted Bauer, must, like Europe, make housing a right and a "public utility."

Mass evictions and mortgage foreclosures during the early Great Depression vindicated Bauer's fears about the inadequacy of American housing. Although President Herbert Hoover's 1931 Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) and President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1933 Public Works Administration (PWA) Housing Division both included monies for low-income housing, Bauer believed that impetus for a real modern housing program must come from workers themselves. Her model became Philadelphia's 184-unit Carl Mackley Homes, a hosiery-worker-sponsored RFC project completed in 1935 by the PWA. With Bauhaus design, it epitomized her ideal of "modern housing," although few hosiery workers could afford the rents.

In 1934 Bauer took the executive secretary post of the Labor Housing Conference and toured the United States promoting a permanent, state-aided low-cost housing program modeled on Mackley. But Bauer's plan, embodied in the 1935 Robert Wagner-Henry Ellenbogen bill, failed. The public housing legislation that emerged—and Bauer supported—lacked the working-class stamp of the

1935 bill. Introduced by Wagner but cosponsored instead by Alabama's hard-line conservative congressman Henry Steagall, it emphasized slum clearance for the very poor, not the working class. Bauer campaigned vigorously for Wagner-Steagall, and it was passed in 1937. The projects built by the new United States Housing Authority (USHA) evinced much of "modern housing," but stripped of frills, they bore a stark, institutional appearance. Bauer briefly (1938–1939) administered the USHA's Division of Research and Information, which as a New Deal insider she had founded to be the research and public relations arm of the new federal housing agency.

After World War II she married the architect William Wurster and took a professorship at the University of California at Berkeley. She became active in regional planning and an incisive critic of 1950s public housing policy. Bauer died in 1964 while hiking the rugged hills near her home north of San Francisco.

See Also: HOUSING; MUMFORD, LEWIS; REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (RPAA); UNITED STATES HOUSING AUTHORITY (USHA).

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JOHN F. BAUMAN

BENNY, JACK. *See* HUMOR; RADIO.

BENTON, THOMAS HART. *See* AMERICAN SCENE, THE.

BERKELEY, BUSBY

Busby Berkeley (November 29, 1895–March 14, 1976), innovative stage and film choreographer and

director, was born William Berkeley Enos in Los Angeles into a theatrical family (his father was a director; his mother an actress). After graduating in 1914 from Mohegan Lake Military Academy, Berkeley worked at various jobs, and during World War I he became an "entertainment officer" with the U.S. military in France. During the 1920s he became a successful, well-known stage dance director, working on over twenty musicals.

In 1930 Berkeley went to Hollywood at the behest of independent film producer Sam Goldwyn for whom he successfully choreographed various musicals. He also worked for other producers. Between 1933 and 1939 Berkeley was employed by Warner Brothers, primarily as a dance director whose efforts were strikingly innovative and exciting, and in the main deservedly well received. He also directed various features, some of them not musicals, such as the melodrama *They Made Me a Criminal* (1938), for which he garnered a mixed reception.

Berkeley, especially in his Warner's musicals, which benefited much from the studio's technical excellence, produced an exciting, intriguing blend of sophistication, precision, and vulgarity. For film critic David Thomson, Berkeley's dance sequences in films such as *Footlight Parade* (1933), *Dames* (1934), and *Gold Diggers in Paris* (1938) demonstrated that he was "a lyricist of eroticism." Bevy of beautiful, scantily clad girls performing in military precision in lavish settings resulted in beguiling almost shameless images. His work must be seen to be appreciated. Berkeley developed exciting new techniques of filming in order to achieve the effects that he wanted: his cameras operated directly above the action. What became known as "the Berkeley top shot" allowed daring angled shots and stunning rhythmic patterns. His films understandably appealed to weary Depression-era audiences. He was also capable of injecting social realism into his dance fantasies as in the biting "Forgotten Men" sequence in *Gold Diggers of 1933*.

Berkeley moved to MGM in 1939, his initial stay there ending in 1943 with the camp classic *The Gang's All Here*. Subsequently he picked up occasional feature film directing jobs, the last being MGM's *Take Me Out to the Ball Game* (1949), and

continued to stage musical numbers until the mid-1950s. His last significant contributions were spectacular water ballets in two MGM films of Esther Williams, the swimmer/actress. He died in Palm Springs, California, in 1976.

See Also: GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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DANIEL J. LEAB

BERLE, ADOLF A., JR.

Adolf Augustus Berle, Jr., (January 29, 1895–February 17, 1971) was a member of the “Brains Trust” that advised Franklin D. Roosevelt from March 1932 until his inauguration. Berle was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1895. His father was a clergyman and an educational reformer. Berle was a child prodigy, entering Harvard University at the age of fourteen and graduating at eighteen. A corporation lawyer and foreign policy specialist, Berle served in the Dominican Republic and in the Russian section in Paris during his army service in 1918 and 1919. While pursuing a career in law during the 1920s, he developed an interest in social reform. He had connections with Lillian D. Wald’s Henry Street Settlement in New York City and John Collier’s American Indian Defense Association. In 1927 Berle became a professor of law at Columbia University in New York.

In 1932, Berle and the economist Gardiner C. Means published *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. The book had a major impact on contemporary thinking about the structure and philosophy of American capitalism. Not only did Berle and Means reveal the separation between ownership and control of America’s largest firms, but they documented the power and influence of large cor-

porations in the modern economy. The book challenged the assumption that competitive principles underlie economic activity and emphasized the power that corporate executives had gained as a result of the diffusion of stock ownership. Berle associated scale with stability and public service, but he looked to corporate executives to develop a greater sense of social responsibility, and to the state to exercise economic management.

In 1932, when he joined the Brains Trust at the suggestion of Raymond Moley, Berle was committed to vigorous federal intervention to initiate national planning and, in particular, he favored the revision of antitrust law, the coordination and rationalization of transportation, and an expansion of credit. He supported Roosevelt’s campaign by writing position papers, speeches, and articles. His most notable contribution was Roosevelt’s September 1932 Commonwealth Club address in San Francisco, which was based on a draft written by Berle. Unlike other Roosevelt advisors, Berle did not seek a permanent appointment after Roosevelt’s election, but served as general counsel of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and advised the president on an ad hoc basis. In 1933, New York mayor Fiorello La Guardia appointed Berle to the post of city chamberlain. In 1938, Berle became assistant secretary of state, a post that he held until 1944. In this capacity Berle supported hemispheric defense and economic development and attended the Pan-American conferences of the 1930s. Berle served as U.S. ambassador to Brazil in 1945 and 1946. He also vigorously pursued American interests in the development of postwar aviation agreements, and he chaired the International Conference on Civil Aviation in Chicago in 1944.

Despite his support for Roosevelt, Berle remained politically independent. In 1947, he became chair of New York City’s Liberal Party, which he had helped establish, and, beginning in 1951, he chaired the Board of Trustees of the Twentieth Century Fund. Berle was a strident critic of British imperialism and Soviet expansionism, a view he expressed through his membership in the National Committee for a Free Europe during the 1950s and, later, through his support of America’s involvement in Vietnam. In 1961, President John F. Kennedy ap-

pointed Berle chair of an interdepartmental task force on Latin America, which became associated with the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba.

See Also: BRAIN(S) TRUST; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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STUART KIDD

BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD

Born to former slaves on a rice and cotton farm near Mayesville, South Carolina, Mary Jane McLeod (July 10, 1875–May 18, 1955) was the fifteenth of seventeen children. Instilled with the belief that God did not discriminate and that she could "achieve whatever was worth achieving," she progressed through various Christian schools and, choosing to be a missionary, enrolled in Dwight Moody's Institute for Home and Foreign Missions, graduating in 1895.

When her application for a missionary post was rejected, McLeod returned to the South to teach. In Sumter, South Carolina, in 1898, she met and married Albertus Bethune, and bore a son, Albert, in 1899. Five years later, with "a dollar and a half, and faith in God," she started the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls in Florida. Stressing vocational education, the school grew gradually, and in 1923 Bethune agreed to merge her 315 students and twenty-five faculty and staff members with Cookman Institute, a Methodist school for African-American boys, creating the Bethune-Cookman College.



Mary McLeod Bethune, photographed by Gordon Parks in her office at Bethune-Cookman College in 1943. LIBRARY OF

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COLLECTION

Bethune gained national acclaim as an educator, and served on presidential commissions for Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. She also served two terms as president of the National Association of Colored Women (1924–1928), and, in 1935, founded and became president of the National Council of Negro Women—a broad coalition of organizations that she headed until 1949. Dedicated to developing female black leaders and to the integration of African Americans in all walks of life, the National Council of Negro Women campaigned against lynching and the poll tax, pushed for the inclusion of African-American history in public school curriculums, and protested racial discrimination in the armed forces and defense industry during World War II. Bethune made a special effort

to get African-American officers into the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

A personal friend of Eleanor Roosevelt, who supported her reform agenda, Bethune was appointed to the National Advisory Committee of the newly formed National Youth Administration (NYA) in 1935. The following year she became administrative assistant in charge of Negro affairs of the NYA, and in 1939 the director of the NYA's Division of Negro Affairs. As such, she was the first African-American woman to head a federal agency. Her goal was to gain African Americans equal participation, and equal pay, in NYA programs. Only partially successful, Bethune did get the NYA to eventually enroll black youths in numbers approximating their proportion of the national population, but not in proportion to their need for assistance.

At the same time, Bethune helped organize the Federal Council on Negro Affairs, an informal group of African-American federal officials popularly known as the Black Cabinet. It sought to secure increased benefits for African Americans from the federal government, as well as to increase the number of blacks serving in New Deal agencies. While she publicly acknowledged the benefits that the New Deal brought to blacks, Bethune often met privately with President Franklin Roosevelt to criticize the administration for not doing enough to aid African Americans.

After World War II, President Harry Truman appointed Bethune as a consultant to the U.S. delegation to the United Nations, and as his personal representative at the presidential inauguration of William Tubman in Liberia in 1952. Bethune died of a heart attack at her home in Daytona Beach, Florida, in 1955. The recipient of many awards and tributes, including a dozen honorary degrees and the Spingarn Medal of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Bethune became the first woman and the first African American to be honored with a statue in a public park in Washington, D.C.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BLACK CABINET; NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA).

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HARVARD SITKOFF

BIDDLE, FRANCIS

Francis Biddle (May 9, 1886–October 4, 1968) was a leading New Deal lawyer and labor reform proponent who served during the 1940s as attorney general under Franklin Roosevelt. Biddle was descended from the prominent Randolph family, with roots in seventeenth-century Virginia. He was educated at Groton School and Harvard University in Massachusetts. Like Roosevelt, Biddle was the model of a distinctive New Deal type: the son of privilege turned social reformer. Biddle's transformation was especially sharp. As a prominent Philadelphia attorney in the 1910s and 1920s, he was a registered Republican and counsel to various corporate clients. But the onset of the Depression led to his disillusionment with his earlier political commitments. Biddle was particularly frustrated with President Herbert Hoover's failure to support the cause of workers' rights, an issue to which Biddle would become increasingly committed in the coming years.

Biddle's support for Roosevelt and labor advocacy led to his 1934 appointment as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Working with tools ill-suited to the task, Biddle nonetheless did an admirable job of employing the limited powers of the NLRB to establish critical federal labor law precedents. Although his tenure on the committee was brief (he served for less than a year), Biddle was a consistent and forceful defender of the important role served by the Board. His testimony before Congress influenced the shaping of the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, which included a strengthened NLRB.

After leaving the NLRB, Biddle returned to private practice in Philadelphia, but by 1938 he was back in Washington, serving as chief counsel in congressional hearings investigating accusations of mismanagement of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). The hearings cleared the TVA of wrongdoing, an accomplishment Biddle would later recall as one of his most satisfying of the New Deal era. Biddle went on to serve on the Federal Reserve Bank for a brief period before being appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, based in Philadelphia. But almost as soon as he settled into his new job, he was again moving back to Washington, this time to serve as the nation's solicitor general. In 1941 he became U.S. attorney general, a job he held until 1945. As attorney general, Biddle continued to support New Deal reform, although he is most remembered for his role in coordinating the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Following his service in the Department of Justice, Biddle went on to serve on the international war crimes tribunal at Nuremberg and to author numerous books.

See Also: NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB); TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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CHRISTOPHER W. SCHMIDT

BIG BAND MUSIC

The 1920s may have been the "Jazz Age," but the 1930s was the era of "The Big Band." Big band jazz provided the soundtrack for a generation coming of age in hard times. And from the big bands came swing, a phenomenon that briefly made jazz the most popular music in America and the first to truly define a mass youth culture.

Already popular by the late 1920s, big bands usually included at least ten musicians and empha-

sized written arrangements with consistent melodies over spontaneous soloing and improvisation, although band leaders like Duke Ellington, the most innovative composer-arranger of his time, often constructed such arrangements around the strengths of soloists. While the stock market crash of 1929 precipitated a drastic fall in record sales and rising unemployment among musicians, the Depression actually proved to be a catalyst for big band music. An excess of musicians looking for work brought down wages and made it easier for leaders to hire bands of a dozen or more. Increasingly accessible radio broadcasts from venues like the Cotton Club in Harlem helped to popularize the big band sound and made stars of bandleaders like Ellington, Louis Armstrong, and Cab Calloway. Thousands of musicians spent the decade traveling by any means available to dance halls and clubs in virtually every city, town, and county in the nation.

Jazz musicians used the term *swing* as early as the 1920s, and in 1932 Ellington's band had a hit with "It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing." But the birth of the popular swing era came on the night of August 21, 1935, when teenage fans at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles burst into dancing excitement during the performance of the band led by twenty-six-year-old clarinetist Benny Goodman. While the definition of swing itself remained elusive, performers and fans could recognize it when they heard it in the rhythm and when it moved them to the dance floor. From the loose jam-session-inspired performances of Count Basie's band in Kansas City to the polished pop sound of Glenn Miller's globetrotting orchestra, swing became the most popular music in America during the later Depression and World War II years.

Swing appealed to both genders and across class lines. It transcended racial divisions, but failed to bridge them. The music introduced millions of young whites to African-American music and led them to appropriate the slang, or "jive talk," of black musicians. But segregation remained the rule in both the bands and the dance halls, although exceptions did occur, such as Goodman's hiring of the black vibraphonist Lionel Hampton and Billie Holiday's singing performances with the white Artie Shaw band. White bandleaders and musicians gen-

erally enjoyed better working conditions and greater public acclaim than their black peers, who often found themselves playing to all-white audiences. And despite the deep roots of jazz in African-American culture, the public and press still crowned a white man, Benny Goodman, “the King of Swing.”

See Also: ELLINGTON, DUKE; GOODMAN, BENNY; HOLIDAY, BILLIE; JAZZ; MUSIC.

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BRADFORD W. WRIGHT

BILBO, THEODORE

Theodore G. Bilbo (October 13, 1877–August 21, 1947), a major figure in twentieth-century Mississippi politics, was an ardent and notorious advocate of both white supremacy and white economic democracy. A native of south Mississippi’s Piney Woods, he rose to political prominence as the champion of the state’s poor farmers and laborers. With white supremacy a settled issue, Bilbo considered racial politics a sham that obscured the real struggle for power between his poor white constituency and the planter-business elite who had ruled the state since the overthrow of Reconstruction. Consciously subordinating race to economics, he sought to recast Mississippi politics as a battle between “the classes and the masses.”

The youngest of ten children in a farm family of modest means, Bilbo graduated from Poplarville High School in Pearl River County, not far from New Orleans. He attended Peabody College and Vanderbilt University Law School, but earned a degree from neither. After several years of teaching

school, he made a successful bid for the state legislature in 1907, beginning a spectacular political rise that carried him to the lieutenant governorship (1912–1916) and two terms as chief executive (1916–1920, 1928–1932).

The dramatic difference between his two gubernatorial administrations underscores the impact of the Depression on Mississippi and its politics. Bilbo’s first term was, as even his most severe critics conceded, a resounding success, the culmination of two decades of rising agrarian progressivism. His second administration was a disaster. Thwarted by a hostile legislature, he achieved none of his progressive goals and bequeathed to his successor an empty treasury and a devastated economy.

Local impotence in the face of economic disaster converted many Mississippians into advocates of what they had long considered anathema—federal intervention. Bilbo led the way, embracing a doctrine of New Deal liberalism that strained the sensibilities of some other southern progressives. Elected to the United States Senate in 1934, he became arguably the most dependable New Dealer among southern Democrats. He eagerly followed the president’s lead, not only on agriculture, relief spending, and social security, but also on public housing and labor legislation. He was one of only twenty Democratic die-hards who backed Roosevelt’s court-packing scheme to the bitter end, and in 1940 he became Mississippi’s self-proclaimed “original third-term” in favor of Roosevelt’s unprecedented re-election.

By the time of Bilbo’s 1946 re-election campaign, however, Harry Truman was edging Roosevelt’s refashioned Democratic Party inexorably toward civil rights for black Americans. The tension between Bilbo’s commitment to economic equality for whites and his increasingly virulent opposition to political equality for blacks became unbearable. In the end Bilbo succumbed to the very racial politics he had long sought to exorcise from public debate in Mississippi. He won his own third term not as an economic liberal but as the “archangel of white supremacy.” His enduring infamy for racist bigotry ironically obscures a remarkably consistent record as a loyal, if undistinguished, New Dealer.

See Also: NEW DEAL; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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CHESTER M. MORGAN

BLACK, HUGO

Hugo Lafayette Black (February 27, 1886–September 25, 1971) was a U.S. Senator from 1926 to 1937 and associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1937 to 1971. Raised in Alabama's hill country, Black handled personal injury suits and cases involving injuries to workers in his Birmingham law practice. He served briefly as a police court judge and county prosecutor. Black joined the Ku Klux Klan in 1923, resigning just before he began his 1926 campaign for a seat in the U.S. Senate, which he won with support from many Klan members.

Black became one of the Senate's most prominent and vociferous defenders of the New Deal after his reelection in 1932. His principal legislative proposal sought the adoption of the thirty-hour work week, which many in Roosevelt's circle regarded as irresponsible and radical. The Senate approved Black's bill, but the administration's National Industrial Recovery Act superseded it. Black chaired two Senate committees to investigate what he regarded as corrupt ties between business and the government in awarding government contracts and in more general business lobbying. Black's methods, which included extensive searches of the personal files and papers of business leaders, were

intrusive, provoking outrage among those he investigated. Civil libertarians, however, had little to say against Black's investigations. Black was one of the most ardent defenders of Roosevelt's court-packing plan.

Black's support of the New Deal made him an ideal nominee for the Supreme Court from President Roosevelt's point of view after the court-packing plan collapsed and Senate majority leader Joseph Robinson, Roosevelt's first choice for the Supreme Court, died unexpectedly. Black's performance in the Senate generated substantial opposition from the business community, but the Senate approved his nomination by a vote of sixty-three to sixteen. Newspaper reports of Black's Klan membership were published after the Senate had approved his appointment, and the revelation provoked a flurry of controversy, which died down soon after Black gave a radio speech confirming his former membership and pledging his fidelity to the Constitution.

Black became one of the intellectual leaders of the Roosevelt court. His guiding principle was that the Constitution should be interpreted in light of its words' plain meaning and its authors' understandings. Black sometimes had idiosyncratic views on what those original understandings were. Compatible with the New Deal's economic focus, Black believed that the Constitution's grant of power to regulate interstate commerce gave Congress essentially unlimited power to develop national economic policy. Reacting against Supreme Court decisions finding economic regulations unconstitutional because they violated a liberty of contract protected by the due process clause, Black became an adamant opponent of those who concluded that the Constitution protected other unenumerated rights more readily described as civil liberties. Nevertheless, Black vigorously defended civil liberties that were listed in the Constitution. His insistence that " 'no law' means 'no law' " in the First Amendment's provision that "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech" led Black to a rigid stance on free expression, which came under pressure early in his court career in cases involving labor picketing.

One of Black's early opinions as a justice seemed addressed to those who thought his Klan

membership demonstrated hostility towards civil rights and civil liberties. Reversing a conviction based on a confession beaten out of an African-American suspect, Black wrote, the courts “stand against any winds that blow as havens of refuge for those who might otherwise suffer because they are helpless, weak, outnumbered, or because they are non-conforming victims of prejudice and public excitement” (*Chambers v. Florida*, 1940).

See Also: BLACK THIRTY-HOUR BILL; SUPREME COURT; SUPREME COURT “PACKING” CONTROVERSY.

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MARK TUSHNET

BLACK CABINET

Encouraged by African-American and interracial organizations at the start of the New Deal, the Roosevelt administration appointed over one hundred prominent blacks to race relations advisory positions within federal departments and newly established agencies throughout the 1930s and the war years. Although some blacks had been given federal positions by Republican administrations following the Civil War, the Depression-era experience was unique. Although the increased importance of the black vote to the Democratic Party during the Roosevelt years certainly influenced the decision to bring racial advisers into the government, few blacks were actually chosen because of their involvement in partisan politics. An exception was the former Republican stalwart, Pittsburgh *Courier* editor and publisher Robert L. Vann, who became an assistant attorney general in the Department of Justice and whose selection was clearly aimed at producing a favorable political response.

Most appointees, however, came from backgrounds that more closely resembled that of the black educator and activist Mary McLeod Bethune or the Harvard educated economist Robert Clifton Weaver. Bethune, adviser to the National Youth Administration, and Weaver, first in the Department of Interior and Public Works Administration and later in the United States Housing Authority, were also key figures in the formation in 1936 of the Federal Council on Negro Affairs, also known as the Black Cabinet. An informal organization in which Bethune often served as chair and Weaver vice chair, the Black Cabinet met on an irregular basis, frequently at the home of individual members. Its primary purpose was to coordinate African-American opinion both in and outside the Roosevelt administration. Black advisers often shared information among themselves and kept close ties with certain black and interracial organizations. Some advisers, such as Forrester Washington in the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and Eugene Kinckle Jones in the Department of Commerce, had held positions in the National Urban League. The majority of black advisers were middle-class and most were college graduates and trained professionals. The Black Cabinet provided them with the opportunity to communicate common personal struggles in government as well as to develop strategies to ensure African-American participation in critical New Deal programs.

The impact of these advisers on departmental and agency policies and in affecting conditions of black people during the 1930s depended upon a variety of factors. The ability to actually shape policy was determined frequently by whom they worked for and the willingness of their superiors to circumvent bureaucratic restrictions and resist adverse public opinion. For many government administrators, the adviser’s role was viewed simply as providing information and serving as a public relations spokesperson for existing New Deal programs. Bethune’s relationship to Aubrey Williams in the National Youth Administration and Weaver’s with Clark Foreman and Harold Ickes in Interior were unique in terms of the support and authority that those white New Dealers gave to their black appointees. In contrast, Attorney General Homer Cummings never even knew Robert Vann was in

the Justice Department, and Edgar Brown, who served with the Civilian Conservation Corps, worked out of a makeshift office at the end of a corridor. Moreover, civil rights legislation and racial desegregation were never central to New Deal reform in the 1930s. Instead, New Deal economic and class-oriented policies affirmed the ideal of equal opportunity through the inclusion of all groups and classes, and black advisers had to work within the restraints of that political and ideological framework. Few blacks were satisfied ultimately with those limits, and some left in frustration. Yet the Black Cabinet remained important as a symbol of the New Deal's special recognition of black needs, in the educating of white New Dealers on racial issues, and the precedent established for future black participation in the Democratic party and the national government.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; VANN, ROBERT; WEAVER, ROBERT CLIFTON.

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JOHN B. KIRBY

BLACK LEGION

Part of a native fascist movement that grew to menacing proportions in the United States in the midst of the economic crisis occasioned by the Great Depression, the Black Legion stood out as an American counterpart to the rise of Nazism and fascism

in Europe. Probably started in Ohio in 1931 by a group of former Ku Klux Klan members who dyed their robes black after their expulsion from that group, the organization experienced its greatest success in the industrialized regions of Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. Its influence spread to a dozen or more other states. Though claiming as many as six million adherents, it is more likely that around forty thousand different individuals joined the Black Legion over time before legal investigations and prosecutions led to its collapse in 1939.

Having attracted publicity for a series of floggings during 1935, the terrorist group became headline news after the ritual murder of a 32-year-old Detroit relief worker by a dozen of its members in May 1936. The Black Legion was an authoritarian, quasi-military organization, which forced discipline upon its heavily-armed members by initiating them at the point of a gun and threatening death if they ever disclosed the secrets of the group to outsiders. To join the organization, a person had to swear that he was a white, native-born, Protestant American citizen and agree to take up arms, when called upon, against the group's enemies.

Racial prejudice, religious bigotry, union-bashing, and red-baiting characterized the organization. Murder, intimidation, and violence were its calling cards. Many of its members were former rural residents who felt alienated in unfamiliar conditions in northern cities. A typical member, according to one journalistic account, was a southern-born male, in his mid-thirties, and Anglo-Saxon in background. While composed mostly of poorer, marginalized, working-class whites, the Black Legion also attracted a considerable number of middle-class businessmen and white-collar workers to its banner. Politicians and even law-enforcement officials sometimes became members.

Like the Ku Klux Klan and other similar groups, which provided a fertile recruiting ground for the Black Legion, its members spouted anti-black, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic rhetoric. Religious symbolism stood out prominently, and members acted in authoritarian fashion to try to impose their morality on others. Exposure of the organization in news articles, along with legal investigations and prosecutions, led to its precipitate decline during

the late 1930s. The Black Legion's rapid demise resulted from its heavy dependence on violence, as opposed to voluntary support, to attract members. Afterwards, many of its adherents drifted into other similar native fascist groups.

See Also: RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS; ANTI-SEMITISM.

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JOHN E. MILLER

BLACK METROPOLIS

In 1945 social scientist St. Clair Drake and his research associate, Horace R. Cayton, published the two-volume *Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City*, which attempted to provide the empirical foundation for the notion of a "black metropolis." The term, as used by the public as well as by social scientists, referred to a large and diverse African-American social enclave composed principally of professionals, small business owners, and a large working class of both unskilled and semi-skilled laborers. These enclaves emerged during the interwar years in large urban industrial areas in midwestern cities such as Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and Milwaukee. The south side of Chicago, the site of Drake and Cayton's study, contained an elaborate institutional structure that replicated those of native-born whites, as well as those of recent immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, who occupied distinct ethnic enclaves in the city.

Black metropolises were the direct product not only of residential segregation and other blatant forms of discrimination, but also of the hard work and ingenuity of their inhabitants. African Americans' overall prosperity during the 1920s was possible primarily because of the dire need for their labor as unskilled workers in midwestern factories.

With the onset of the Great Depression at the end of the 1920s, the notion of a black metropolis was transformed. In Chicago, for example, many working-class African Americans were discharged from unskilled jobs in factories in which many of them had been gainfully employed since World War I. Many African-American domestics also were fired, and banks in Chicago's south-side ghetto were closed.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's policies provided public relief programs, employment, and housing. Furthermore, presidential support for initiatives in collective bargaining between management and labor benefited unskilled African-American workers who had been able to retain employment. Additionally, many African Americans left both the rural and urban South during the 1930s—a direct result not only of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) crop reduction policies, but also because African Americans in southern cities received less than their proportionate share of allocations of relief and emergency employment. In short, the notion of a black metropolis was transformed from that of a community with a solid working class that had the potential to make advances in the mass-production industries and narrow the income gap between themselves and whites to one in which most of its members were on the dole or dependent on their working spouses for support.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE.

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VERNON J. WILLIAMS, JR.

BLACK THIRTY-HOUR BILL

The Black thirty-hour bill was introduced by Senator Hugo L. Black, a Democrat from Alabama, in December 1932 to establish a thirty-hour maximum workweek. The bill had diverse origins. During the 1920s some economists argued that the shorter workweek would improve the quality of life for working people and offset labor displacement resulting from technological change. The dramatic claims of the Technocracy movement, which emerged in 1932, reinforced concerns that technology contributed to unemployment. However, the shorter workweek was primarily viewed as a short-term expedient to ameliorate the Depression. During the Hoover years, it was central to the strategies of the President's Emergency Committee for Employment (1930–1931) and its successor, the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief (1931–1932). These agencies popularized work-sharing on the basis of its voluntary implementation by corporations to combat the unemployment emergency.

Herbert Hoover's establishment of the Share-the-Work movement in September 1932 reflected the president's commitment to this strategy. While there were many dissenting voices who believed that work-sharing was tantamount to spreading misery rather than relieving it, others believed that to be effective, work-sharing would have to be mandatory. Black's bill would have prohibited the interstate or international shipment of products that had been manufactured in any establishment where workers were on the job more than five days per week or more than six hours per day. Black contended that the shorter workweek was an alternative to public relief and a way of promoting economic recovery by spreading purchasing power.

Despite widespread reservations, the Senate passed the Black bill on April 6, 1933. This action spurred the Roosevelt administration to formulate a more comprehensive industrial recovery bill. Roosevelt was particularly concerned that the hours provision was too rigid and he condemned the measure as a "one paragraph bill" that would not contribute to economic recovery. After the bill's passage by the Senate, Secretary of Labor Frances

Perkins formulated a "substitute" bill that made provision for minimum wages, as well as maximum hours. Perkins's bill received widespread criticism from the business community, and business organizations sought to further their own interests in antitrust reform and self-regulation through trade associations. In April Roosevelt established a planning group that became the focus of intense lobbying by business groups seeking to promote industrial self-regulation through cooperative agreements, subject to government approval in the public interest. Organized labor demanded a government guarantee of the right of workers to belong to unions and to bargain collectively through them. In addition, Roosevelt's planning group considered a number of schemes to "start up" the economy, including federal subsidies and public works. Ultimately, a comprehensive recovery program emerged out of the brainstorming and lobbying that the single-issue Black bill had provoked. Federal regulation of working hours was one dimension of the National Industrial Recovery Act signed by Roosevelt on June 16, 1933.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA).

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STUART KIDD

BONNIE AND CLYDE (BONNIE PARKER AND CLYDE BARROW)

During an era when the exploits of gangsters such as Pretty Boy Floyd, Machine Gun Kelly, and the Karpis-Barker gang filled the pages of newspapers and provided plots for popular movies, Bonnie Parker (October 1, 1910–May 23, 1934) and Clyde Barrow (March 24, 1909–May 23, 1934) stood out as



Bonnie Parker jokingly points a shotgun at Clyde Barrow in 1932. BETTMANN/CORBIS

icons. Between 1932 and 1934, when they drove through Texas, Louisiana, Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Arkansas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma, committing the crimes for which they became notorious—twelve murders, scores of robberies, and nearly a dozen incidents of hostage-taking—Bonnie and Clyde came to stand for a variety of sometimes conflicting images. They were known as romantic lovers, and as a modern-day Robin Hood and Maid Marian who fought back against the predatory rich. Tabloid readers knew them as the “snake-eyed killer” and “cigar-smoking gun moll” (an image Bonnie despised but helped create). The recipients of an enormous amount of publicity on the radio, in newspapers, and in crime magazines, they contributed to their own legend through photographs they took of one another, poems written by Bonnie, stories they sent to detective magazines, and even through a letter Clyde sent to the Ford Motor Company, extolling the Ford as the car he always stole when he had the opportunity.

Both Bonnie and Clyde came from poor families—Clyde, the son of tenant farmers, was born in Ellis County, Texas, and Bonnie was born in Rowena, Texas, and raised by a poor widow. They met in 1930, when Bonnie was working as a waitress in a Dallas café and Clyde was wanted by the police on burglary charges. During the time that they spent together, they became famous for their abilities as escape artists. They drove their stolen cars through the Texas countryside at speeds of up to seventy miles an hour, evading police traps while other gang members, including members of both their families, were caught. They even managed to smuggle weapons into the Texas prison system to free their confederates.

Their crimes seemed to many emblematic both of the frontier spirit of the West, and of the new freedom made possible by the mass production of the automobile. Before meeting Bonnie, Clyde was just another two-bit crook—their romantic partnership elevated their criminal status. His love of his many guns, all of which he named, placed him squarely in the tradition of the western outlaw. However, as an armed woman during a period when marriage rates plummeted, male unemployment rates were high, and pundits decried a crisis of masculinity, Bonnie Parker simultaneously inhabited the gun-toting role more familiar to men and played the role of the supportive girlfriend, highlighting the cultural contradictions of American womanhood.

Bonnie and Clyde were shot down by lawmen in an ambush on May 23, 1934, in rural northwest Louisiana. They died almost literally in one another's arms; their “death car,” which was exhibited at public events for years thereafter, as well as their bodies, became targets for souvenir hunters. Clyde's funeral attracted thirty thousand spectators, and Bonnie's was mobbed, too—the largest wreath there was sent by an organization of Dallas newspaper boys, perhaps in thanks for the half million newspapers the account of the final ambush had helped them to sell.

See Also: “BALLAD OF PRETTY BOY FLOYD”; CRIME; HEROES.

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LAURA BROWDER

BONUS ARMY/BONUS MARCH

The veterans' bonus, more properly called "adjusted service compensation," was approved by Congress in both 1922 and 1924 and vetoed by presidents Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge. Harding's veto was upheld, but Coolidge's was overridden and the bonus bill became law. Its enactment came after four years of agitation by veterans and veterans' groups. The law provided a cash payment equal to one dollar for each day of wartime military service, with an extra twenty-five cents for each day spent overseas. Certificates with varying face values were issued, but payment was deferred until 1945. An insurance provision provided for full payment to heirs in case of death. The accrued interest made the maximum possible payment some \$1,800, a tidy sum at a time when the average annual earnings of non-farm workers came to just over \$1,400. Other provisions allowed veterans to borrow limited amounts of the value of their bonus certificates at relatively high rates of interest.

THE BONUS: A DEPRESSION ISSUE

The payment deferral was widely accepted in 1924, but the end of the prosperity of the 1920s and the onset of the Great Depression created widespread agitation for "immediate cash payment." The initial response of Congress during the Depression winter of 1930 to 1931 was to pass a bill allowing veterans to borrow larger amounts on their certificates at lower interest rates. President Herbert Hoover vetoed the bill, but a majority of the Republicans in each house joined almost all the Democrats to override Hoover's veto.

There were those in Congress who wanted to do more. A growing bloc led by three House Democrats—William Connery of Massachusetts, John E. Rankin of Mississippi, and Wright Patman of Texas—campaigning for full and immediate cash payment. All had served as enlisted men during the war. Patman soon became the acknowledged leader of the bonus forces in Congress. The bills he and others introduced made the bonus a national issue and were a spur for most of those who came to Washington.

MARCHING ON WASHINGTON

As early as January 1931 a few veterans had demonstrated in the nation's capital for immediate cash payment, and a number of other demonstrations took place before May 1932, none of which had a significant impact. The one Washington demonstration that caused a stir was the "National Hunger March," a one-day affair on December 7, 1931, which was sponsored by a Communist Party front, the Unemployed Councils. Early in May 1932 the Communist press announced that another front organization, the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League (WESL or Weasels), would lead a similar one-day March on June 8, 1932. But before that happened an unheralded group of veterans from Portland, Oregon, had crossed the nation in boxcars and trucks, captured national attention, and begun what would now be called a sit-in in the nation's capital.

The Oregon veterans were led by an unemployed ex-sergeant, Walter W. Waters, who had spent almost eighteen months overseas with the medical detachment of the 146th Field Artillery until he was discharged in 1919. A handsome and glib six-footer who had drifted from job to job in the 1920s, Waters inflated his resume in his 1933 memoir, *B.E.F.: The Whole Story of the Bonus Army*. Even there, however, he admitted that "my inability to take root in fertile soil may have been due to the unsettling effects of the war on me" and he referred to an unspecified post-discharge illness with the words "my health failed."

Waters and fewer than three hundred other veterans set out riding in empty boxcars on March 11 or 12, 1932. Their slow but peaceful passage east



Shacks built by members of the Bonus Army in Washington, D.C., burn after the battle with federal troops in 1932. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

was ignored by the national press until railroad officials at Council Bluffs, Iowa, tried without success to stop them from reaching Saint Louis; the brief stand-off in the Iowa rail yards was news. Waters gave his first press conference on May 20 when the bonus seekers arrived in Saint Louis. He said that when they got to Washington they were going to stay until a bonus bill was passed “if it takes until 1945.” That statement, publicized nationally, acted as a signal for groups of veterans across the country to come to Washington. By the time the Oregonians reached the capital on May 29, hundreds of other veterans were already there and thousands more were on their way.

By mid-June some twenty thousand had come to participate in what the press called a “bonus

march,” although almost no one walked to Washington. Some drove their own cars and trucks. The Washington, D.C., police force was commanded by Pelham D. Glassford, a West Point graduate who had been the youngest general in the American Expeditionary Force and had retired from the army in 1931. Glassford sympathized with his fellow veterans but understood that their cause was all but hopeless. Interested in public order, he encouraged the men to organize as a Bonus Expeditionary Force (BEF), helped them obtain relief supplies, and got most of the veterans to set up an encampment on park land in Anacostia at the edge of the District of Columbia. Some also camped in partially demolished buildings on lower Pennsylvania Avenue near the Capitol. There were few arrests and no significant violence for almost two months.

Patman's bonus bill had been locked up in committee, but after the veterans arrived it was easy to pry it out. On June 15 it passed in the House, 211 to 176. The Senate leadership agreed to a quick vote, hoping that the men would go home once it was defeated. On the evening of June 17, with several thousand veterans massed in front of the Capitol, the Senate defeated the bill. Only twenty-eight of ninety-six senators favored it. Some feared that the massed veterans would riot in response. Instead they sang "America the Beautiful" and returned to their encampments. But large numbers of them stayed in Washington and some reinforcements arrived.

THE BATTLE OF WASHINGTON

Before adjourning on July 16, Congress offered railroad fare home plus a seventy-five cent per diem allowance to any veteran who left by July 25. Some five thousand veterans took advantage of this offer. The Red Cross, which had refused any aid to the veterans, financed the travel of nearly five hundred accompanying wives and children. Once the July 25 deadline had passed, the Hoover administration, acting through its appointees, the District Commissioners, issued orders to force the now fewer than ten thousand veterans to leave Washington. The first step was ordering the police to remove the veterans camped on Pennsylvania Avenue. Glassford and his police commenced that task on July 28; two violent outbursts occurred as some men resisted eviction. The first, in the morning, caused no fatalities, but resulted in the commissioners asking the president for federal troops. Hoover obliged, ordering that the veterans be taken into custody. A few minutes later, another fracas broke out and a policeman who had been attacked drew his pistol and fired several shots, which killed two veterans. Glassford restored order and shortly thereafter learned that the Army had been called out.

About six hundred soldiers—some two hundred cavalry, three hundred infantry, and five tanks—under the personal command of Chief of Staff Douglas MacArthur, formed on the Ellipse behind the White House, and at 4:30 P.M. they moved up Pennsylvania Avenue at the height of the evening rush hour. The resulting "Battle of Washing-

ton" was no battle at all: Not a shot was fired by the troops or the veterans, although the latter threw a few bricks and a lot of curses and the former used the points of sabers, bayonets, and tear gas. The troops then moved toward Anacostia, positioned three tanks on the bridge, and took a break for supper. Those in the Anacostia encampment were given notice, and then the soldiers advanced, driving the veterans and whoever was with them out of the district and into Maryland like so many refugees. MacArthur deliberately disobeyed Hoover's order to take the veterans prisoner.

The Hoover administration claimed that most of the expelled bonus marchers were Communists and not really veterans, but such charges did not sit well with the public. Rexford Guy Tugwell wrote in *The Brains Trust* (1968) that he had an appointment with Franklin Roosevelt on the morning of July 29. Entering the governor's Hyde Park, New York, bedroom about 7:30 A.M., Tugwell found Roosevelt, characteristically, in bed with the papers spread around him. He told Tugwell that the pictures of the troops driving the veterans from the nation's capital were like "scenes from a nightmare." Tugwell believed that from that point on Roosevelt felt assured of his election, which almost certainly would have come in any event.

In a letter written a few days before the 1932 election, Roosevelt, who, like Hoover, opposed a bonus prepayment, told a correspondent that he would have handled things differently. Roosevelt got that opportunity when a smaller and more radical group of veterans came to Washington in May 1933. The president had Harry Hopkins arrange for billets at underused military facilities outside the district, sent his wife to meet with the veterans, and changed the rules so that those who wished could enroll in special veterans' units of the newly created Civilian Conservation Corps.

In 1936 Congress passed a bill to pay the bonus at once; Roosevelt vetoed it, but did not strenuously attempt to stop Congress from overriding his veto. Although the imaginative World War II programs for veterans commonly known as the G. I. Bill of Rights might have come about in any event, the

bonus experience spurred planning for future veterans' benefits.

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT.

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ROGER DANIELS

BOONDOGGLE

During the years of the New Deal, its critics used the term “boondoggle” to refer to various work relief programs that fell under the aegis of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), a federal agency created in 1935 and run by Roosevelt’s federal relief administrator, Harry Hopkins. The word implied a politically motivated, trivial, wasteful, or impractical government project funded to gain political favor.

The word originally meant a braided cord worn by Boy Scouts as a neckerchief or ornament, that is, a handmade article of simple utility and practical use. It may have been used earlier to refer to a device rigged by Daniel Boone to carry his equipment across rivers so that his hands would be free to swim. Thus, the term can be used to refer to anything people created for themselves to help them work more easily and effectively.

During the 1930s, however, boondoggle became a politically charged word expressing disdain for government programs that provided various types of work for the unemployed during the Great Depression. Hopkins’s WPA work relief programs

were especially vulnerable to criticism as “make-work,” especially those that had to do with the arts. Although most WPA projects consisted of building or repairing roads and public buildings, parks, hospitals, and highways, one of its components, the Federal Arts Project (known as Federal One), paid thousands of unemployed artists, musicians, actors, and writers for working at their craft.

Artists suffered inordinately during the Great Depression because the market for art works virtually disappeared. In desperation, some artists would barter their work for food and rent while others tried selling on the street. The hard fact that the unemployment rate for artists was even greater than for the general population led the government to create jobs for them. When critics accused Hopkins of giving boondoggling jobs to people committed to the creative impulse, he defended Federal One as a way to keep the talents of millions of Americans alive. Art patronage, in Hopkins’s opinion, was healthy and defined the artists’ relationship to their society as an ultimately useful one. Government patronage made art accessible to the public and insured that the artist would have a creative role in American society that would be democratizing and culturally enriching for the entire nation.

See Also: FEDERAL ONE; HOPKINS, HARRY; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JUNE HOPKINS

BORAH, WILLIAM

William Edgar Borah (June 29, 1865–January 19, 1940) was a prominent Republican senator during the Great Depression. Known as the “Lion of

Idaho," he defended Jeffersonian principles, upheld civil libertarian doctrines, espoused constitutionalism, and safeguarded the special interests of his home state. Despite his lengthy service in the upper chamber, Borah lacked an understanding of power plays in American politics. He remained a political maverick whose oratorical skills outweighed a plan of action, a characteristic that curtailed his effectiveness as a leader. Essentially he remained a loner. Yet for all his shortcomings, Borah possessed the ability to arouse people on public issues.

Born in Jasper Township, Wayne County, Illinois, Borah attended Tom's Prairie Public School and Southern Illinois Academy but never completed high school. He matriculated at the University of Kansas for a time in the 1880s. Thereafter Borah studied law in his brother-in-law's office, relocated to Idaho in 1890, earned a reputation as a good criminal lawyer, became interested in politics, chaired the Republican State Central Committee, attacked the trusts, and supported William Jennings Bryan, a Democrat, for president in the free silver crusade of 1896. In 1902 Borah led the progressive Republican faction that defeated Idaho's Old Guard candidates. Five years later state legislators elected him to the U.S. Senate, where he remained until his death.

Borah was a reformer and individualist. He embraced Theodore Roosevelt but declined to follow him in the Bull Moose campaign of 1912. Borah endorsed legislation for labor revision and backed constitutional amendments for a graduated income tax, the direct election of U.S. senators, and national prohibition. He also belonged to the irreconcilable wing of senators who opposed any version of a League of Nations. After World War I, Borah surfaced as a major voice for progressivism, isolationism, and the outlawry of war. Although he wholeheartedly championed Herbert Hoover for president in 1928, Borah assailed the president's farm and tariff policies and berated him for not pursuing more aggressive action to relieve the suffering in the nation. Borah demanded relief for the needy and unemployed. In a blistering Senate speech in 1931, he challenged the administration to respond to the crisis. Borah's crusading voice against Hoover's economic philosophy helped prepare the way for the New Deal.

The severity of the Great Depression in the 1930s convinced Borah of the necessity for government intervention to combat the economic catastrophe, monitor the nation's financial condition, and protect the general interest. He accepted much of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal domestic program, especially legislation that aided farmers and arranged for work remedies and alleviation. The senator favored the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Social Security, the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, the Revenue Act of 1935, and the Public Utilities Holding Company Act of 1935, but he remained steadfastly against the National Recovery Administration with measures designed to benefit the industrial segments of American society. He suggested currency expansion as a means to ameliorate the Depression. Although the expansion of federal bureaucratic agencies and the possible dangers to individual rights worried Borah, he focused attention on the activist role of government in the 1930s.

By the end of the 1930s, Borah devoted his time primarily to foreign affairs and endeavors to avoid United States entanglement in case of war. He died at his home in Washington, D. C., three days after a cerebral hemorrhage.

See Also: NEW DEAL.

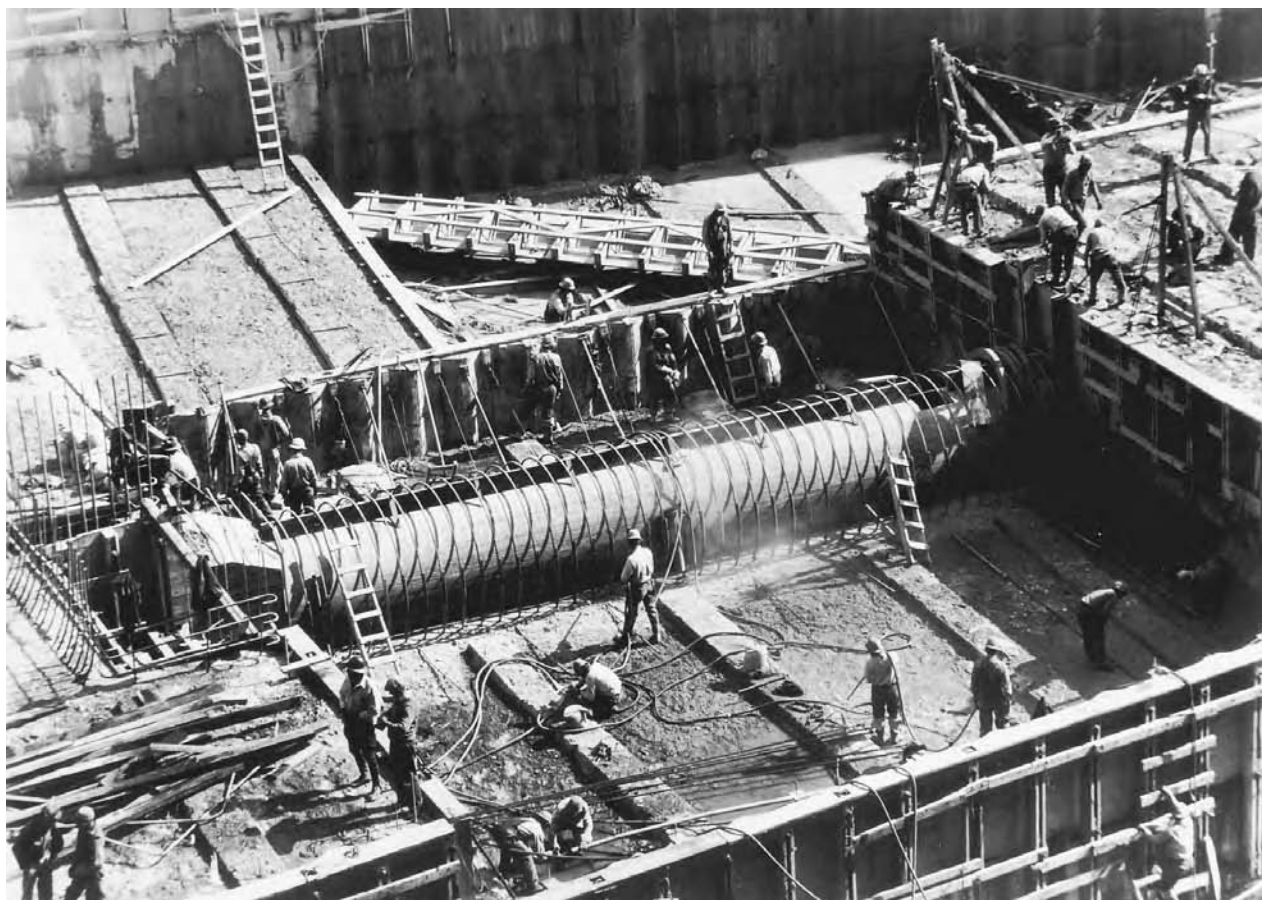
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LEONARD SCHLUP

BOULDER DAM

Located in the Black Canyon of the Colorado River on the Arizona-Nevada state line, thirty-five miles southeast of Las Vegas, the Boulder Dam, known since 1947 as the Hoover Dam, stands as a monu-



Laborers install steel bar reinforcements at the mid-section of Boulder Dam during construction in 1934. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ment to modern engineering. It is a concrete gravity arch dam that spans 1,244 feet across the canyon and rises to a height of 726 feet; its width ranges from 660 feet at the base to forty-five feet at the crest. By controlling unpredictable floods, providing water to drought-ridden areas, and generating electrical power, the dam transformed the West and encouraged settlement of the region.

On December 21, 1928, following extensive debate over water rights and fiscal concerns, President Calvin Coolidge signed the Boulder Canyon Project bill, providing over \$165 million to construct the dam. The Bureau of Reclamation awarded the contract to Six Companies, Inc., on March 11, 1931, ensuring employment for five thousand workers at the depths of the Depression. The government built Boulder City, complete with a school, a hospital, a

general store, and a mess hall that served four thousand meals a day, to provide housing for single men and families.

Work on the dam began in May 1931 with the excavation of two tunnels on each side of the canyon to divert the river during construction. Workers then drained the site, stripped canyon walls of loose rock to provide a smooth surface for abutment, and drilled the canyon floor for the dam to rest on solid bedrock. In June 1933 workers started pouring concrete blocks in a series of columns using bottom-drop buckets hoisted into position by a cableway that spanned the canyon. A U-shaped powerhouse, with two arms extending downstream on either side of the canyon and connected by an arm spanning the face of the dam, housed generators that produced over 700,000 kilowatts of electricity, ren-

dering Boulder Dam the largest hydroelectric facility in the world until the Grand Coulee Dam in Washington exceeded that level in 1949. Twin sets of intake towers controlled the flow of water to the powerhouse and reservoir outlets.

On February 1, 1935, workers sealed the diversion tunnels and allowed water to rise behind the dam, creating Lake Mead reservoir, named for Elwood Mead, the former commissioner of the Bureau of Reclamation. President Franklin Roosevelt dedicated the dam on September 30, 1935, proclaiming it “a twentieth-century marvel” that transformed the Colorado River “into a great national possession.” Congress renamed the structure Hoover Dam in 1947, ending a controversy that began in 1930 when supporters proposed naming the dam after President Herbert Hoover for his contribution to the project. However, as more Americans began blaming Hoover for the Depression, Roosevelt’s Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes, rejected the proposal and named the project Boulder Dam in 1933. Once public opinion of Hoover softened, Congress restored his name to the project that he helped to initiate.

The Boulder Dam harnessed the power of the Colorado River for the public good. It encouraged settlement and development of the West by thousands of farmers and businessmen who required a stable water supply, power generation, and protection from unpredictable floods. Combined with its contributions to municipal and recreational needs, Boulder Dam eventually benefited millions of Americans.

See Also: GRAND COULEE PROJECT; PUBLIC POWER; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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TODD J. PFANNESTIEL

BOURKE-WHITE, MARGARET

Margaret Bourke-White (June 14, 1904–August 27, 1971) was born in the Bronx, New York, the daughter of Joseph White and Minnie Bourke, and grew up in New Jersey. She acquired a fascination for photography from her father and from a teacher, Clarence H. White, a member of Alfred Stieglitz’s Photo-Secession movement. After briefly attending two colleges, and getting married and divorced, she enrolled in Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and supported herself by selling photographs of the campus to students and alumni. She graduated in 1927 with a degree in biology. Bourke-White then opened a photography studio in Cleveland, where her dramatic industrial photographs of foundries gained the attention of Henry Luce in 1929. Luce brought her to New York to become a photographer for his new magazine, *Fortune*. Bourke-White’s assignment to take pictures of industrialization in the Soviet Union in 1930 led to her first book, *Eyes on Russia* (1931). After completing celebrated picture essays on the meatpacking plants of Chicago, glass blowing in upstate New York, and Indiana stone quarries, Bourke-White’s emphasis changed from industry to the human condition while she photographed the Dust Bowl conditions of the Plains states in 1934. She collaborated with writer Erskine Caldwell, whom she would later marry and divorce, on a photo-documentary of the life of poor southern sharecroppers, *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937). In 1936 she signed on as one of four photographers for Luce’s new pictorial magazine, *Life*. Her photographs of the construction of Fort Peck Dam in Montana were chosen for the first cover illustration and lead article of Luce’s new venture.

As a *Life* correspondent during World War II, she was the only foreign photojournalist to be in

the Soviet Union when the Germans invaded, the only woman to be accredited by the U. S. armed forces as a war photographer, the first female to accompany and record an Army Air Force bombing mission, and the first to document the horrors of the German concentration camp at Buchenwald. After the war, she covered the Korean War, the miners of South Africa, and the independence of, and strife between, India and Pakistan. Discovering that she had Parkinson's disease in 1956, Bourke-White gradually turned from photography to writing, producing an autobiography, *Portrait of Myself* (1963). She died in 1971 at the age of sixty-seven. A pioneer in photojournalism who thrived on adventure and craved a crisis, tirelessly and ruthlessly doing whatever it took to get the photograph she wanted, Bourke-White was widely hailed as a woman doing a man's job in a man's world.

See Also: CALDWELL, ERSKINE; LANGE, DOROTHEA; PHOTOGRAPHY; SHAHN, BEN.

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HARVARD SITKOFF

BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA

In 1933 and 1934, Thomas Minehan, a young sociologist at the University of Minnesota, disguised himself in old clothes and hopped freight trains crisscrossing six midwestern states. He joined the bands of boys, and more than a few girls, who formed the ranks of a roving army of 250,000 children torn from their homes in the Great Depression. Over a two-year period, Minehan associated on terms of intimacy and equality with several thousand transients, collecting five hundred life



During the Depression, some 250,000 young people took to the road, often with the blessing of parents at their wits end to feed and care for them. These boys were photographed hopping a freight car in California in 1940. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

histories of the young migrants. The result was a vivid portrayal of their harrowing existence, *Boy and Girl Tramps of America*, a work unique in its ability to reach beyond statistics and reveal the opinions, ideas, and attitudes of the boxcar boys and girls.

Grinding poverty, shattered family relationships, and financially strapped schools that locked their doors were among the reasons most kids went on the road. They usually did so with the blessing of parents at their wits end to feed and care for them. The first weeks away from home could be euphoric, filled with a sense of romance and adventure. Minehan observed that after six months on the road, however, the boys and girls lost their fresh outlook and eagerness. Trips across the country were no longer educational, but were quests for bread. "There comes a day when the boys are alone and hungry, and their clothes are ragged and torn," wrote Minehan; "breadlines have just denied them

food, relief stations an opportunity to work for clothes. A brakie [brakeman] has chased them from the yards. An old vagrant shares his mulligan with them and they listen."

Riding with the road kids, Minehan estimated that 10 percent of those he met were girls, dressed in overalls or army breeches and boys' coats. They traveled in pairs, sometimes with a boyfriend, sometimes with a tribe of ten or twelve boys. Minehan described "Kay," who was fifteen: "Her black eyes, fair hair, and pale cheeks are girlish and delicate. Cinders, wind and frost have irritated but not toughened that tender skin. Sickly and suffering from chronic undernourishment, she appears to subsist almost entirely upon her fingernails, which she gnaws habitually."

For African-American youths, the road was even rockier. They were often turned away from a door where a white hobo would get a handout; on occasion, too, black youths riding the rails in the South were threatened with a lynching.

Danger was a constant companion that could turn deadly in an instant. Railroad detectives, called "bulls," handled illegal riders savagely. By 1932, the Southern Pacific Company reported 683,457 trespassers on its property, 75 percent of these estimated to be from sixteen to twenty-five years old. In the first ten months of 1932, the Interstate Commerce Commission recorded 1,508 trespassers under twenty-one killed or injured.

Minehan completed his research even as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was being established by the Roosevelt administration, the single most vital program to meet the needs of the roving army. By July 1933, a quarter of a million young men were serving in the CCC in 1,468 forest and park camps. The National Youth Administration later provided fifty camps that offered job training and education for girls.

Minehan found that desperate as their lives were, the child tramps remained defiant: "I can't get a job anywhere," said a boy called Texas. "I can't get into the CCC because I have no dependents. I can't remain in any state unless I go to a slave camp. What chance have I got? Less chance than a man with two wooden legs in a forest fire.

I've seen a lot of the country in the last year and I'm glad I've seen it but if a guy travels too much he becomes a bum, and I don't want to be a bum."

See Also: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC).

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ERROL LINCOLN UYS

BRAIN(S) TRUST

The Brains Trust was a small group of academics selected by Franklin D. Roosevelt and his political advisors to help the Democratic candidate in 1932 in his presidential bid. The term was originally coined by Louis Howe, a long-time associate of Roosevelt. It was later shortened to Brain Trust and made popular by *New York Times* reporter James Kieran.

Given the complexities of the modern American economy and the enormity of the Great Depression and its effects, Roosevelt's law partner, Sam Rosenman, suggested to the Democratic candidate that he seek the advice of academics in attempting to deal with the economic issues of the

day, a practice Roosevelt had used previously during his governorship of New York. Rosenman recruited Raymond Moley, a political science professor at Columbia University in New York, to help Roosevelt organize this academic group.

Raymond Moley had already worked with Roosevelt during the Seabury investigation into corruption in the New York City government. An expert in criminal justice, Moley was to help the candidate in political matters and introduce him to other academics. After another Roosevelt law partner, Doc O'Connor, joined the small group, Moley recruited two more Columbia professors: Rexford G. Tugwell and Adolf Berle.

Tugwell was a professor of economics at Columbia and a highly prolific author who had written on the causes of the Great Depression and Herbert Hoover's failure to address the crisis. Tugwell was also familiar with the novel approaches being suggested to resolve America's agricultural problems. Adolf Berle was a well known legal expert who published with the economist Gardiner Means an important work on the modern corporation, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (1933). Moley, Tugwell, and Berle served as Roosevelt's Brains Trust throughout the 1932 campaign.

The purpose of the Brains Trust was to educate Roosevelt on current economic issues, assist in speechwriting, and help the candidate formulate his own ideas on how to approach and resolve the Depression. Although the three academics would later follow their own distinctive beliefs and career paths, in 1932 they all agreed that big business was inevitable, that the Wilsonian approach of breaking up corporations into small units was unacceptable, that regulation was the key to dealing with big business, and that some form of planning in the economic sector was necessary.

Throughout the 1932 campaign, the Brains Trust met frequently with Roosevelt. They often researched topics the candidate needed to know about or was embracing, and they helped him draft speeches, although Roosevelt typically put his own imprint on any speech, sometimes changing the wording and content as he delivered it. Moley worked with Roosevelt on the "forgotten man" speech in April 1932. Moley also helped Roosevelt

draft a speech delivered in Saint Paul, often referred to as the "concert of interest" speech, in which the term *New Deal* was first used. Berle helped Roosevelt write the San Francisco Commonwealth Club speech, which called for economic planning in the future. Tugwell worked on a number of speeches, usually writing parts of the draft, especially if the speech dealt with agriculture and the domestic allotment proposal.

In addition to speech writing, Moley tutored Roosevelt on political issues, Tugwell on agricultural matters, and Berle on finance and corporations. Tugwell, for example, worked hard to educate Roosevelt on *domestic allotment*, a plan to control farm overproduction by paying farmers to not plant crops. Although some Democratic leaders disliked the idea of professors advising their candidate, there was little they could do about it. Roosevelt relied on his Brains Trust and listened to what they had to say, whether or not he incorporated what they told him into his speeches or, later, into his New Deal programs. Election day marked the official end of the Brains Trust, but not the end of the role each member of the group played in Roosevelt's administration.

Of the three, Berle was the only one who chose not to accept an official appointment in 1933. Rather, Berle returned to New York where he advised Fiorello La Guardia in his mayoral campaign and helped the newly elected mayor address New York's financial crisis. Berle continued to help the president in a variety of ways, however. For example, he advised Roosevelt on the banking crisis, the railroads, and foreign policy, especially concerning Latin America and Cuba.

Raymond Moley was appointed assistant secretary of state in 1933. Working under Cordell Hull, Moley was closely associated with the president. Moley advised Roosevelt for the 1933 London Conference, but Roosevelt seemed to endorse Hull's views, rather than Moley's, when he sent his famous "bombshell" message to the conference announcing his decision to promote American economic nationalism to resolve the economic crisis. This announcement so undermined Moley's position that he gradually drifted away from the president. He eventually left the administration and be-

came a magazine editor. Moley's disappointment with Roosevelt deepened as time went on, and he finally broke openly with the president during the 1940 campaign. Thereafter, Moley became a consistent critic of the Roosevelt presidency.

Rexford Tugwell fared much better. He remained with Roosevelt after the election, serving as an advisor until the inauguration, after which Tugwell was officially appointed assistant secretary of agriculture under Henry Wallace. Tugwell worked diligently in the Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement domestic allotment under the provisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. His clash with the director of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, George Peek, and Peek's eventual resignation, was seen as a victory for Tugwell, however short-lived. Although Peek's replacement, Chester Davis, was committed to domestic allotment, he was also a determined administrator who did not tolerate disagreement from subordinates. His famous "purge" of liberals in the USDA over Southern sharecropping agreements was a direct attack on Tugwell. Tugwell was so livid about Davis's actions that he threatened to resign from the New Deal. Roosevelt convinced him to stay, and Tugwell became director of the Resettlement Administration (RA) in 1935. Despite his good intentions and administrative capabilities, Tugwell was targeted by the press as a radical and as a threat to America. He resigned from the RA in 1936, only to return to the administration in 1941 when Roosevelt appointed him governor of Puerto Rico. For the rest of his life and career, Tugwell remained loyal to Roosevelt, despite the disappointments he felt with Roosevelt and the New Deal after 1936.

With Tugwell's departure from the administration in 1936, all three original members of the Brains Trust were gone. Other advisers with academic backgrounds and business expertise joined the administration, and the term *associate* member of the Brains Trust is sometimes applied to such individuals as Hugh Johnson of the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and Donald Richberg of the NRA and the National Economic Council. Later advisers like Benjamin Cohen and Thomas Corcoran are also sometimes referred to as Brains Trusters. In the end, though, the Brains Trust remained

what it had started out to be—a small advisory group of academics who helped Roosevelt in his 1932 bid for the presidency.

See Also: BERLE, ADOLF A. JR.; ELECTION OF 1932; MOLEY, RAYMOND; TUGWELL, REXFORD G.

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

BRANDEIS, LOUIS D.

In November 1931, as the American economy was sinking into frightening decline, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Dembitz Brandeis (November 13, 1856–October 5, 1941) turned seventy-five. Behind him was an illustrious career as a prominent Boston attorney, a leading reformer active in a dozen progressive crusades, a close adviser to Woodrow Wilson, and, after 1914, the leader of the American Zionist movement. He had been on the Supreme Court since 1916, and had earned a reputation as an eloquent defender of civil liberties, a champion of the rights of labor, a supporter of state and local prerogatives against centralized federal authority, and a bitter foe of "the curse of bigness," both in business and in government. By the time of the Great Depression he had transcended much of the controversy that had characterized his turbulent years as a social activist, and he enjoyed nearly universal respect and admiration as a wise elder statesman. Franklin D. Roosevelt occasionally referred to him as "Isaiah."

His activities during the 1930s centered in three general areas. First, he maintained his interest in the Zionist project of establishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine. He paid close attention to Jewish

affairs, assiduously studied Palestine developments, and grew increasingly worried about British policy there. He was one of the earliest to see the dangers to Jews in the rise of Adolf Hitler. Second, of course, he continued his work on the Supreme Court until his resignation in February 1939. Although he joined in declaring some key New Deal measures unconstitutional, he was numbered among the Court's liberal wing. One of his most significant opinions in this period was in *Erie v. Tompkins* (1938), which limited the authority of federal courts and enhanced the judicial authority of the states. Although Brandeis admired Roosevelt personally, he was opposed to the president's attempt, in 1937, to "pack" the Supreme Court.

Finally, Brandeis played an extremely important role in the spirited debates raging around the formation of New Deal policy. He did this, in part, by utilizing extensive informal channels of influence—through Felix Frankfurter and Frankfurter's many disciples, through numerous private conversations with major and minor New Deal officials, and even, occasionally, through direct and indirect contacts with President Roosevelt himself. Soon Brandeis came to be regarded as the symbolic leader of that wing of New Deal thought that believed in imposing limitations on federal authority, avoiding centralization at the expense of local autonomy, and enhancing free market competition rather than relying upon federal measures that assumed and accepted the inevitability of large-scale production. Many historians of this period refer to those in Washington who held these views as *Brandeisians* or *neo-Brandeisians*.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; DOUGLAS, WILLIAM O.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; HUGHES, CHARLES EVANS; SUPREME COURT.

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DAVID W. LEVY

BREADLINES

Breadlines, in which poverty-stricken and hungry Americans queued for free food, were representative of the increasing unemployment and consequent hunger caused by the Depression. Breadlines became common in many cities during the 1930s, and the sheer numbers of homeless and unemployed people often overwhelmed the charities that were giving out food. Rexford G. Tugwell, a New Deal administrator and advisor to Franklin Roosevelt, commented in his diary about the pervasiveness of hunger during the Depression: "Never in modern times . . . has there been so widespread unemployment and such moving distress from cold and hunger."

With the onset of the Great Depression, companies were forced to cut production and to lay off many of their employees. By 1932 there were some thirteen million Americans out of work, or one-fourth of all workers. Even those who remained employed often found their wages and hours sharply reduced, and providing adequate food for oneself and one's family became a daily struggle for many Americans. One oft-repeated story tells of a teacher in West Virginia who directed a young girl to go home and eat. The girl replied, "I can't. This is my sister's day to eat." In New York City one out of five children attending school was reported to be suffering from malnutrition. And in other areas, such as the coal-mining regions of Illinois, Kentucky, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia, thousands of children went hungry.

Breadlines were thus a necessity during the 1930s. They were run by private charities, such as the Red Cross; private individuals—the gangster Al Capone opened a breadline in Chicago; and government agencies. Breadlines became associated with shame and humiliation because many Americans felt responsible for their own downfall. As one



A long line of people wait for free food in February 1932 in New York City. Because government relief programs were inadequate during the early years of the Depression, private organizations and benefactors often provided the food. FRANKLIN

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distressed man during the Depression put it: "Shame? You tellin' me? I would go stand in the relief line [and] bend my head low so nobody would recognize me."

See Also: CHARITY; SOUP KITCHENS; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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KIM RICHARDSON

BRIDGES, HARRY

One of the most successful and radical labor leaders in the United States, Harry Bridges (July 28, 1901–March 30, 1990) was integral to the formation of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU) and a strong voice for the left in American labor throughout the Depression years and after.

Born in Australia to middle-class parents, Bridges became a sailor in his teens, and emigrated to San Francisco in 1920, eventually finding work as a longshoreman. He had already been exposed to the radicalism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) while working in Australia, and he soon was involved in labor organizing on the San Francisco docks. In 1933, Bridges, along with Communists and other radicals, was at the forefront of efforts to rebuild the faded International Longshoremen's Association (ILA). He and other labor activists sought to unite all unions in the industry into one federation. They proposed changes from the top-down leadership structure of previous unions, calling for regular union meetings, financial accountability for union officers, and a democratic constitution that would recognize the voices of rank-and-file members.

In 1934, the newly revived ILA sought to negotiate a contract that would organize West Coast docks. Even after the intervention of President Franklin Roosevelt and in the face of opposition from the ILA's own president, the union voted to strike, shutting down West Coast docks beginning on May 9. Tensions during the strike also led to violent clashes between protesting workers and police, most notably in San Francisco, where a general strike ensued. During the strike, Bridges gained a reputation as a dedicated organizer and successful leader, particularly after employers were forced to arbitrate with the union to end the strike. This notoriety also made him a target for anti-labor forces who claimed Bridges was a Communist agitator, a charge he would deny. Evidence from Soviet archives suggests that Bridges was a member of the Communist Party in the 1930s.

After another large strike in 1936, Bridges was elected president of the Pacific Coast District of the ILA, but the district soon came into conflict with the more conservative union leadership. In 1937, the district's members voted to join the newly formed Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and they renamed themselves the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union. With Bridges as president, the ILWU was one of the most radical unions in the country, engaging in hundreds of job actions to improve working conditions and retaining a large faction of Communist members. With the rise of fascism in the late 1930s, Bridges led the ILWU's boycott of Italian and German ships, and the union later adopted a "no-strike" pledge during World War II in order to support the U.S. war effort.

Bridges's continued radicalism made him the target of deportation hearings in the late 1930s, yet he remained defiant, even after the ILWU was expelled from the CIO in 1950 for supporting its Communist membership. Bridges continued as president of the ILWU until 1977, remaining politically outspoken and ensuring his legacy as one of America's most important labor leaders.

See Also: CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION (ILA); SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE (1934); STRIKES.

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ROBERT FRANCIS SAXE

“BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?”

The popular song “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?,” which became an anthem of the Great Depression, was written in 1932 by composer Jay Gorney and lyricist E. Y. “Yip” Harburg as part of a musical score for the satirical revue *Americana*. The revue took its theme from Roosevelt’s “Forgotten Man” speech that launched his first presidential campaign by reminding Americans of the men who had fought our wars and worked in our factories but now were out of work. “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” was written for a scene in which men in soldiers’ uniforms form a breadline.

Gorney’s melody starts out in a plaintive minor key—an unusual beginning for a Broadway theater song—and Harburg’s lyric portrays a man who is not a pitiful panhandler, but a strong man bewildered to find himself in a breadline. In the past, he says, he has built a railroad and fought bravely in war, but now he is outraged to find that he must beg for a dime. In the opening verse, he expresses his bitterness, “They used to tell me I was building a dream,” and in the chorus, the main body of the song, he recalls how jauntily he and other men went off to war, only to find themselves later “slogging through hell.”

By the end of the song, as the music soars upward in a crescendo, the singer’s request becomes ominously threatening as he confronts his listener and repeats his request for money, but this time, instead of addressing him as “brother,” he uses the

more military (“buddy” is a military term for a fellow-soldier) and militant, “Buddy, can you spare a dime?” The clear implication is that this powerful, embittered man—and “half a million” like him—could easily rise up against the political system that betrayed them with its “Yankee-Doodle-de-dum.”

After *Americana* opened on Broadway on October 5, 1932, a month before the presidential election, reviewers singled out “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” for praise, and recordings by Bing Crosby and other singers made it a hit despite the fact that some radio stations downplayed or even banned the song.

See Also: BREADLINES; MUSIC.

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PHILIP FURIA

BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS (BSCP)

Pullman porters worked exclusively on railroad cars called Pullman sleeping cars, the brain-child of George Mortimer Pullman and the major means of transportation used by the wealthy to travel long distances before the era of air travel. George Pullman chose recently freed black men for the position of porter on his sleeping cars in order to evoke the comfort and style slaves had provided for the gentry in the antebellum South. By the 1920s, the Pullman porter was perhaps the most recognized African American in white America, and the Pullman Company employed approximately twelve thousand African Americans, making it the largest private employer of black men in the United States. In 1925 a group of porters, fed up with long hours, low pay, and the servile demeanor demanded by the Pullman Company, formed the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) in New York City, where it enjoyed a measure of success.

The BSCP's campaign came to a halt when it reached Chicago, headquarters of the powerful, anti-union Pullman Company and home to more than a third of Pullman porters. Through the years Pullman executives had cultivated close relationships with black leaders by pouring money into institutions in black Chicago and promoting the image of Pullman as a friend not just of workers, but the entire community. As a result, the majority of black leaders opposed the BSCP. Utilizing a community-based strategy, the BSCP set out to win the hearts and minds of ministers, the press, and politicians who did not appreciate the role labor unions could play in the larger black freedom struggle. By 1929, as significant numbers of black leaders began supporting the BSCP and its organizing networks, a pro-labor perspective was taking shape in black Chicago. The pro-labor stance increased the union's credibility in the eyes of the community and increased membership in the union. Shortly thereafter, fallout from the Depression, which included a severe decline in travelers, fewer jobs for porters, fewer tips for working porters, and fear associated with joining a union during hard times, contributed to a decline in BSCP membership. From a high of 7,300 members in 1927, BSCP membership had dropped to 658 by 1933. While some observers decreed that the BSCP had died, union porters dubbed the 1929 to 1933 period as the "dark days."

The union's fate changed through its relationship with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the coming of New Deal labor laws. The AFL, which granted federal charters to thirteen BSCP locals in 1929, provided very little financial assistance, but gave the BSCP a platform from which to advance its call for greater economic opportunity for all black workers. Though the BSCP was reduced to a skeleton crew, the Brotherhood carried the gospel of unionism deep into the black community during the dark days by forging cross-class alliances with other groups challenging the racial status quo. Simultaneously, the AFL continued to support racist unions while hundreds of thousands of black workers in steel, meatpacking, and autos were poised for organization.

Questions related to organizing black industrial workers erupted at the 1935 AFL convention when

its leadership, refusing to endorse industrial unionism, set the stage for the emergence of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Although the BSCP never left the AFL, the strength it had gained within the black community by 1935 pushed the AFL to grant the BSCP an international charter, even as the AFL voted to sustain union color bars against thousands of other black workers.

The BSCP's destiny was also altered by favorable legislation promoted by the federal government. The Amended Railway Labor Act of 1934 guaranteed railroad workers the legal right of collective bargaining, placing the National Mediation Board at the service of the union during elections. Finally, the Brotherhood gained recognition at the national level as the voice of all black workers when A. Philip Randolph, head of the BSCP, became president of the National Negro Congress in 1936. In 1937, the BSCP signed a historic labor contract with the giant Pullman Company, marking the first time representatives from a major American corporation negotiated a labor contract with a union of black workers. But the larger significance of the BSCP's community organizing during the Great Depression lay in popularizing unions, thus providing an important foundation for widespread unionization of black workers.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS; ORGANIZED LABOR; RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP.

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BETH TOMPKINS BATES

BROWDER, EARL

Earl Russell Browder (May 20, 1891–June 27, 1973) led the American Communist Party (CPUSA) to its greatest size and influence during the Great Depression and World War II. Meanwhile, he was recruiting and directing, with a degree of autonomy, spies for the Russian secret police and Soviet military intelligence.

Browder, the eighth of ten children, was born to Kansas parents who had lost their homestead to drought, disease, and debt. Earl's disabled father, William, and his homemaker mother, Margaret, taught populism, socialism, and anticlericalism to their offspring. Poverty forced the boys to leave elementary school. Earl drifted through left-wing movements, most notably the Kansas City bookkeepers and accountants' union and the Socialist Party. His opposition to World War I caused him to be imprisoned for a time in Leavenworth Penitentiary. There he read about the Russian Revolution, and became a dedicated Marxist-Leninist. He entered the Communist Party at mid-level, organizing an American delegation to the first Congress of the Red International of Labor Unions, held in Moscow in 1921. Known by its Russian abbreviation, Profintern, and subordinate to the Communist International (Comintern), it had its own staff, funds, and networks in foreign countries. In mid-decade, Browder became intimate with Raissa Luganovskaya, a Profintern attorney and former commissar of justice in the Ukrainian city of Kharkov during the Russian Civil War. She helped him land a position organizing illegal trade unions to resist China's right-wing government. The post gave Browder undercover experience that served him well. After Soviet leader Joseph Stalin removed CPUSA head Jay Lovestone in 1930, Browder became part of a three-person leadership that also included William Z. Foster and William W. Wein-

stone. There Browder proved a vicious infighter; after Foster was debilitated by a heart attack in 1932, Browder won firm control of the CPUSA.

Browder soon championed the Popular Front policy, directed by Moscow. Between 1933 and 1939, his CPUSA called for antifascist unity and supported President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. Browder painted the Communists as heirs to American radical traditions, at the very time when the CPUSA was changing from a sect of immigrants to a party of ethnic and black Americans. It included 82,000 members and influenced many times that number. Browder even achieved a degree of autonomy in domestic politics, with Soviet approval. Yet as early as 1933, he had begun building an espionage network among federal employees.

The 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact killed the Popular Front and left the CPUSA morally bankrupt. When Germany invaded the USSR on June 22, 1941, Browder led the charge back to vigorous antifascism. The CPUSA regained members and Browder came to see himself as an independent Communist leader. After Stalin dissolved the Comintern to placate the West, Browder propounded his Teheran Thesis, arguing that the wartime conference of United States, British, and Soviet leaders in Iran signified the acceptance of Communism as a permanent force in the world. At home, big business could play a role in defeating fascism and extending prosperity into the postwar era. He also reconstituted the CPUSA as the Communist Political Association, a nonpartisan leftist lobby. This action constituted a grave heresy because it violated V.I. Lenin's concept of the vanguard role of the Communist Party set forth in 1903. Once victory in Europe became certain, the Soviets engineered Browder's removal and took his espionage agents. When he died not one Communist newspaper in the world printed his obituary.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; FOSTER, WILLIAM Z.

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JAMES G. RYAN

BSCP. See BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS.

BUNCHE, RALPH

Ralph Bunche (August 7, 1904–December 9, 1971) was the first black to win the Nobel Peace Prize. He received the honor in 1950 for his efforts on behalf of the United Nations (UN) in negotiating a truce between Egypt and Israel. He eventually became undersecretary-general of the UN. In the late 1960s, radical activists accused Bunche of ignoring domestic civil rights concerns, but in the 1930s Bunche had been a leading intellectual radical who attempted to steer civil rights groups in a new, activist direction that directly addressed black and white working class needs.

Bunche received his B.A. degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and his M.A. and Ph.D. from Harvard University. Before he had completed his doctorate, Howard University hired Bunche as an instructor, and he organized and chaired the school's political science department. In 1934, when Bunche completed his dissertation on colonial governance in Africa, he became the first black American to earn the Ph.D. in political science.

When Bunche started working at Howard University his liberal political views became more radical and pronounced. He called upon the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to abandon its legalistic civil rights reform strategy for one that was dedicated to building an interracial workers' alliance. He argued that supporting class politics and instituting dramatic eco-

nomic reform were the keys to solving blacks' second-class status. He publicly claimed the New Deal was a "raw deal" for blacks, and he openly worked with communists and socialists in organizing the National Negro Congress (NNC). The NNC, established in 1936, sought to build a coalition of organizations dedicated to solving the "Negro problem" through a new class politics. The same year, Bunche published *A World View of Race*, an aggressive critique of the imperialist and capitalist roots of racism.

Bunche's public political stances began to soften as fascism spread across Europe and as the United States became increasingly involved in the Allied war effort. He broke from the NNC when he concluded that it had become a tool of the Soviet Union. Due to his expertise in African affairs, the federal government hired Bunche as an African and Far East affairs analyst for what would become the Office of Strategic Services. He would later work for the State Department and then the UN.

Before he moved into the government, however, Bunche played a central role in the production of one of the most important social science surveys of black life in the United States: *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and American Democracy* (1944). This study, directed by Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal, became the cornerstone of liberal ideology on race issues for much of the civil rights era. As Myrdal's assistant, Bunche supervised numerous other researchers and produced several thousand pages (collected in four long "memos") of analysis of black political development in the South, black betterment organizations, and black leadership. One of these memoranda, *The Political Status of the Negro in the Age of FDR*, was published posthumously in 1973.

See Also: HOWARD UNIVERSITY; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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JONATHAN SCOTT HOLLOWAY

BURNS AND ALLEN. *See* HUMOR; RADIO.

BUSINESSMEN

Businessmen reached new levels of unpopularity during the 1930s. Following the prosperity of the 1920s, the stock market crash of 1929 punctuated the end of the “New Era” in dramatic fashion. By 1932, the nation’s gross national product had dropped 33 percent, nearly 25 percent of workers had been thrown out of work, and the prices of most goods were cut in half. Business executives who had been seen as enlightened captains of industry, responsible for much of capitalism’s advances during the years following the end of World War I, were soon perceived as responsible for capitalism’s collapse. Some, such as utility magnate Samuel Insull, fled the country as their corporate empires collapsed around them. In 1933 and 1934, the Senate Banking and Currency Committee, led by chief counsel Ferdinand Pecora, questioned leading businessmen and financiers, including J. P. Morgan, Charles Mitchell, Winthrop Aldrich, and Thomas W. Lamont, about their practices. Morgan acknowledged that he had (legally) avoided paying any income tax in 1930, 1931, and 1932, while others, such as Mitchell, eventually faced criminal charges for their actions. The legitimacy of capitalism, itself, was increasingly called into question.

Businessmen reacted to this social, political, and economic crisis, and to subsequent New Deal policy measures, in different ways and in ways that changed over time. To speak of “businessmen” as an unchanging monolith does injustice to the complexity of the historical record. It is, however, possible to make some generalizations. In reacting to the Great Depression and the coming of the New Deal, businessmen drew on the intellectual currents that had been popular during the 1920s and earlier. They at first welcomed the election of President Franklin Roosevelt, and cautiously looked to the

federal government to provide stability and legitimize the “associational” activities that antitrust laws had long prevented. By 1935, however, many businessmen were frustrated with the New Deal. Although there were exceptions, businessmen generally opposed New Deal measures designed to increase the bargaining power of organized labor, provide public works projects, create unemployment insurance and old-age insurance, and regulate wages and hours. Businessmen could usually be counted as reliable supporters of a balanced federal budget, and as vociferous opponents of measures designed to increase federal revenues, such as Roosevelt’s call to “soak the rich” with income tax increases. Efforts to regulate the nation’s banks and financial markets, such as the 1933 Glass-Steagall Banking Act and the creation of the Securities and Exchange Commission, were also greeted with disdain by most businessmen. With the coming of World War II, though, New Dealers and businessmen achieved a rapprochement of sorts.

THE EARLY NEW DEAL AND THE NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION

During the 1920s, a number of businessmen and politicians, including such figures as George Perkins, Frank Munsey, and Herbert Hoover, championed the idea of business cooperation. Through voluntary organizations, such as trade associations, businesses could attempt to plan production, develop and implement codes of conduct, and avoid competing on price. These anticompetitive practices grew in part out of measures developed in World War I to regulate wartime production, but they also expanded on the popular notion of the “business commonwealth.” Thanks to enlightened planning, supporters of the business commonwealth assumed, business could coordinate the economy and capitalism in such a way as to ensure prosperity and stability for all firms. Greater efficiencies would smooth out the business cycle’s oscillations, minimizing unemployment and delivering a wider selection of goods to consumers.

In developing the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) in 1933, New Dealers explicitly drew on associational activities in their effort to end the economic depression. Businessmen welcomed Title I of the NIRA, which suspended the nation’s antitrust

laws and called for business to participate in drafting codes of conduct that would govern competitive practices. Organizations such as the American Bar Association and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supported this idea, and even the National Association of Manufacturers offered a lukewarm endorsement of the policy. Bernard Baruch and Hugh Johnson, both of whom had served on the War Industries Board during World War I, backed the NIRA, as did such leading businessmen as Gerard Swope, Henry Dennison, and Charles Abbot. Many of these individuals helped participate in the actual drafting of the legislation, and Hugh Johnson was placed in charge of the National Recovery Administration (NRA), which emerged from this work. The NRA not only reflected ideas about efficiency, planning, and competition that dated back to thinkers such as Thorstein Veblen and Frederick W. Taylor, it also found favor with such New Dealers as Rexford Tugwell. Although reluctant to trust businessmen, New Dealers saw in the NRA the possibility for the state to counter business's power by championing the interests of consumers, farmers, and labor. In practice, however, the codes of competition that were drafted under the NRA reflected the power and interests of larger businesses. In sectors as diverse as cotton textiles, steel, lumber, petroleum, and automobiles, for example, the NRA codes served to put in place government-sanctioned cartels, largely achieving big business's goals while minimizing the influence of consumers and labor. As time passed, the NRA's popularity waned. By the time the Supreme Court declared Title I of the NIRA an unconstitutional use of federal power in *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States*, the NRA had few remaining supporters.

BUSINESS AND THE NEW DEAL, 1935–1939

While businessmen initially looked to the New Deal to provide economic stability, they found most of Roosevelt's political agenda unpalatable. They were particularly upset by the New Deal's commitment to organized labor. Section 7(a) of NIRA's Title I, though, which enshrined the right of organized labor to collectively bargain with employers, was initially met with guarded acceptance by the business community. Businesses located in northern, higher-wage environments generally assumed

that it would improve their competitiveness relative to their southern counterparts, or simply accepted its inclusion as a price to be paid for the suspension of antitrust laws. When NIRA's Title I was struck down in *Schechter*, stronger protections for workers' rights to organize were incorporated into the language of the National Labor Relations Act, which became law in 1935 despite vigorous opposition from many business organizations. Business opposition to the Social Security Act of 1935, while noticeable, was somewhat less intense, in part because a number of firms characterized by welfare capitalism saw Social Security as a way to, in effect, transfer these sorts of programs to the federal government.

Measures such as the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 were also passed by Congress despite objections from businessmen and firms concerned about further government encroachment into what they declared was their right to manage labor relations as they saw fit. These issues were particularly salient in the steel, auto, and mining industries, where such businessmen as Myron Taylor of U.S. Steel and Alfred Sloan of General Motors confronted labor leaders like John L. Lewis and Walter Reuther. Such events as the 1936 to 1937 Flint sit-down strike and the 1937 Memorial Day massacre outside of Republic Steel in Chicago graphically demonstrated the high stakes of the conflict between labor and business, driving home to businessmen the importance of trying to shape public policy and public opinion. This effort had taken a number of forms throughout the Great Depression, but one of the most prominent organizations to emerge was the American Liberty League, founded in 1934 with financial backing from the DuPont family. Along with the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Association of Manufacturers, and a number of other organizations, the American Liberty League led the public relations effort against President Roosevelt and the New Deal. It opposed deficit spending by the federal government, objected to Roosevelt's court-packing plan, and tried to influence the rewriting of the federal tax code.

Although businessmen had little success in rehabilitating their public image during the 1930s, with the coming of war they found a new chance

to recapture the public's trust and respect. Many businessmen took a leave of absence from their private-sector employment in order to work for such new government bodies as the War Production Board, becoming "dollar-a-year men" (so named because, while retaining their private salaries, they took only minimal compensation from the government). While working for the government, they drew upon their expertise to advance the war effort. Investment banker Ferdinand Eberstadt, for example, developed and implemented the Controlled Materials Plan, which solved many of America's wartime production problems by controlling the allocation of copper, aluminum, and steel. After converting automobile production facilities to the building of airplanes, the United States managed to produce nearly 300,000 aircraft during the war, easily trumping the productivity of the other combatant nations. By the time the war ended, businessmen had made some strides in changing public opinion. By 1953, for example, David Lilienthal, a staunch New Dealer, published *Big Business: A New Era*, a glowing account of big business and its place in American society.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE; BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); BARUCH, BERNARD; CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; JOHNSON, HUGH; MORGAN, J.P., JR.; NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA).

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JASON SCOTT SMITH

BYRD, HARRY

Senator Harry Flood Byrd (June 10, 1887–October 20, 1966) led the Democratic Party political ma-

chine in Virginia. According to historian James T. Patterson, Byrd was one of the "irreconcilable Democrats," who voted against the New Deal beginning as early as 1935. He opposed the Franklin Roosevelt administration 65 percent of the time; only Senator Carter Glass, also from Virginia, opposed the New Deal more. Byrd became a significant member of the Republican-Democratic congressional coalition that emerged to oppose the New Deal by 1938.

Born in Martinsburg, West Virginia, and raised in Winchester, Virginia, Byrd was the scion of prominent Virginia families. He traced his lineage to the William Byrds, who had helped to settle colonial Virginia. Harry Byrd, however, downplayed his distinguished ancestry and preferred to think of himself as a "self-made" man. He left school at age fifteen to take over his father's bankrupt newspaper, the Winchester *Evening Star*. Byrd also began to invest in apple orchards, eventually becoming one of the largest apple producers in the country.

Both his father, Richard, and his maternal uncle, Henry Flood, were active in state politics, and they encouraged Byrd to run for office. Byrd's uncle was one of the key architects and leaders of the Democratic Party political machine, known simply as the "Organization." As his uncle's protégé, Byrd served in the state legislature from 1916 to 1925, and became chairman of the state Democratic Party upon his uncle's death. By the mid-1920s, Byrd had risen to lead the Organization. Efficient management and a restricted electorate assured the political success of Byrd and his favored candidates for state offices. Elected governor in 1926, Byrd reorganized the state government in an effort to eliminate waste and inefficiency. A fiscal conservative, Byrd earned a reputation for himself as a progressive. He focused on maintaining a balanced state budget, keeping state taxes low, and providing few social services.

In 1933, Byrd was appointed to the Senate when Claude Swanson joined Roosevelt's cabinet. Facing reelection in 1934, Byrd supported President Roosevelt and the New Deal programs. Yet, as a fiscal conservative, he voiced his concerns about the rapid expansion and reckless spending of the federal government. A champion of self-help, Byrd as-

serted that government work relief programs undermined individual character. Moreover, the New Deal, popular with both blacks and whites in Virginia, threatened to disrupt the political and social control of the Byrd machine. By 1935, Byrd openly opposed Roosevelt's policies, voting against the Wagner Labor Relations Act and Social Security. He secured an amendment to the Social Security Act that allowed states to determine how much aid they would contribute to the program. Through his influence, Virginia was the last state to join the program in 1938. Moreover, in 1936, at Byrd's urging, the Senate created a Select Committee to Investigate Executive Agencies of the Government and appointed Byrd chair. Throughout his career in the Senate, which lasted until his retirement in 1965, Byrd consistently criticized federal government expansion, large federal expenditures, and deficit spending.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; GLASS, CARTER; NEW DEAL.

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LARISSA M. SMITH

BYRNES, JAMES F.

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, of Irish Catholic parents, James Francis Byrnes (May 2, 1879–April 9, 1972) matured into the most influential southerner in the Depression-era Senate. Raised by his mother, a dress maker, and his maternal grandmother, the young Byrnes received a parochial school education and became a full-time clerk for a Charleston law firm at the age of fourteen. He studied law independently, and was admitted to the South Carolina bar in 1904. In 1910 Byrnes won South Carolina's second district by fifty-seven votes and entered the U.S. House of

Representatives. Dark haired and sharp featured, the young politician possessed an encompassing public persona that shielded a skillful, sly mind and an industrious spirit.

Intent on maintaining white supremacy, South Carolina's minority of Protestant white males controlled Byrnes' electoral base, which had suffered since 1876 from corrosive race baiting. Although Byrnes could have appeal to racial prejudices, he preferred to campaign on economic and social improvement platforms. He supported Woodrow Wilson's World War I administration and the formation of the League of Nations. He met Franklin Roosevelt at the 1912 Democratic convention, and during the Wilson years Byrnes benefited from Roosevelt's friendship. Byrnes refused to join the Ku Klux Klan and, in 1924, ran unsuccessfully for the Senate against the demagogic Coleman L. "Coley" Blease. Six years later, with the help of a new friend, Bernard Baruch, and the growing economic crisis, Byrnes defeated Blease.

Upon his nomination for president, Franklin Roosevelt drew politically shrewd Byrnes into the "Brains Trust," and the two men sustained a warm relationship throughout the 1930s. Possessing such confidants as Carter Glass, Joseph Robinson, and Byron "Pat" Harrison, Byrnes emerged as a key legislative leader for much New Deal legislation. Convinced that the Depression's origins lay at home, Byrnes opted for a planned economy. He participated as a calculating compromiser to help create the Emergency Banking Act, the Farm Credit Act, the Homeowners' Loan Act, the 1933 Economy Act, and such agencies as the Agriculture Adjustment Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and the National Recovery Administration. As a member of the Senate conference committee Byrnes also forged understandings that facilitated the establishment of the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1934.

Byrnes used work relief funds from the Public Works and the Works Progress Administrations (WPA) to alter the face of South Carolina. He sided with veterans to override a presidential veto of a bonus bill. Driven by the race-based politics of his constituency, he fought in 1935 the Wagner-Costigan proposal, a federal anti-lynching bill. Al-



James Francis Byrnes, 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

though Byrnes was ill during passage of such 1935 reforms as the National Labor Relations Act, the Eccles Banking Act, the Revenue Act, the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, and the Social Security Act, he nonetheless endorsed them on the basis that these new laws would benefit South Carolinians. In 1936 he easily won reelection to the Senate.

In 1937 Byrnes joined Roosevelt's attempt to reorganize the court system. Despite the alarm of many wealthy South Carolinians, Byrnes understood that the average voter preferred reform. When the reform effort failed, Byrnes bemoaned the political errors that prevented passage. Byrnes' votes against the Fair Labor Standards and Child Labor Acts also had their roots in the South Caroli-

na electorate and the increasingly urban tilt of the New Deal. Concurrently, his resistance to extension of the WPA was also rooted in the concerns of rural precincts where the agency's wage scales drew away labor and earned cotton growers' wrath. Byrnes actions were further shaped by his belief that the Depression was by this time lifting. After telling Roosevelt that he would stand with his friends, he supported conservative senators Walter George, Millard Tydings, Guy Gillette, and Ellison D. Smith when Roosevelt attempted to purge them from the Congress in 1938. Yet, Byrnes also helped reelect such New Dealers as Florida's Claude Pepper and Alabama's Lister Hill. While pundits claimed these actions marked a break with Roosevelt, the South Carolinian had refused to sign the

southern Conservative Manifesto authored by Josiah Bailey, who touted a conservative opposition to the course of the New Deal. Byrnes endorsed the 1938 Agricultural Adjustment Act, composed the 1939 Administrative Reorganization Law, and managed the refunding of the WPA.

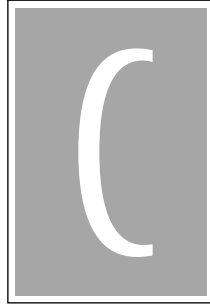
After trips to Japan and Germany in the mid-1930s, Byrnes feared future aggression. In 1938 he urged the Roosevelt administration to accept Jewish émigrés from Nazi persecution, and, as chair of the Navy appropriations subcommittee, he supported the expansion and increased preparedness of the U.S. Navy. Byrnes was appointed an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1941, but he resigned that post in 1942 to serve as Roosevelt's director of the economic stability. He later served as secretary of state from 1945 to 1947 during the Truman administration and as governor of South Carolina from 1951 to 1955.

See Also: BRAIN(S) TRUST; ISOLATIONISM; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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HENRY C. FERRELL, JR.



CAGNEY, JAMES

Born in New York City, James Cagney (July 17, 1899–March 30, 1986) was the son of an Irish bartender and his Norwegian wife. After graduating from Stuyvesant High School, Jimmy Cagney attended Columbia University. His show business career began in 1918 when he appeared in local vaudeville revues. This work led to his first role in a major Broadway show *Pitter Patter* in 1920. After an unsuccessful visit to Hollywood in 1922, Cagney danced with his wife, Frances Willard “Billie” Vernon, on the vaudeville circuit in New York. Cagney won critical notice for small stage roles and by 1929 he was a star on Broadway.

Cagney’s movie career began with the Warner Brothers musical *Sinner’s Holiday* (1930). The cocky redhead from the Lower East Side and Yorkville neighborhoods quickly became a movie star in the 1930s, often playing a fast-talking Irish-American tough guy. His roles in *Public Enemy* (1931) and *Smart Money* (1931) helped establish the gangster movie genre. Cagney was handsome, athletic, and versatile; his experience as a dancer was evident in his unique body movement and dynamic screen presence. But his ironic wit and comic talent led to a wide variety of roles, including those in *Blonde Crazy* (1931) and *Taxi* (1932).

Discontented with the Hollywood studio system, the independent New Yorker left Los Angeles for six months while renegotiating his contract in 1931. With his salary doubled, Cagney was one of the first Irish-American actors to achieve megastar status playing urban antiheroes. He had leading roles in nineteen films in the next four years. Depression-era audiences were charmed by the feisty big city wise guy in such hit movies as *Winner Take All* (1932), *Hard to Handle* (1933), *Lady Killer* (1933), and *Jimmy the Gent* (1934). His performance in *Footlight Parade* (1933) was among his most memorable. In this movie he played a light-footed Broadway stage director confronting the competition of talking motion pictures. Cagney danced and sang in three Busby Berkeley production numbers and was featured in the film’s tribute to the National Recovery Administration, reminding Depression-weary viewers how much they depended on President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Its lavish budget and strong supporting cast distinguished *Footlight Parade* from most of the Hollywood dream factory movies Cagney made in the 1930s.

Cagney’s performance in *Comes the Navy* (1934) helped that picture earn an Academy Award nomination for best picture, but many of his movies in the 1930s were less memorable. When Cagney teamed with his friend Pat O’Brien in nine movies, however, the Irish-American pair delighted audi-



James Cagney (second from right) as the gangster Tom Powers in the 1931 William Wellman film *The Public Enemy*. JOHN SPRINGER COLLECTION/CORBIS

ences with their wit and energy. The restless Cagney left Warner Brothers in 1935 to work with independent film companies but returned to earn his first nomination as best actor in *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938). Among the best roles he played in the 1930s was his part as a Prohibition racketeer in *The Roaring Twenties* (1939).

While Cagney was often described as cocky or pugnacious, his movie star qualities were more difficult to define. Perfectly suited for the hard times of the thirties, he possessed a gritty character with clipped speech and restless body language that moviegoers found irresistible. His political consciousness, as a founder of the Screen Actors Guild, his

criticism of Jack Warner's studio system, and his being a subject of a HUAC investigation in the late 1930s and 1940s, also suited the times.

James Cagney made more than ninety movies in his long and productive career, but he is best remembered for his tough guy roles in the fifty movies he made from 1930 to 1940. He retired to Martha's Vineyard in 1961 and received the American Film Institute Life Achievement Award in 1974. He died on March 30, 1986, at his farm in Stanfordville, New York.

See Also: BERKELEY, BUSBY; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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PETER C. HOLLORAN

CAHILL, HOLGER

Holger Cahill (January 13, 1887–July 8, 1960) was national director of the Federal Art Project of the Works Project Administration (WPA) from its inception in 1935 to its termination in 1943. Born Sveinn Kristjan Bjarnarsson, Cahill was the child of parents who immigrated to North Dakota from Iceland. He spent most his adolescence in a variety of manual jobs from Winnipeg to Shanghai before settling in New York City, where his connections with the arts community led him into journalism. He began taking courses at Columbia University and, from 1922, working for the Newark Museum in New Jersey, where he organized major exhibitions of American folk art. In 1932 Cahill became acting director of the New York City's Museum of Modern Art, for which he arranged an exhibition entitled "American Folk Art: The Art of the Common Man in America, 1750–1900." A prolific author and a respected authority on art, Cahill rejected conventional distinctions between "fine" and "folk" art, and he idealized the antebellum period when, he believed, the arts and society had been totally integrated through universal practice. Federal service provided Cahill with the opportunity to restore the arts to "the people," both as producers and consumers.

While the provision of relief for destitute artists was the Federal Art Project's principal function, Cahill sought to recover the "American culture pattern" in both the scope and diversity of its programs. This involved the promotion and dispersion of art throughout the nation. Art projects were established in thirty-eight states and the Federal Art Project employed some ten thousand artists who produced 128,000 murals, easel paintings, and sculptures and 240,000 prints that decorated schools, libraries, and other public buildings. The

sheer scale of the project was complemented by its variety. There were four dimensions to the Federal Art Project's work involving the promotion of creative art, art education, community service, and research. Almost 50 percent of its personnel were engaged in creative art, and the Federal Art Project assisted painters who would later become internationally renowned, including Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Willem de Kooning. Approximately, 25 percent of the Federal Art Project's workforce was involved in establishing 103 art centers that offered art classes in twenty-three subjects. Travelling exhibits and "Art Weeks" brought art to a wider public.

Cahill also oversaw the recording of an American vernacular tradition. The Index of American Design employed five hundred workers in thirty-five states and compiled 22,000 plates of textiles, furniture, ceramics, and other artifacts. For Cahill, the masses were crucial to the nation's art resources, and in 1939 he organized the "Contemporary Unknown American Painters" exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art. In contrast to his counterpart, Edward Bruce, who headed the Treasury Department's Section of Fine Arts, Cahill did not discriminate against the avant-garde, and major commissions were given to artists such as Stuart Davis and Arshile Gorky.

The WPA was a complex organization, and much of Cahill's work as director was consumed by administrative matters, such as liaison with state authorities, negotiations with unions, and political lobbying. Dependent upon annual congressional appropriations, the existence of the Federal Art Project was precarious and liable to the kind of swingeing budget cuts that occurred in 1936 and 1937. Cahill understood that the Federal Art Project was vulnerable because its per capita costs were 70 percent higher than for manual workers in the WPA, and his efforts to maintain the project in the face of widespread criticism required him, at times, to work a nineteen-hour day. When Congress abolished Federal One in 1939 and turned responsibility for the remaining arts projects to states, Cahill remained in a coordinating role, although he became less influential. If his vision for the integration of the arts and society was not fully realized, his efforts

provided relief for thousands of artists and nurtured those artists who would form the vanguard of abstract expressionism in the postwar era. After the termination of the federal art project in 1943, Cahill returned to New York City to concentrate on writing fiction.

See Also: ART; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP); FEDERAL ONE; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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STUART KIDD

CALDWELL, ERSKINE

Erskine Preston Caldwell (December 17, 1903–April 11, 1987) was a prolific writer whose novels, stories, and nonfiction about the American South combined burlesque humor, social criticism, brutal violence, and graphic sexuality. He was one of the Depression-era's most prominent and controversial literary figures.

The son of a reform-minded itinerant minister, Caldwell lived in seven southern states by the time he was twelve. Although he never received a high school diploma, he attended the University of Virginia, which he left without a degree in 1925 to work as a reporter for the *Atlanta Journal*. Dedicated to becoming a professional fiction writer, Caldwell quit the paper in 1926 and moved to Maine, where he lived in dire poverty and obscurity, gradually gaining notice for stories published in several of the era's little magazines.

The central theme of Caldwell's Depression-era writing is the agony of rural impoverishment. His first two novels, *Poor Fool* (1929) and *The Bastard* (1930), hard-boiled tales of amoral loners, attracted little critical or popular notice. Caldwell came to literary prominence with the publication of *Tobacco Road* (1932), the story of a family of destitute Georgia sharecroppers, the Lesters, stubbornly clinging to farmland that has been ruined by soil erosion. Lazy, licentious, and morally depraved, the Lesters' brutal, often obscene behavior culminates when one of the family's sons, Dude, backs his automobile over his grandmother, who is left unattended for hours until she is thrown, still alive, into an open grave. *God's Little Acre* (1933) narrates the story of the Waldens, another indigent farm family that has been digging futilely for gold on their barren land. The plot, noteworthy for the pornographic rendering of an adulterous sex scene, also includes the proletarian tale of a temporary takeover of a closed mill by the locked-out workers.

The 1933 theatrical adaptation of *Tobacco Road*, which became the decade's longest-running Broadway play and toured the country, brought Caldwell fame and financial security. The play's popularity outside the South, however, stemmed in part from the fact that the story was often played for comedy rather than social critique, and quite likely reinforced stereotypes about the degeneracy of southerners.

In addition to writing two other novels during the thirties, *Journeyman* (1935) and *Trouble in July* (1940), Caldwell also published hundreds of short stories, many about poverty, sex, and racism, in magazines and in five collections, including the critically-acclaimed *Kneel to the Rising Sun* (1935). In later decades, many of Caldwell's Depression-era novels were released as mass-market paperbacks, with astonishing results. By the early 1960s, he had sold over sixty million books and was being advertised as "the best-selling novelist in the world."

A committed, if idiosyncratic, leftist, Caldwell also wrote journalism designed to expose the horrors of American poverty. A 1935 series for the *New York Post* described the dire malnutrition suffered by several Georgia families, claiming that "men are so hungry that they eat snakes and cow dung." In

1937, Caldwell collaborated with celebrated photo-journalist Margaret Bourke-White, whom he would marry in 1939, on the decade's first major photo-essay book, *You Have Seen Their Faces*, which offered a pointed critique of economic exploitation in the rural South. However, some liberals, including James Agee, contended that Bourke-White's photographs were manipulative and that the book's depiction of the poor was sentimental and condescending.

Throughout his work, Caldwell sought to challenge romantic misconceptions of his native South by exposing the human costs of soil erosion and economic exploitation. However, the exceedingly debased nature of his characters often reinforced stereotypes of poor whites, African Americans, and women, and seemed to place blame on the very people Caldwell saw as victims, rather than on larger social structures. Moreover, the pornographic quality of his writing generated virulent protest, including campaigns to have his work banned in several cities.

Caldwell's work, a volatile blend of social protest, ribald humor, sexual frankness, and shocking violence, defies conventional aesthetic and political categories. He remains one of the Depression era's most enigmatic authors.

See Also: BOURKE-WHITE, MARGARET; LITERATURE; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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JOSEPH ENTIN

CANADA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

Like most of the industrialized world in the 1920s, Canada enjoyed an uneven prosperity during the latter years of that decade. Internal economic growth was based on speculation (in real estate and on the stock market) and a great wave of consumer spending on houses, automobiles, and household appliances, all financed on credit and promoted by a newly-developed advertising industry. When Wall Street led the way in a collapse of stock prices in October 1929, Bay Street in Toronto was only a heartbeat behind. Canadian businessmen did not initially see Black Tuesday as more than a temporary setback, but it was soon associated with a general economic collapse that was more serious and protracted in Canada than in almost any other "advanced" nation of the world.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

The Great Depression was hardly a uniquely Canadian phenomenon. It was the downward part of a periodic international economic cycle that affected all nations, although the industrialized suffered more. On the other hand, the Depression was arguably more severe in Canada than in almost any other nation except the United States. Officially recorded unemployment reached almost one-fifth of the labor force in Canada in 1933, but such statistics were only the tip of the iceberg. In Montreal, in 1934, almost 30 percent of the population was living on official assistance, and the figure for French-Canadians was almost 40 percent. The relief allocation in Montreal—\$21.88 per month—was well below the estimated cost of a "restricted diet for emergency use."

The government did not count independent farmers as unemployed, although many had negative incomes in the early 1930s. The prairie farm

community, especially, suffered through drought and bad harvests in these years, which meant that farm families did not always have their own harvests to eat. Omnipresent dust became the symbol for the Depression in western Canada. The government did not count independent fishermen or timberers as unemployed either, and most significantly of all, it did not count women. In the worst years, therefore, fewer than half of those Canadians who wanted a paying job were able to find one.

Two major factors made the Canadian economic situation so serious. One was proximity to and involvement in the American economy because the United States was even more hard-hit by the depression than Canada. The other was the extent of Canadian reliance on the production and sale abroad of raw materials ranging from grain to lum-

ber to minerals. The bottom dropped out of the international market for such goods in 1929, and it did not recover until much later in the 1930s. Canadian manufacturing production also dropped by one-third between 1929 and 1933. But Canada had other problems as well, including political and constitutional arrangements that militated against active policies of social assistance and social insurance to those Canadians who were suffering.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROBLEMS

Canada was a federal state, and sections ninety-one and ninety-two of the British North America Act—the largest part of the Canadian constitution created by act of the British Parliament in 1867—carefully distinguished between the powers of the federal government and the powers of the prov-

inces. Provincial powers included almost all of the powers relevant to social conditions. But the provinces were not given commensurate powers of taxation and revenue-raising, largely because the nineteenth-century Fathers of Confederation had never anticipated vast amounts of expenditure on health, welfare, and unemployment. Moreover, the Canadian constitution made absolutely no mention of cities or municipalities, which bore much of the burden for urban unemployment but had little tax base except real property. The municipalities dispensed much-needed relief on a cheeseparing basis that made no effort to maintain the dignity of the recipients.

During the early 1930s, constant political struggle occurred between the federal government and the provincial governments, but also between the

provincial governments and the municipalities. The federal government refused to expend money on relieving unemployment because of “constitutional limitations.” Not until the 1935 election did the government in power pay much attention to the cries of the destitute. As for the provinces, they blamed their failure to act on the “feds.” In the midst of the finger-pointing, a federal Employment and Social Insurance Act of 1935 was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court of Canada because it violated provincial authority.

Ideological constraints were probably as important as constitutional limitations in hamstringing federal action during the Depression. R. B. Bennett, the Canadian prime minister from 1930 to 1935, lacked imagination and a willingness to experiment in active government. A typical Conservative, for

most of his administration he balanced his budget and sought international economic improvement chiefly through a "Canada First" protectionist policy combined with imperial preference. In 1935 he announced a sudden conversion to activism, however, telling a national radio audience, "I am for reform. I nail the flag of progress to the mast. I summon the power of the state to its reform." Most Canadian voters did not believe that Bennett's new policy was anything but opportunism though, and voted instead for Mackenzie King's Liberals, who had promised very little but had the solid backing of the electorate in Quebec. What Bennett's "conversion" did represent, however, was a growing realization by large segments of the Canadian business and professional community that only a stabilized economy could stave off a major political and social upheaval.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Given the extent of unemployment, especially in the resource sector of the economy, and the limited forms of social assistance, life was extremely hard for large numbers of Canadians during the Depression. In many regions, particularly those outside Ontario and Quebec, virtually the entire population was on the dole or thrown entirely on their own resources. Conditions were particularly hard on women, upon whose shoulders as housewives and mothers was thrown the burden of maintaining the coherence and integrity of the family in the midst of economic crisis. Perhaps the most publicized wife and mother was Elzire Dionne, who gave birth to identical quintuplets in May of 1934. The Dionnes were classic examples of impoverished farmers, living in a northern Ontario home without plumbing and electricity. The province of

Ontario swiftly removed the photogenic quints from the control of their parents, declaring them wards of the Crown, on the grounds that the Dionnes could not possibly bring them up appropriately.

For the half of the population that had employment, life during the thirties was often quite a pleasant experience. Food, housing, and consumer goods were relatively cheap, and servants and services were readily available at bargain rates. In Montreal, laundresses who washed and ironed by hand in their own homes earned \$2 per day. Economic conditions certainly improved dramatically in the late part of the decade, especially in the urban areas of Ontario and Quebec.

For Canada's First Nations, especially the Métis, there was a general sharing in the drought

conditions on the Prairies and the overall Depression markets and employment opportunities. At the same time, the Department of Indian Affairs experienced administrative cutbacks leading to much inactivity and confusion, and the 1930s actually saw a considerable growth of organization among aboriginal peoples. The Métis organized l'Association des Métis d'Alberta in 1930, while on the West Coast the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia was founded in 1931, and the Pacific Coast Native Fisherman's Association in 1936.

One of the major social effects of the Depression was to widen the gap in Canada between the nation's poor—like the Dionnes—and a well-to-do and well-educated elite. Contrary to predictions, universities maintained or even added to their en-

rollments during the decade, increasing the proportion of females among their student bodies in the process. Despite administrative belt-tightening, for students and faculty alike, life within the ivory tower was good. Canadians who spent the Depression on the wrong side of the economic divide would be understandably extremely eager, after the end of World War II, to ensure that they were allowed to participate in the postwar era of prosperity.

MOVEMENTS OF POLITICAL PROTEST

Organized parties of protest and radical reform abounded in the "Dirty Thirties." During the early years of the Depression, however, only the Communist Party of Canada offered a national voice for Canadian popular discontent, creating in 1930 a National Unemployed Workers' Association that within a year had 22,000 members across the country. The Communists could be charged with follow-

ing the commands of the Communist International, and were quickly repressed by section 98 of the Criminal Code, introduced in 1919 during the earlier "red scare" to outlaw the advocacy of revolutionary agitation. Eight Communist leaders were arrested in August 1931, and although they were subsequently released, the party had lost its momentum and never recovered it. A few Fascists were to be found over the decade, but they were never taken seriously.

The League for Social Reconstruction (LSR), which held its first convention in Toronto in January 1932, sought a "planned and socialized economy." The LSR was proudly non-Marxist and non-revolutionary, and considered itself merely an elitist educational organization. Not until 1933 did the LSR participate in the formation of a new political party, formed by representatives of farmers' and labor organizations at Regina, Saskatchewan. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (or CCF,

as it was usually called), emphasized economic planning and a series of universal welfare measures that would be introduced after necessary amendments had been made to the British North America Act. The CCF attracted over 300,000 votes in the 1933 British Columbia provincial election, and won 8.9 percent of the popular vote nationally (seven parliamentary seats). The new MPs were led into the House of Commons by J. S. Woodsworth and T. C. Douglas. But the CCF would subsequently enjoy strong support in only a few provinces (notably British Columbia and Saskatchewan) and would make no inroads east of Ontario.

Other newly-organized movements of protest existed on mainly a provincial or regional basis. Most had populist roots. Perhaps the most influential of the new creations was the Social Credit Party of Alberta, which emerged out of the travails of farmers in that province. Social Credit was developed by a Calgary schoolmaster and radio preacher, William Aberhart (1878–1943), who had broadcast for the Prophetic Bible Institute over the West's most powerful radio station, CFCN, since 1924. In 1932, Aberhart was converted to the economic theories of a Scottish engineer named C. H. Douglas, a monetary theorist who believed that capitalism was incapable of distributing purchasing power to the masses of people. Douglas advocated the distribution of money, in the form of "social credit," to enable people to buy the goods and services they produced. Aberhart took over these theories, which he did not fully understand, and converted them into a practical platform overlaid with fundamentalist evangelicalism. He emphasized state intervention in the economy and the issuance of a social dividend (eventually set at \$25 per month) to all citizens as part of their cultural heritage. The new party swept to victory at the polls in 1935. Over the next few years, much of its economic program would be disallowed by the federal courts as unconstitutional. But the party remained in power in Alberta until 1972. Versions of Social Credit sprang up all over the western provinces, and a British Columbia variant would govern British Columbia for over twenty years beginning in 1952.

In Quebec, a popular leader with tendencies toward demagoguery emerged in 1933 in the person

of Maurice Duplessis (1890–1959). Duplessis rode to power in 1935 on the backs of the Catholic social action movement and a Quebec nationalism associated with the Action Libérale Nationale (ALN). These two movements merged to create a powerful force for attacking the capitalist system. Duplessis insisted that Quebec was owned by foreigners. What was needed was "l'achat chez nous" ["buying at home"] and the destruction of the great financial establishments. When in power, Duplessis quickly abandoned the reform program that brought him into office, retaining mainly only a concern for provincial autonomy, a fervent anti-Communism—the "Padlock Act" of 1937 closed any place suspected of disseminating Communist propaganda—and a paternalist program of grants and handouts for the disadvantaged. Like Social Credit, the program of Duplessis's Union Nationale Party was far different from its campaign promises, but the party remained in power until well after World War II.

Perhaps the most effective movement of Catholic social action occurred in the Maritime region, peopled by farmer-fishers who had no control over marketing and distribution. The Antigonish movement gained its impetus from two Roman Catholic priests at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia—Father James Tompkins and Father Moses Coady—who advocated that small producers regain power over their own production and consumption through economic cooperation in the forms of cooperative banks, stores, and marketing agencies. The Antigonish ideology, like most populist movements of the Depression in Canada, was a curious mixture of radical rhetoric and conservative attitudes, well designed to appeal to small producers.

From a political and constitutional perspective, the most extreme action of the 1930s occurred not in Canada but in its neighboring Dominion of Newfoundland. The economy of Newfoundland was so dependent on fish and other extractive resources that failed to find markets in the early 1930s that the government was not only forced to declare bankruptcy but to place itself under the tutelage of Great Britain, which administered Newfoundland through appointed trustees. The trusteeship remained until, by a series of contorted steps, New-

foundland finally joined the Canadian Confederation in 1949.

PUBLIC VIOLENCE

The thirties in Canada were periodically punctuated by outbreaks of public discontent that often turned to violence. Some of the violence occurred when spontaneous demonstrations were broken up by authorities apprehensive of the threat to social order. This was the case in both a famous riot in Vancouver in 1935 and in a subsequent riot in Regina that occurred when police armed with baseball bats moved to disperse a group of unemployed Canadians travelling to Ottawa to protest their situation. Much of the violence resulted from confrontations between organized labor and the authorities. On the whole, labor unions did not flourish during the hard times of the 1930s, but many workers fought desperately to maintain their position. Police and even the militia were often called upon in strike situations. Some strikes were gestures of desperation, such as that by coalminers in Saskatchewan in 1931, which ended in a riot in Estevan. Later in the decade, when economic conditions were better and workers attempted to organize industrial unions in the factories, both management and governments desperately opposed such actions. A notable strike occurred in 1937 in a General Motors plant in Oshawa, which resulted in a victory by the newly formed Committee of Industrial Organization (CIO, later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations). What is perhaps the outstanding feature of public discontent in Canada was how seldom it led to violence and how little damage was done to life and property.

RISE OF SOCIAL WELFARE

As in most jurisdictions, the length and intensity of the Depression in Canada dramatized the inadequacy of the existing arrangements for social justice, thus giving a substantial boost to debate over schemes of social protection, especially in the public sector. Contrary to much popular mythology, a fair amount of social insurance was in existence in Canada before the Depression and was extended during the 1930s, almost entirely on a provincial basis. Little reform occurred on a national or federal level, however, leading critics to argue that Canada

lagged behind other nations in its social welfare provisions, although by the early 1940s, all national political parties were committed to reform.

A general old-age pension scheme had been introduced by the federal government in 1927, jointly financed by both levels of government and administered by the provinces. It paid a maximum of \$20 per month to British subjects over the age of seventy. Despite other constitutional limitations, the federal government was clearly responsible for veterans, and various health and pension schemes for those who had fought in World War I took up a substantial proportion of the federal budget in the 1930s. Several provinces attempted to introduce public health-care insurance during the Depression, but were opposed by the medical profession. On the other hand, the doctors in some provinces did introduce their own schemes of health-care insurance, which became the basis of Blue Cross coverage. Compulsory national unemployment insurance was introduced in 1940 following a constitutional amendment. However, most national Canadian social insurance schemes were introduced on a piecemeal basis well after the Depression was over.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Canada had achieved world recognition as an independent nation as a result of World War I, and became a dominion, an autonomous community within the British Empire, as a result of the Westminster Conference of 1930. Throughout the Depression, Canada was an active member of the League of Nations and during the decade developed a small but highly skilled Department of External Affairs, with an extremely limited social view of the world. In 1935 the nation executed a major change of international policy by negotiating a most-favored nation treaty with the United States. This treaty signaled a new emphasis on the Canadian-American relationship, as Canada began to disengage from the British Empire and adopted a continentalist position. Like most of the participants in World War I, Canada was slow to rearm. Indeed, during most of the 1930s it spent less than \$1 per capita annually on its military establishment. Canada was for obvious reasons reluctant to come out of

its isolationist shell, although events in Europe and elsewhere around the world gradually forced its engagement. The Canadian government fully supported the British policy of “appeasement” in the later 1930s, and was hardly prepared for World War II.

One of the consequences of events in Europe was the emergence of a large number of refugees from Nazi persecution, most of them Jews. Canadian authorities showed little interest in assisting these people, and in 1938 actually began limiting Jewish immigration, despite desperate pleas from its Jewish community, which offered to finance refugees at no cost to the government. A general Canadian suspicion of Jews was even more virulent in Quebec, and the government of William Lyon Mackenzie King was—like previous Canadian governments—obsessed by the need for assimilable newcomers. Canada continued to drag its feet on refugee policy, and never accepted more than a few thousand Jewish refugees. Since the nation was desperately short of scientific, intellectual, and cultural talent, in even the crassest of non-humanitarian terms its refugee policy was a disaster. In moral terms, the Canadian attitude—summed up by one of its mandarins as “None is too many”—was unconscionable, particularly since the country constantly lectured the world from a high moral pedestal.

CANADIAN CULTURE

Perhaps paradoxically, the period of the Depression was in some ways a very positive one for the development of a distinctive Canadian culture, although most popular culture remained dependent on the United States. Many of the unemployed found solace in their local public libraries, and more than one radical political critic and writer first found his or her voice in the library stacks. The federal government, which was publicly responsible for regulating the airwaves, had received a report from a royal commission in 1929 calling for the nationalization of radio, as in Great Britain, instead of allowing private broadcasters, as in the United States. The government eventually decided on a dual system—both public and commercial—establishing by the Broadcasting Act of 1932 the

Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission, which in 1936 became the publicly-operated Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with extensive English and French language networks. Over the years, the CBC has been the principal patron of Canadian cultural content in the nation, and during the late 1930s it served as the Canadian equivalent of the writers’ branch of the Works Progress Administration.

On a less public level, the governor-general of Canada, the Earl of Bessborough, spearheaded the creation of the Dominion Drama Festival in 1932, which served to promote amateur regional theater throughout Canada. The Dominion Drama Festival was able to take advantage of a strong upsurge of interest in the theater during the Depression, which came about partly because so many Canadians had free time on their hands and partly because radical intellectuals found drama, poetry, and art to be ideal mediums for expressing their discontent with the status quo. Much of the most original creative work done in the 1930s in Canada came from the radicals, who were neither part of the university establishment nor of Americanized popular culture.

CONCLUSION

Somehow Canada managed to survive the Depression with its social fabric relatively intact, only to lurch unexpectedly into World War II. Many Canadians were forced to defer their expectations of a better life for nearly an entire generation. They were as a result eager both to participate in the postwar prosperity and to insure through the gradual elaboration of a network of social welfare provisions that the people of Canada would never again experience such privations.

See Also: AFRICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; ASIA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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J. M. BUMSTED

CAPONE, AL

A child of Brooklyn, New York, Alphonse Capone (January 17, 1899–January 25, 1947) found notoriety and wealth in Chicago through organized crime. Capone was born to an Italian immigrant family in 1899. Though a promising student, he left school in the sixth grade, and from then it was a life in the streets. Capone was probably twenty when he killed his first victim. Three years later, he followed Johnny Torrio, his mentor in crime, to Chicago. Together, they built a model criminal organization.

Torrio was a modernizer who did for gambling, prostitution, and the Prohibition-era sale of liquor what John D. Rockefeller had for the oil business. The automobile and telephone—as well as the Thompson submachine gun—were some of the modern tools Torrio employed. When a 1925 assassination attempt left him wounded, Torrio retired and left the business to his protégé.

Like Torrio (and Rockefeller, Sr.), Capone rationalized the marketplace with a pool arrange-

ment, where different gangs were allowed control of different sections of the city. Anyone dissatisfied with their share met a bloody end. The seven victims of the 1929 St. Valentine's Day Massacre were but one example.

Perhaps Capone's true genius lay in his crafting a public image. "They call Capone a bootlegger," he once complained. "Yes. It's bootleg while it's on the trucks, but when your host at the club, in the locker room or on the Gold Coast hands it to you on a silver platter, it's hospitality" (Bergreen, p. 268). Such comments always served Capone well with the public. So did his reputation for generosity: When the Depression struck Chicago with nearly 50 percent unemployment, Capone opened up soup kitchens to feed the needy. The public did not care that Capone "encouraged" others to pay the cost of his project—Big Al lent a helping hand at a time when government did not. "Capone has become almost a mythical being in Chicago," (Bergreen, p. 402) one critic lamented in 1930. Hollywood gave the story form a year later with Edward G. Robinson as Little Caesar, who was Capone by any other name. The press had already made much of Capone as a kind of street philanthropist.

Capone was grossing some \$100 million annually by the late 1920s. This wealth proved his undoing, or at least his failure to report it did—he was convicted of income tax evasion in 1931 and spent eight years in federal prisons, including Alcatraz. By then, Capone had fashioned a myth for the Depression and beyond. He was the gangster as antihero. Capone died from the ravages of syphilis in 1947.

See Also: CRIME; LAW ENFORCEMENT; PROHIBITION.

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DOUGLAS BUKOWSKI

CAPRA, FRANK

Frank Capra (May 18, 1897–September 3, 1991) was a motion picture director, producer, and writer who



Clark Gable as reporter Peter Warne and Claudette Colbert as heiress Ellie Andrews in Frank Capra's 1934 romantic comedy *It Happened One Night*. THE KOBAL COLLECTION

won three Academy Awards for best director in the 1930s. Born in Bisacquino, Sicily, Capra emigrated at the age of six with his family to Los Angeles, where he grew up. In the early 1920s, after graduating from Throop College of Technology (now Caltech), he wrote gags for movie producers Hal Roach and Matt Sennett. After writing material for screen comic Harry Langdon, Capra directed three films starring Langdon in 1926 and 1927 before the two had a falling-out.

In 1928, Capra was hired by Harry Cohn, head of Columbia Pictures. Between 1928 and 1933, Capra would direct nineteen features for Columbia, including *American Madness* (1932), a film about the collapse of a bank, which anticipated many of the themes of Capra's later social films. In 1931, Capra

began working with screenwriter Robert Riskin, who would go on to write most of Capra's major films of the 1930s.

Although Capra had begun to make a name for himself during the early 1930s, his first huge hit came with *It Happened One Night* (1934). The film concerns an heiress (Claudette Colbert) who is secretly traveling from Miami to New York to escape her father. She is discovered by an out-of-work newsman (Clark Gable), who senses that her tale might make a good scoop. Naturally, the two fall for each other. *It Happened One Night* helped to create the screwball comedy, one of Hollywood's most important subgenres during the 1930s. It also established Capra as one of Tinseltown's most popular and powerful directors. *It Happened One Night*

swept the Oscars, garnering the awards for best picture, director, writer, actor, and actress.

With the exception of *Lost Horizon* (1937), a box-office disappointment that led to a bitter rift with Cohn and tensions with Riskin, Capra's success continued unabated over the next several years. *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1936) earned Capra his second best director Oscar. A third arrived with *You Can't Take It with You* (1938). *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939) and *Meet John Doe* (1941) capitalized on the success of *Mr. Deeds* with similar plots about a little man taking on corrupt and powerful interests. The darkly comic *Arsenic and Old Lace* (produced 1941–1942; released 1944) was just wrapping production when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Shortly thereafter, Capra became an officer in the Army Signal Corps, where he supervised the *Why We Fight* series of propaganda films during World War II.

After the war, Capra directed two more significant films: *It's A Wonderful Life* (1946), which despite later becoming his most watched film never found an audience at the time of its release, and *State of the Union* (1948). Thereafter, Capra's career experienced a rapid decline.

Critics and audiences have sometimes seen Capra's 1930s films, especially the social trilogy of *Mr. Deeds*, *Mr. Smith*, and *John Doe*, as cinematic embodiments of the spirit of the New Deal. On closer inspection they are less clearly liberal. Capra's own politics were far from Rooseveltian: He was a lifelong conservative Republican. While Capra's most important screenwriter, Riskin, was a New Deal liberal, another important writer on his pictures, Myles Connolly, was a reactionary anti-Communist. Out of this political stew emerged films that, perhaps unintentionally, illuminate the ambiguities of American populism during the Great Depression. Although Capra's films centered on tribunes of the little man, often their heroes' most implacable foe was the people themselves: the panicked crowd trying to withdraw their money from the bank in *American Madness*; the thousands of letters calling for Senator Smith's resignation in *Mr. Smith*; or the angry throng at the stadium in *John Doe*.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON.

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BENJAMIN L. ALPERS

CARDOZO, BENJAMIN N.

Benjamin Nathan Cardozo (May 24, 1870–July 9, 1938) served as an associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1932 until 1938. Cardozo was born in New York City and earned his law degree at Columbia University. He was admitted to the New York bar in 1891 and gained a reputation for his scholarly approach to law and his belief that the law should be adapted to modern conditions. Cardozo was appointed to the New York Court of Appeals in 1914 and was elevated to its chief judgeship in 1926. He served on this state court until President Herbert Hoover appointed him to replace retiring Supreme Court justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., in 1932.

Like Holmes and Louis Brandeis, Cardozo was a legal realist and a pre-New Deal progressive who believed that the Constitution, especially as it affected state governments, should be flexible, and that states should have broad discretion to make laws to solve or alleviate social and economic problems resulting from industrialization and urbanization, such as child labor, unsafe working conditions, and abusive business practices. In such cases as *MacPherson v. Buick* (1916) and *Ultramares Corporation v. Touche* (1931), Cardozo wrote decisions for

New York that respectively expanded the legal responsibilities of businesses in product liability and fraud cases. A series of lectures that Cardozo gave at Yale Law School reflected these ideas and opinions and was published as a book, *The Nature of the Judicial Process*, in 1921.

Cardozo, like other pre-New Deal progressives, was more willing to grant the states, rather than the federal government, broader powers to enact labor, social welfare, and regulatory reforms. Since the early New Deal emphasized economic planning and the regulation of prices, wages, and production through codes made and enforced by the executive branch, Cardozo joined the majority of the Supreme Court in striking down the National Industrial Recovery Act in the *Schechter* decision of 1935. Cardozo dissented, however, in the Supreme Court's anti-New Deal decisions in the *Butler* and *Carter* cases of 1936. In *Butler*, he and Brandeis joined Harlan Stone's dissenting opinion. Harlan claimed that the Agricultural Adjustment Act should be upheld since because Congress had the constitutional authority to regulate agricultural production through excise taxes. In *Carter*, Cardozo wrote a dissenting opinion arguing that the Guffey Coal Act should be upheld since the commerce clause gave Congress the authority to regulate the prices, wages, and trade practices of the interstate coal industry.

By 1937, he belonged to the pro-New Deal majority on the court. After Cardozo's death in 1938, he was replaced on the Supreme Court by Felix Frankfurter.

See Also: BRANDEIS, LOUIS D.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL, JR.; SUPREME COURT.

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SEAN J. SAVAGE

CARTOONS, POLITICAL

Political cartoons, or editorial cartoons, serve as a commentary on current events. From the first use of such cartoons in newspapers and periodicals in the early nineteenth century to the Great Depression in the 1930s and thereafter, political cartoons have played a major role in shaping public perceptions and opinions. By using satire rather than mere humor, political cartoons communicate the views of the cartoonist and add depth to an editorial in a newspaper or magazine.

FAMOUS POLITICAL CARTOONISTS OF THE 1930s

Several political cartoonists gained fame for their work during the Great Depression, including Clifford Berryman, Herb Block, J. N. "Ding" Darling, Jerry Doyle, Rollin Kirby, and Fred O. Seibel.

J. N. "Ding" Darling. Jay Norwood Darling (1876–1962) received the Pulitzer Prize twice for his editorial cartooning (1924 and 1943) and was named the best cartoonist by the nation's top editors in 1934. From 1906 until his retirement in 1949, Darling chronicled the thoughts, ideas, trends, and politics of the United States primarily for the *Des Moines Register*, although his cartoons appeared in newspapers throughout the United States. He was particularly noted for his wit and his use of political satire, especially in relation to conservation policy. Darling's interest in conservation led in 1933 to his being appointed chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Although Darling was a strong Republican and not a supporter of Roosevelt's New Deal policies, he nevertheless was an energetic promoter of conservation projects and his cartoons often emphasized the value of governmental regulations that could benefit the environment. The J. N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island in Florida is named after him.

Herb Block. Another popular Depression-era cartoonist was Herbert L. Block (1909–2001). Block published his first editorial cartoon, titled "This is the forest primeval—", six months before the 1929 New York Stock Exchange crash that marked the



A 1938 cartoon by Clifford Berryman depicting President Roosevelt encircled by playful children, each symbolizing a New Deal program. CORBIS

onset of the Great Depression. Like Darling, Block was interested in protecting nature and the environment, especially the cutting of America's virgin forests, and he addressed these concerns in his cartoons. Block's interest in nature later broadened into concern for the economic and international environment that developed in the 1930s.

Block started his career as a cartoonist for the *Chicago Daily News* in 1929. In 1933, he started working as a syndicated cartoonist under the name HerBlock for the Newspaper Enterprise Association, a feature service headquartered in Cleveland.

He joined the *Washington Post* in 1946, and stayed there for the rest of his career. During the Depression he provided superb commentary about unemployment and poverty in the United States and the rise of fascism in Europe. One cartoon, titled "Well everything helps," depicts Hoover fishing at Rapidan River with members of Congress and his administration. Block comments on the deepening Depression by showing Hoover reviewing his "economic program" with his fishing line in the water, and later selling his catch of fresh fish on a street in Washington, D.C.

Block's cartoons addressed many aspects of the Great Depression and his editorial comments were a rallying call for reform. Though Block was supportive of New Deal policies, he nonetheless questioned Roosevelt's efforts in some areas, notably the president's unsuccessful attempt in 1937 to pack the U.S. Supreme Court. Block was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning in 1942, 1954, and 1979, honors that confirmed his reputation as one of the country's leading political cartoonists.

Jerry Doyle and Fred O. Seibel. Gerald "Jerry" Doyle (1898–1986) and Fred O. Seibel (1886–1968) were two of the more popular political cartoonists of the New Deal era. They were especially noted for their distinctive depictions of Roosevelt. Seibel was an editorial cartoonist from 1926 to 1968 for the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, while Doyle spent most of his career at *The Philadelphia Record* and *Philadelphia Daily News*. Doyle's sophisticated drawings generally expressed support for Roosevelt, whom he depicted as tall, imposing, powerful, and larger-than-life. Doyle usually showed Roosevelt smiling, gave him titles such as "skipper" to show that he was in charge, and sometimes depicted him as a quarterback in football games. Seibel, whose drawings were less realistic in style, generally depicted Roosevelt as struggling and lacking control, with a protruding chin and a body like a penguin. Seibel's cartoons sometimes included an image of a magician pulling a rabbit out of a hat, which was meant to indicate that Roosevelt's policies would only succeed by magic. Neither Doyle nor Seibel, however, would hesitate to reverse his usual depiction of Roosevelt when, in the cartoonist's opinion, the subject matter warranted it. One of Doyle's most famous cartoons showed Roosevelt holding a picture of Hitler with Hitler's arms in a position of surrender and Roosevelt's elongated arms forming a V for victory.

DRAWING PRESIDENTS

Hoover and Roosevelt were regular subjects of political cartoons during the 1930s. In the first hundred days of Roosevelt's administration in 1933, cartoonists tended to show Roosevelt as a confident, strong, and energetic leader whose intentions

for the nation were good. These cartoons suggested that Americans sensed that the new president had faith in the future and could lead the nation out of hard times. The February 1934 issue of *Vanity Fair*, for example, includes a rugged-looking Roosevelt riding a bucking horse in the shape of the United States. By 1935, however, the country had only achieved a modest degree of recovery, and some political cartoonists began to express opposition to Roosevelt and his programs.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; HUMOR.

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WILLIAM ARTHUR ATKINS

CASTE AND CLASS

The terms *caste* and *class* are associated with an interpretation of American race relations that came to prominence in the late 1930s and was widely influential in both social scientific and applied social inquiry. Part of an older, historically-rooted trend toward more social scientific understandings of racial inequality, the caste and class school was nevertheless a product of Depression-era social thought and investigation. At a time rightly associated with deepening economic division and looming fear of "class warfare," the caste and class concept offered a powerful, if flawed, analysis of the depths and the consequences of racism in the United States.

The caste and class concept was first laid out in a brief 1936 essay by social anthropologist W. Lloyd

Warner, and it was more fully developed in a series of community studies conducted in the Depression-era South. Warner, who started his anthropological career studying aboriginal tribes in Australia, was among the leaders of a broader trend towards applying anthropological techniques honed in observing “primitive” cultures to “typical” American communities. It was in this type of study that he and others developed the caste and class concept. Indeed, in important ways the concept emerged out of the contrast between industrial New England and the post-plantation agricultural South. While still engaged in an ambitious study of the substantially ethnic but predominantly white city of Newburyport, Massachusetts, Warner launched a parallel study in Natchez, Mississippi. In Newburyport, as Warner reported in his famous *Yankee City series*, social relations were organized around an elaborate status hierarchy based on class, upheld not only by differences of wealth and income, but even more importantly by class-coded behavior, attitudes, and cultural traits. In Natchez, however, the picture was more complicated. In Natchez, there was not one, but two separate class hierarchies, one black and one white. They in turn existed within a rigid and pervasive caste system—an all-encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural system of racial subordination that was aimed at maintaining white supremacy. While at times caste and class worked in tension with one another, the overwhelming weight of the system was devoted to keeping African Americans—and especially the small black middle- and upper-classes—“in their place.” Conversely, no matter how low they were on the class hierarchy, whites always had the social, cultural, and psychological advantage over African Americans.

Although he was by no means the first to describe black/white relations as a caste system, Warner’s framework proved more widely influential—reflecting his own status as a prominent white social scientist, as well as the landmark empirical studies conducted using the caste and class concept. Studies such as John Dollard’s *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (1937), Hortense Powdermaker’s *After Freedom* (1939), and *Deep South* (1941) by Warner students Allison Davis, Burleigh Gardner, and Mary Gardner elaborated the interlocking

mechanisms of caste and class subordination in empirical detail. A series of studies commissioned by the American Council on Education investigated the impact of caste and class on black adolescent personality development. Important though they were in illuminating the structural and institutional dimensions of southern racism, what these studies shared—again reflecting a broader trend in contemporary social science—was a fascination with the cultural and psychological scars it left. African Americans in the South, or so the deeply flawed portrait that emerged from these studies suggested, had become “accommodated” to racial subordination in what threatened to become a self-perpetuating complex of repressed frustration, self-hatred, and, for the lower classes in particular, cultural “pathology.”

Criticized at the time for its basically static, pessimistic vision of American race relations, the caste and class framework was nevertheless important for drawing attention to the enduring reality of racism as a key factor in the persistence of African-American poverty and economic subordination—during and beyond the depths of the Great Depression. Its central analysis, however, left an ambiguous legacy that also endures: on the one hand, an argument for attacking the roots of white racism; on the other, a distorted cultural and psychological imagery of the African-American lower class.

See Also: CLASS; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS; SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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Alice O’Connor

CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Disagreement over the causes of the Great Depression began before the economic collapse that commenced in 1929 had even been given that name, and the disagreement has persisted ever since. Nor does the debate show any signs of imminent resolution in the early twenty-first century. Arguments over what caused the Great Depression are deeply entwined with economic, social, and political philosophy.

A major reason for the controversy is that the Depression seemingly disproved the efficacy of the unregulated free market. Defenders of the faith of classical free market economics are, therefore, obliged to seek elsewhere for the causes of the collapse of the economy following a decade of lowering taxes and lifting restrictions on business by successive Republican administrations. It is an article of dogma to them that an unfettered marketplace is self-correcting. Accordingly, devotees of Adam Smith's worldview must find fetters—some sort of government interference or regulation—on which to lay the blame.

WORLD WAR I AND THE ORIGINS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Although it was in many ways eclipsed by the second installment of the twentieth century's world conflict, World War I (or "the Great War" as it was still known at the time of the Depression) was a major source of much of what happened in the world for most of the remainder of the century, including World War II and the Cold War. The role played by the Great War in helping to produce the Great Depression was also significant. Although the death toll from World War I was relatively small for the United States, the war was catastrophic for many European nations.

The war's economic impact was similarly profound. The war stimulated and distorted the economies not only of the belligerent nations, but those of many nonbelligerents as well. Wartime inflation was followed by postwar deflation in most countries. During the war and for several months after the armistice, demand for American farm products,

especially grains, soared, as did prices. Such profitable conditions led American farmers to go deeply into debt to buy additional land and machinery. These happy circumstances for American farmers were, however, an artificial consequence of the war, which severely disrupted European agriculture. When the latter recovered rapidly after the war, the demand for the expanded production of American farms plummeted, helping (along with a sharp contraction in the money supply) to carry the economy into a sharp recession in 1920 and 1921. Agriculture was to remain in depressed conditions throughout the period of more general prosperity from 1923 to 1929.

The war also radically altered international finance. It transformed the United States for the first time from a net debtor nation into the world's largest creditor. Massive war debts owed by the British and French to American creditors were part of the economic landscape of the 1920s, as were the huge reparation payments the European victors demanded from Germany. The problem of war debts and reparations was a continuing irritant to the international economy in the twenties.

Perhaps more significant in its adverse effects on the world economy was the war's establishment of the United States in the role previously held by Great Britain as the world's banker or creditor-in-chief. This position carried with it responsibilities for which the Americans were ill prepared and that they were disinclined to shoulder. In particular, American political leaders of the twenties were committed to maintaining a favorable balance of trade, meaning that they wanted the nation to export more than it imported. This posture was, in the long term, incompatible with America's assumption of the position of the world's leading lender, because other countries had to sell more to the United States than they bought from it if they were to have the funds to repay the debts they owed to American creditors.

THE STOCK MARKET CRASH

This much can be stated categorically: Popular perceptions to the contrary notwithstanding, the stock market crash of October 1929 did not cause the Great Depression. Although hardly anyone re-

alized it at the time, the economic contraction that became the Depression had already begun in the summer of 1929, when the economy started to slow considerably.

“You know,” Herbert Hoover once remarked to journalist Mark Sullivan, “the only trouble with capitalism is the capitalists; they’re too damn greedy.” This is a truism that has been proven repeatedly, but it is also true that greed is a highly contagious disease against which few people’s immune systems provide much protection. This is particularly the case when those already infected are actively working to spread the contagion, as many of them were in the 1920s. (Du Pont executive and Democratic National Chairman John J. Raskob, for example, wrote a 1929 article entitled, “Everybody Ought to be Rich.”) The result was an epidemic of greed in the United States in the mid and late 1920s.

The first major outbreak of the disease in the decade occurred in Florida, where it took the form of real estate speculation. It began with the reality of the growing value of beachfront property in a place with warm winters that had been made accessible to well-to-do northeastern and midwestern residents by the development of the automobile and the construction of highways. Quickly, however, Florida real estate became a classic bubble in which prices rose far beyond realistic values, simply because they were rising. That is, speculators were willing to pay ever higher prices for land because they expected someone else to be willing to pay even more for it a week or a month later. The Florida bubble burst, as all bubbles that keep expanding ultimately must, following a severe hurricane in 1926, but the greed virus had already infected a different area: Wall Street (which was, in any case, its natural habitat).

The Great Bull Market of the late twenties was fueled by easy credit in the form of margin buying (buying stock by putting up a small percentage of its cost in cash and borrowing the rest “on margin,” using the stock itself as collateral for the loan). In a rapidly rising market, the “leverage” provided by margin buying made the possibilities for huge profits extraordinary. By the time the Federal Reserve sought to dampen the speculative fever in 1928 and

1929 by raising interest rates, the mania had taken on a life of its own. “Nothing matters as long as stocks keep going up,” the *New York World* said as 1929 began. “The market is now its own law. The force behind its advance are now irresistible.”

Historian Maury Klein sums up the situation well in his book *Rainbow’s End* (2001): “Put simply, too many people held too much stock on borrowed money.” When the economy began to slow in the summer of 1929, it sent signals to Wall Street that were disregarded by most investors, but heeded by many of the richest insiders. Among those who quietly got largely out of the market before the bottom fell out were Raskob (who apparently thought that he ought to remain rich while “everybody” lost their shirts), Bernard Baruch, Joseph P. Kennedy, and President Hoover himself.

The crash was a response to an already begun, but as yet invisible to most observers, Depression. It amounted to a spectacular funeral for the “New Era” of eternal prosperity that had been proclaimed a few years earlier. Funerals, it is worth remembering, do not cause death; they recognize the decedent’s passing, which has already occurred. Such was the relationship between the crash and the demise of prosperity.

The crash did, however, accelerate the downward spiral of the economy by wiping out much of the paper wealth of investors and by altering the previously euphoric outlook of so many people into one of pessimism, which led them to be much more cautious in their spending and investment. Both of these consequences of the crash further eroded demand.

MONETARY POLICY AND THE GOLD STANDARD

There is no question that the money supply can have profound effects on the economy. In the simplest terms, if the money supply is insufficient, prices must fall, which can lead to the sort of serious deflation that contributed to the Panic of 1893, the worst economic depression in American history prior to the Great Depression. If, on the other hand, the money supply grows faster than the demand for money, prices will rise, causing inflation. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, the most notable and recent

example of the potentially catastrophic consequences of runaway price increases was the hyperinflation that had gripped Germany in 1922 and 1923, when the exchange rate between the German and American currencies went in less than two years from 192 marks to the dollar to 4.2 *trillion* marks to the dollar. Annualized for the two years, this was an inflation rate in excess of a trillion percent a year. By November 1923, German money was essentially worthless.

Germany's horrible experience with hyperinflation contributed to the coming of the Depression in two important ways. First, it wreaked havoc on the German economy and those of several other central European countries, and they never fully recovered from the effects for the remainder of the decade. Second, the German disaster caused other nations to be unduly concerned with avoiding inflation when the more dangerous economic predator lurking in the shadows of late twenties prosperity was actually deflation. In their efforts to defend their nations against inflation, political and economic leaders inadvertently strengthened the building forces of deflation.

In the decades prior to World War I, most major countries had been on the gold standard, meaning that their currencies were convertible to a set amount of gold. This meant that the value of all currencies on the gold standard had a stable exchange rate with other currencies that were tied to gold. The gold standard was abandoned by most of the belligerents during World War I (the United States, a late entrant into the war, remained on the gold standard), but there was a concerted effort to restore it after the war. Because of the major disruptions of the war, exchange rates were allowed to float from 1919 to well into the 1920s. Such floating rates provided some protection against the problems in one or a few countries spreading to other countries, but most nations' governments were committed to returning to the gold standard with fixed rates of exchange as rapidly as possible. Great Britain did so in 1925 and France followed in 1928. By 1929, forty-five nations were on the gold standard.

By 1929, much of the world's gold was rapidly flowing into the United States and France. At-

tempts by various countries to keep their currencies at prewar exchange rates led them into deflationary policies, intended to cheapen the prices of their products on the international market and so bring gold back into their countries to support their currencies. These deflationary actions contributed to a worldwide contraction in economic activity.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE DEPRESSION

Technology was in three major respects a significant factor in creating the conditions that produced the Great Depression.

First, new technologies provided much of the impetus for the unprecedented prosperity of the 1920s. The development of important new products that large numbers of people can be persuaded to buy is often the driving force in periods of economic boom, as appears to have been the case with personal computers and the Internet in the boom of the 1990s. The development of such new consumer products encourages investment in new plants and equipment and provides employment for large numbers of workers. This was plainly the case with the automobile in the 1920s. The motor car was not new in the twenties; nor was its method of mass production, which had been perfected prior to World War I. What was new in the decade following that war was the enormous expansion of the market for cars and the rapid development of numerous industries that were stimulated by the mass ownership of automobiles. Among these booming industries of the prosperity decade that preceded the Depression were petroleum (exploration, drilling, refining, and retailing); steel production; road and highway construction (which pulled along the cement industry); and motels, diners, and tourist attractions.

Nor was the automobile alone among new technologies that had been developed by the early 1920s in providing fuel for the economy of the decade. Radio, little more than a promising curiosity at the decade's start, had spread across the nation and into the homes of a majority of Americans by 1929. Along with the automobile and, to a lesser extent, a variety of new household appliances, the swift rise of radio to the status of "necessity" for middle-class life provided an enormous stimulus to the economy.

It should be noted that while the potential market for radios and electrical appliances was huge, it was limited to areas where electricity was available. Although all densely populated parts of the United States were electrified, large expanses of rural America were not, so rural Americans were not part of the potential market for electrical devices. Additionally, while there was no such access barrier to farmers buying automobiles (and many did buy them), the fact that agriculture remained economically depressed throughout the decade also reduced the potential market for automobiles among the nation's farmers.

A rapid economic expansion induced by the products of new technology can be great while it lasts, but it is, almost by definition, limited in its duration. Once most consumers have purchased the new products, demand for them must decline. Businesses involved in the industries can try to lessen the effects of a saturation of the market for their products by trying to expand the potential number of consumers through lower prices and installment purchase plans. They can also use the introduction of new models and planned obsolescence to churn the market with repeat customers. Both of these strategies were employed to considerable effect in the second half of the 1920s. Even so, the trajectory of new sales of a new technology will almost always be downward as the market for the product approaches saturation.

If an economic boom that has been stoked by one or more new technologies is to continue after the market for it or them has been largely supplied, new technologies that can be made to appear to be necessities for consumers must be introduced. The lack of such additional new products in the second half of the 1920s is the second way in which technology played a significant part in causing the Depression. In terms of the development of new or significantly improved products, the ten-year period beginning in 1925 was probably the least productive time in the twentieth century. The only major new product introduced during those years, as the economy moved from extraordinary boom to unprecedented bust, was the electric refrigerator.

If technological innovation failed to introduce much in the way of new products during the late

1920s and early 1930s, that did not mean that there was a hiatus in technological advance. On the contrary, there was great technological advance in the methods for producing the products that had already been developed. During the 1920s, productivity of industrial workers increased by 50 percent or more. And, even while huge numbers of workers were jobless in the 1930s and wages were very low, technological advances in manufacturing processes continued, resulting in another 25 percent increase in productivity in that decade.

The effects of this sort of technological advance on the economy tend to be the opposite of those of the development of new products, and the rapid innovation in productive processes in the 1920s was the third major contribution of technology in laying the groundwork for the Great Depression.

Certainly process innovation requires some new investment, but it is usually on a much smaller scale than that required for manufacturing new products. Furthermore, improvements in the technology of production usually lead to the number of machines and buildings used to make products being decreased. Most important, the whole point of such innovations in process is to increase productivity, so they almost invariably result in fewer workers being employed to manufacture a given quantity of the ultimate consumer product. In the six years from 1923 to 1929, output per person-hour of labor in manufacturing in the United States increased by nearly 32 percent.

To summarize the role of technology in the Depression: Technological advances that introduced new products greatly stimulated the economy of the 1920s, but the lack of new products in the late 1920s placed a drag on the economy when the market for the earlier innovations became largely saturated. Continuing advances in the technology of producing already existing goods contributed to an increase in unemployment and to a lessening of demand, both because of the unemployment itself and because increased productivity without corresponding wage increases reduced the share of national income going to potential consumers (i.e., workers who remained employed).

INCOME DISTRIBUTION AND “UNDER-CONSUMPTION”

Both types of technological advance—new products and new processes to make them—contributed to a fundamental shift in the economy. Put simply, mass production necessitates mass consumption. In this new economy, therefore, it was essential that a large portion of the population have both the desire and the means to buy products that were not, by any standards of the past, necessary for them to have. “Now you have taken over the job of creating desire,” Hoover told advertisers in 1925. This meant that such traditional values as frugality and deferred gratification had to be undermined. Advertising served this objective by keeping “the customer dissatisfied,” as a 1929 article by a General Motors executive put it.

The whole idea of the new consumption-driven economy seemed odd to some observers. “It still escapes me why a prosperity founded on forcing people to consume what they do not need, and often do not want,” social critic Stuart Chase wrote in 1929, “is, or can be, a healthy and permanent growth.”

Persuading people that they should buy what they had not even known they wanted was, however, only the first step in achieving the level of mass consumption needed to soak up the products of mass production. Effective demand requires money as well as motivation to buy. For this reason, as an economy becomes more dependent on mass consumption, it should move toward a less concentrated distribution of income. In the 1920s, just the opposite was happening. The slice of the national income pie going to the richest one percent of Americans grew from 12 percent in 1920 to 19 percent in 1929. This increasing maldistribution of income posed a serious threat to prosperity.

If a sufficient number of customers with desire and money to buy what the nation’s industry was producing could not be found at home, a possible solution would be to sell the excess abroad. But several obstacles blocked this route: First, as the world’s principal lender, the United States could not continually export more than it imported; second, tariff barriers constrained international trade; third, other industrial countries were facing similar

problems of overproduction and so they, too, sought to export more than they imported.

In the absence of some means of transferring a larger share of income to those who would buy the products coming off assembly lines—through taxation, higher wages, or deficit spending by the government, all of which went against the grain of popular thinking and the dominant political and economic philosophy of the era (indeed, tax cuts on upper income brackets in the Coolidge years helped to increase the maldistribution)—the only way to keep the economy going seemed to be to allow people who did not have enough money to buy products to buy them anyway. Advertising led people to hunger for products; credit let them, however briefly, satisfy that hunger. Selling products on credit became ever more popular as the twenties wore on. This process kept demand within shouting distance of supply for a few years beyond when the imbalance would otherwise have hit. But in postponing the day of reckoning, the rising burden of debt made the eventual fall much harder.

As he left a post-crash meeting of industrialists called by President Hoover on November 21, 1929, Henry Ford succinctly stated a major cause of the Great Depression then underway: “American production has come to equal and even surpass not our people’s power to consume, but their power to purchase.”

TARIFFS AND THE DECLINE OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE

Once the Depression had begun, the policies and actions of various governments around the world in reaction to it worsened the situation. Tariff barriers—led by the Hawley-Smoot Tariff in the United States, passed in 1930—were erected to protect domestic markets. These impediments to international trade added to the deflationary forces already at work, and the world economy slipped ever deeper into depression.

CONCLUSION

“One cannot recall when a new year was ushered in with business conditions sounder than they are today,” the *Wall Street Journal* gushed on January 4, 1929. Exactly two months later, Herbert Hoo-

ver proclaimed in his inaugural address that he had “no fears for the future of our country. It is bright with hope.” Following the stock market crash less than eight months later, President Hoover reassured the nation in the same terms the *Journal* had used at the year’s outset, saying that the economy was “fundamentally sound.”

The most comprehensive answer to the question of what caused the Great Depression is that conditions by the last year of the 1920s were quite the opposite of these optimistic pronouncements. Had the economy in fact been “fundamentally sound,” the stock market crash would surely have produced some deleterious economic fallout, but the decline would not have been nearly as steep, deep, or prolonged as it turned out to be. The unfortunate truth was that, in a variety of ways outlined in this entry—from international banking, war debts, and reparations, through the effects of the gold standard on money supply, the wild speculation of the decade’s orgy of greed, the lack of major new products combined with rapid increases in productivity, the economy’s new dependence on mass consumption, and widespread consumer debt, to the growing maldistribution of income, the economy was fundamentally unsound in 1929. That many-faceted unsoundness caused the Great Depression.

See Also: EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; LAISSEZ-FAIRE; MONETARY POLICY; SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY; STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929).

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

CCC. *See* CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS; COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION.

CERMAK, ANTON

Before there was a Roosevelt coalition of reformers, organized labor, and ethnics, there was a Cermak coalition. This one elected a mayor of Chicago and might have accomplished more had Anton Cermak (May 9, 1873–March 6, 1933) not been assassinated while meeting with president-elect Franklin Roosevelt.

Cermak was born in Kladno, Bohemia, now part of the Czech Republic. Cermak came with his family to the United States as an infant, and grew up in Braidwood, a coal-mining community southwest of Chicago. He made his way to Chicago as a teenager with limited education but great ambition.

Like other newcomers, Cermak naturally gravitated to the Democratic Party, but with a difference—this regular politician never saw a need to fear or war on reformers. His tolerance for diverse viewpoints served Cermak in a career that saw his election as alderman, bailiff of the municipal court, president of the Cook County Board, and state representative.

Cermak’s politics combined advocacy for immigrants with opposition to Prohibition. For years before passage of the Eighteenth Amendment, Cermak led the United Societies, an umbrella group that fought to keep legal the sale and consumption of liquor. While his standing as a “wet” on the issue of Prohibition made enemies, it also had advantages: By the mid-1920s, when voters later turned against the Amendment, Cermak was vindicated.

Cermak spent the 1920s courting other ethnic groups so that in 1931 he was ready to run for mayor of Chicago. Opposing him was Republican William Hale "Big Bill" Thompson. The three-term incumbent derided Cermak as "Pushcart Tony," a reference to Cermak's first real job in Chicago. Cermak's reply could have been a motto for Democrats in the Age of Roosevelt: "It's true I didn't come over on the Mayflower, but I came over as soon as I could." Cermak even reached out, in a way, to African Americans. In the 1927 mayor's race, Democrats circulated the rumor that a Republican win would lead to a black takeover of the city, but Cermak refused to engage in such demagoguery. The Chicago electorate picked Cermak by nearly 200,000 votes, and no Republican mayoral candidate has won Chicago since. Unfortunately for the victor, vote totals did not translate into the money necessary to keep government running. The city ran on funds generated mostly by real estate taxes, and with nearly half the working population unemployed, Chicagoans had stopped paying their taxes. Cermak soon was forced to slash budgets and lay off workers. At one point, the city owed its employees some \$40 million in back wages. Cermak went to Washington, D.C., requesting assistance from the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation, only to have the Republican-controlled RFC turn him down.

Because Cermak was a committed "wet" who favored the speedy repeal of Prohibition, he favored Al Smith over Franklin Roosevelt as Democratic nominee for president in 1932. It was a decision that ultimately cost Cermak his life. In February 1933 Cermak traveled to Miami to repair his relationship with the president-elect. Aiming at the next president, assassin Joseph Zangara instead shot Chicago's mayor, who was sitting alongside Roosevelt in an open car. Cermak died of his wounds three weeks later.

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DOUGLAS BUKOWSKI

CHANDLER, RAYMOND

American writer of hard-boiled detective novels, Raymond Chandler (July 23, 1888–March 26, 1959) helped develop the genre and stretch its limitations. Born in Chicago, Chandler was seven years old when his parents divorced and his mother took him to England to live. He attended Dulwich College, a preparatory school, from 1896 to 1905. In 1907 he became a British subject. After working as a civil servant and a reporter, and after publishing poems, literary essays, and fiction without achieving much success, Chandler returned to the United States in 1912. In World War I he served at the western front with the Canadian army. After the war Chandler worked as a reporter and bookkeeper in California. He married Cissy Pascal, a woman seventeen years his senior, in 1924. In 1932, after ten years with the Dabney Oil Syndicate, he was fired for drinking, absenteeism, and involvement with women who worked for him.

Out of work, he began writing "hard-boiled detective stories," which were published in *Black Mask* and other detective magazines. His first novel, *The Big Sleep* (1939), introduced Philip Marlowe as Chandler's detective and narrator. Marlowe's sardonic wisecracks and idealistic outlook gave *The Big Sleep* and the novels that followed a style and substance that moved them beyond the limitations of the detective novel towards the techniques and concerns of the serious novel, particularly those concerns raised by the Depression. Marlowe, as Chandler's spokesman in the novels, pointedly comments on class and wealth as corrupting influences on American society. Chandler's large cast of characters provides a cross section of American life, and his tangled plots and the atmosphere of the urban jungle suggest the complexities of the modern world. Marlowe's idealism leads him to seek meaning, order, and justice in the increasingly meaningless, chaotic, and corrupt world, and Marlowe's inevitable failure and disillusionment at the end of the novels make him a particularly modern antihero. Chandler's most highly regarded novels besides *The Big Sleep* are *Farewell, My Lovely* (1940), *The High Window* (1942), *Lady in the Lake* (1943), *The Little Sister* (1949), and *The Long Goodbye* (1954).

Chandler also was a successful screenwriter, most notably for such movies as *Double Indemnity* (1944), *The Blue Dahlia* (1946), and *Strangers on a Train* (1951). Devastated by his wife's death in 1954, Chandler attempted suicide and was hospitalized several times for depression and alcohol-related health problems before he died on March 26, 1959.

See Also: HARD-BOILED DETECTIVES; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; LITERATURE.

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AUSTIN WILSON

CHAPLIN, CHARLIE

Charles Spencer ("Charlie") Chaplin (April 16, 1889–December 25, 1977), motion-picture actor, director, producer, and writer, was born in London, England, to two music-hall singers who separated soon after his birth. Chaplin experienced a difficult and often unstable childhood. A talented mimic, he began acting early, and by 1913 the successful music-hall performer signed a movie contract to work for Keystone's Mack Sennett. Chaplin quickly developed a comic persona, the Tramp, which launched him to stardom, and began to write and direct his short comedies. By 1919 he had built his own movie studio and cofounded United Artists with Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and D. W. Griffith. During the 1920s Chaplin shifted from two-reel shorts to feature-length films, most notably *The Gold Rush* (1925).

During the Depression Chaplin completed one film, *City Lights* (1931), and made two more, *Modern Times* (1936) and *The Great Dictator* (1940). *City Lights* was planned before the stock market crash of 1929 and is best considered Chaplin's farewell to the 1920s, particularly for its satirical portrayal of an urban millionaire who is generous when drunk but suicidal when sober.

The Depression left its imprint on both *Modern Times* and *The Great Dictator*. In 1931 and 1932 Chaplin took a fifteen-month world tour, which demonstrated his global fame and confronted him with the suffering of the Depression. Responding to calls for socially relevant works, Chaplin began work in 1933 on a project, *The Masses*, that was released in 1936 as *Modern Times*. Although it resembled earlier Chaplin features with its visual comedy, romance, and pathos, *Modern Times* was more topical than his previous films, alluding to the Depression in images of frantic assembly lines, closed factories, and street clashes between protesters and the police. Ideologically progressive, the film sympathized with common people like his Tramp and the gamin, and criticized authority figures like the factory owner or the policeman who kills the gamin's father. Critics and moviegoers were divided in their response to this new and more socially aware Chaplin.

Chaplin's next film, *The Great Dictator*, aligned itself with another progressive cause of the later Depression years: antifascism. A pointed satirical attack on fascism, the film starred Chaplin in two roles—a gentle Jewish barber and the dictator of Tomania, Adenoid Hynkel. Chaplin conceived the film in the late 1930s, halted production on it briefly when World War II erupted in 1939, then decided that even during wartime, it was important to use humor to combat what he considered to be cruel totalitarianism. *The Great Dictator* was Chaplin's biggest box-office success in its initial domestic release. Recognizing its popularity, Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Chaplin to read the film's final speech at a presidential inaugural ball in 1941. By the end of the Depression, Chaplin was developing the reputation of a politically aware and progressive filmmaker; that reputation would later cause him problems after the Cold War set in, when he faced accusations that he was a Communist.

See Also: FASCISM; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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The Salvation Army's charitable services during the Great Depression included meals and lodging for transients. This 1938 photograph by Ben Shahn shows the organization's Newark, Ohio, offices. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

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CHARLES J. MALAND

CHARITY

Prior to the Great Depression, private charity played a critical, if supplemental, role in the nation's patchwork relief system. Although public and private charities grew considerably between 1910 and 1929, private charity constituted barely one quarter of all aid in 1929. But because private agen-

cies administered most relief funds, their values shaped virtually all public programs that emerged before and during the 1930s.

Between 1929 and 1931 most politicians and professionals believed that the expansion of private charity would help the nation overcome its devastating economic problems. Through emergency appeals, private charity quadrupled to \$170 million in two years—34 percent of all relief funds. As its primary funders, the community chests remained strong proponents of private charity, as did the Herbert Hoover administration, which extolled its virtues despite clear evidence that private charities lacked adequate resources to cope with rising unemployment.

The economic crisis quickly exhausted even the best efforts of private charities. For example, the



Police officers in New York City augment civilian charity efforts by distributing eggs and bread to the needy in 1930. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

number of families on relief in Detroit increased from four thousand to forty-five thousand between October 1930 and January 1931. In Cleveland, nearly ten times as many families received charity in mid-1932 than had received it in 1929.

In 1930, the community chests raised \$84.8 million in 386 cities. This was only an \$8 million increase over the 1929 total and it had to be distributed among 33 more cities. Even a model city such as Philadelphia, which was spending about \$1 million each month on private charity, could not cope with the increasing need. Funds were stretched so thin that 57,000 families received between \$1.50 and \$2 per person per week, plus a little coal, some food,

and used clothing. By November 1931, Philadelphia had exhausted its charitable funds.

Although private charities feared that an expanded public welfare system would hurt their ability to raise funds, by late 1931 they recognized that existing networks of relief could not adequately respond to increased demands for assistance, especially in major cities. Conflicts emerged, however, between city officials, who faced growing pressure to act, and business leaders, who argued that such actions would stifle economic recovery.

Private charities also could not raise new resources because their primary donors—working and middle-class people—lacked the income to

contribute. By late 1931 their national organizations reluctantly conceded that federal intervention was imperative. The 1932 Republican platform, however, affirmed the party's position that relief was primarily a private responsibility.

As relief programs expanded during the Depression, traditional distinctions between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor persisted. In New York, private charities classified the newly unemployed separately and assigned their cases to unpaid junior staff. Throughout the 1930s, racial discrimination continued to create barriers for the receipt of charity among African Americans, although they were twice as likely as whites to be certified as eligible.

The policies of the Franklin Roosevelt administration continued such practices even as they dramatically expanded public relief. In January 1935 Roosevelt spoke of the differences between the "productive" and "unproductive" poor, and, at the height of the New Deal, the government continued to assume that private charity was best suited to address the needs of the "old poor." Public relief programs maintained a central feature of private charities—their emphasis on investigation, which persisted long after the Depression.

See Also: BREADLINES; PHILANTHROPY; SOUP KITCHENS.

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MICHAEL REISCH

CHAVEZ, DENNIS

Dennis Chavez (April 8, 1888–November 18, 1962) was a U.S. Senator from New Mexico. One of only a handful of Mexican Americans ever elected to the Senate, Chavez ardently supported the New Deal to bring jobs and educational opportunities to his constituents.

Born Dionisio Chavez in Los Chaves, New Mexico, the future New Dealer entered school for the first time in 1895 when his family moved to Albuquerque. He quit after the seventh grade to help support his parents and eight siblings. While working full time as a delivery boy, Chavez continued his education by reading extensively. In 1917, he received a Senate clerkship and eventually parlayed this opportunity into admission at Georgetown University Law School in Washington, D.C. At this time, the only requirement to enter law school was satisfactory completion of entrance examinations. Chavez received his degree at the age of thirty-two and returned to Albuquerque to practice law.

Although his father had served as a Republican precinct captain, Republican neglect of his Mexican-American neighborhood led Chavez to register as a Democrat. In 1922, he won his first political seat in the New Mexico House of Representatives. Eight years later, he entered the U.S. House of Representatives, receiving much of his support from the large Hispanic electorate in the state. In 1934, Chavez ran for the U.S. Senate but narrowly lost to incumbent Bronson Cutting and then charged fraud. Cutting's sudden death ended the dispute, and Chavez received an appointment to the vacant seat. He would remain in the Senate until his death in 1962.

In the 1930s, Chavez firmly backed the New Deal, advocated neutrality, and sought to improve relations with Latin America. Mostly associated with the Works Progress Administration, Chavez pushed the agency to provide jobs to New Mexico's poor and to use its funds to construct schools to enable others to follow his footsteps out of poverty. He supported the Good Neighbor policy of Franklin Roosevelt that ended U.S. intervention in Latin America and, in 1939, he advocated recognition of Francisco Franco's Spain as a further means of im-

proving relations with the countries to the south of the U.S. border.

Still, Chavez did not become a national figure until 1944, when he introduced a bill prohibiting discrimination in employment on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, or ancestry. The legislation died, but Chavez claimed a notable place in history by laying the groundwork for subsequent civil rights legislation.

See Also: LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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CARYN E. NEUMANN

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The 1930s marked a seminal decade in the history of American childhood. The onset of the Great Depression hit children and adolescents hard, but at the same time new policies and changing public attitudes signaled positive changes for America's youngest citizens. Since the mid-nineteenth century, Americans had been moving toward a new definition of childhood and adolescence. Modern childhood was viewed as a period distinct from adulthood and separate from adult responsibilities. For over one hundred years, longer life expectancy and declining birth rates had lowered children's proportion of the total U.S. population. In 1830, individuals nineteen years of age and under (the U.S. Census Bureau's definition of *children*) constituted 56 percent of the country's population with a national median age of 16.7. In 1930, children's proportion of the total population had declined to 38 percent, and the nation's median age rose to 26.4.

The economic Depression of the 1930s led many couples to have even fewer children, and a growing number of young men who were unable to find employment postponed marriage. By 1940, individuals under twenty years of age made up only 36 percent of the nation's total population, and the country's median age had risen to 29. Interestingly, as children and adolescents became a smaller proportion of the nation's total population, they became a more visible part of public policy and American culture. Changes in public policy and culture that took place during the 1930s established a universal definition of American childhood for the balance of the twentieth century.

MODERN CHILDHOOD AND THE ONSET OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Before the onset of the Great Depression, children's diminished share of the total population paralleled a general improvement in their lives. An estimated U.S. infant mortality rate of 130 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1900 fell to 85.8 deaths in 1920 and to 64.6 in 1930. By 1930 most states had passed compulsory school attendance laws for those under sixteen, established public high schools (although many were segregated), and placed restrictions on the industrial employment of young people under fourteen years of age. In addition, medical science had made great strides in treating and preventing childhood diseases such as diarrhea, rickets, and diphtheria.

Child welfare experts attending President Herbert Hoover's 1930 White House Conference on Child Health and Protection pointed to the progress that had been made for American children. In his opening address, Hoover waxed sympathetic about the value of children, but there were few positive results from the 1930 conference. The Hoover administration seemed to turn a blind eye to the worsening economic conditions for youngsters and their families. Secretary of the Interior Ray Lyman Wilbur, a medical doctor, argued in 1932 that the economic Depression could actually be good for children. Families with less money to spend, Wilbur concluded, would be forced to depend upon each other and live a more wholesome home life.

It was obvious to many others that a growing number of American children and their families

were living in miserable conditions during the worsening economic crisis. By the time Franklin D. Roosevelt took office in March 1933 it was clear that children were experiencing some of the Depression's worst consequences. While the national divorce rate did not rise, desertion became more common. Although infant mortality rates had continued to fall during 1931 and 1932, they were climbing again by 1933 for the first time since such data had been collected in the United States. With unemployment rates at 25 percent, many families that had been middle-class during the 1920s slipped into poverty, contributing to rising incidence of hunger and malnutrition among children and adolescents. Psychological stress on adults resulted in domestic violence and child abuse. School districts ran out of money, classrooms became more crowded, school years were shortened, and many young people dropped out of school to seek work. Cash strapped business owners and parents ignored or intentionally violated existing child labor laws. Franklin Roosevelt noted that one-third of America's citizens were ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed. Of those, the majority were children.

A NEW DEAL FOR CHILDREN

Child welfare advocates attending the U.S. Children's Bureau's Child Health Recovery Conference on October 6, 1933, called for emergency food relief, school lunch programs, funds to pay the salaries of public nurses, and reimbursement plans to pay private physicians to care for needy children. Government officials from the U.S. Children's Bureau and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) told attendees that more than six million children lived in families on federal and state relief. Responding to conference recommendations, the FERA and Children's Bureau quickly implemented the Child Health Recovery Program (CHRP). This two-year effort concentrated on providing emergency food and medical care to America's poorest children, especially those living in rural areas. In the end CHRP did not live up to advocates' ambitious expectations, but it marked the first New Deal relief program directed at children and the first established at the federal level to help the nation's youngest citizens.



The children of struggling sharecroppers, like this child in Alabama in 1936, often worked long hours in the fields.

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The 1935 Social Security Act was the New Deal's next generation of programs and its most ambitious. Besides the better known old-age pension plan, the 1935 Social Security Act included three specific programs for children: Titles IV, V, and VII. Title IV, the Aid to Dependent Children program (ADC, later renamed Aid to Families with Dependent Children), replaced the widely varied state-based mothers' pension systems. As state governments ran out of money for mothers' pensions, families turned to FERA welfare funds. This circumstance ran contrary to the U.S. Children's Bureau's established argument that mothers' pension recipients were entitled to long-term aid, not simply emergency unemployment relief. Pension advocates wanted to keep mothers at home with their children and out of the wage-labor force. The federal ADC program was founded on this philoso-



Like many children during the Great Depression, these sons of unemployed miners at Miller Hill, West Virginia, in 1937 faced poverty when their parents lost their jobs. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

phy. It initially defined those eligible for aid as any child under sixteen who lived with a parent or close relative as caregiver, but had no breadwinner in the home. Amendments to Title IV in 1939 expanded the program to sixteen and seventeen year olds. ADC established the idea that in the absence of parental support, the federal government was ultimately responsible for needy children. States provided additional allotments to match federal ADC funds, but payments were meager and caregivers (mostly single mothers) received no stipend for their own support. This situation left ADC families in perpetual poverty. Furthermore, at the state level many blacks and minorities, as well as youngsters' whose mothers were judged as "immoral," found themselves denied aid. Over time the debate con-

cerning who "deserved" ADC made it the most controversial part of the Social Security Act.

Title V of the Social Security Act provided federal money for maternal and child health care for needy women and children. Title V was the only health care program included in the 1935 act, making poor children and pregnant mothers the only recipients of federally subsidized health care until passage of the 1965 Medicare Act.

Title VII focused on young people with "special needs." The Children's Bureau estimated that there were approximately 300,000 orphaned, abandoned, or physically and/or mentally handicapped children living in the United States who were dependent on the state for their support. By 1935, only one-fourth

of the states had established county welfare boards to look after the needs of such children. Title VII made the health and well-being of dependent children a joint federal-state responsibility.

The Great Depression also focused attention on adolescents. In 1933, the Children's Bureau estimated that 23,000 adolescents traveled the country riding the rails and hitchhiking along highways in search of work. While some were females, most adolescent "hobos" were males. Many felt they were a burden on their already strapped families and hit the road to find work. The unemployment rate for American boys sixteen to twenty years of age was twice that of adults. Many people were sympathetic to the plight of unemployed youth, but some also charged that homeless boys were dangerous juvenile delinquents. The infamous Scottsboro Boys' case, in which nine black youths were accused of raping two white women in Alabama in 1931, and other high-profile criminal trials fueled such fears. In March 1933 Congress established the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). For the next nine years the CCC employed more than 2.5 million males aged seventeen through twenty-three. Enrollees built recreational facilities and engaged in land conservation work. Life in the CCC was regimented and many officials enforced Jim Crow rules within the camps. CCC participants sometimes served as scapegoats for local community problems, but overall, the CCC was one of the New Deal's most popular relief efforts, ending only after U.S. entrance into World War II.

Like the CCC, the National Youth Administration (NYA, 1935–1943) was also a popular New Deal program directed at American youth. As a division of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the NYA provided part-time work-relief for high school and college-aged students, as well as full-time jobs for unemployed young people no longer in school. The NYA was open to both males and females and had a Division of Negro Affairs headed by Mary McLeod Bethune. Like the CCC, it was a popular program that ended only after the United States entered World War II. Another WPA program, day nursery schools, actually expanded during World War II. Organized to provide jobs for unemployed teachers, these high quality pre-

schools opened to children of all races and set the standard for preschool education throughout the United States.

Another side of the New Deal focused on getting young people out of the wage-labor force. The 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act successfully wrote child labor restrictions into federal law for the first time. It outlawed the employment of individuals under sixteen in the manufacture of goods shipped across state lines. It also set regulations for the employment of sixteen and seventeen year olds, and prohibited all minors from working in specific industries. The law ignored young people who worked in agriculture or domestic service, but the economic crisis of the 1930s increased pressure on politicians to end child labor. For the first time in history, American children were expected to spend more of their time in school than on the job.

YOUTH CULTURE AND THE LEGACY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

This fact underscores the new status of childhood by the 1930s. Popular radio shows appealed to young consumers, even during dire economic times. Films featuring the "Our Gang" kids, and child stars such as Mickey Rooney, Judy Garland, and Shirley Temple depicted an idealized childhood absent from adult responsibilities. Children's lives on the big screen were filled with activities experienced with peers, not adults. By the late 1930s a majority of seventeen year olds attended high school for the first time in the nation's history. The quality of schools varied widely, but communities accepted the notion that education through high school was a public responsibility.

The shift to high schools as a universal experience for American adolescents reinforced the development of a distinct youth culture. Dating moved adolescent boys and girls far from the watchful eyes of parents. Clubs such as the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, Young Men's Hebrew Association, and the Department of Agriculture's 4-H Clubs gained new members. Racial and ethnic segregation persisted, but comic books and other "kid" centered aspects of popular culture crossed social divisions. Highlight-



Several New Deal programs offered sports and recreation opportunities to children around the country. This group of boys exercises under the direction of a National Youth Administration counselor at a recreation center in Nampa, Idaho, in 1936.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

ing the significance of youth culture, a 1941 article in *Popular Science* introduced the word *teenager* into the American print vocabulary. The important matter of growing up became the focus for most children and teens. The economic crisis somewhat hindered the development of a commercialized youth culture dancing to the rhythm of swing music, but the concentration of most young people into high schools strengthened the trend.

The dramatic crisis that engaged Americans during the 1930s clearly shaped the lives of children and youth. Individuals who grew up during the Great Depression were also the first generation to experience a government that recognized a federal responsibility for protecting and shaping the lives of the nation's youngest citizens. Racial, gender, and ethnic discrimination persisted, but the idea that every child should have the right to basic eco-

nomonic security, a childhood separate from adult responsibilities, and a high school education was accepted as an American entitlement.

See Also: AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN (ADC); AMERICAN YOUTH CONGRESS; CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC); EDUCATION; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HEALTH AND NUTRITION; NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA); SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

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KRISTE LINDENMEYER

CIO. See CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS.

CITIES AND SUBURBS

With brute force, the Great Depression hit America's metropolitan areas, the centers of economic growth during the 1920s. The Wall Street crash nearly halted construction of skyscrapers and residential housing, then staggered output of durable goods. Pittsburgh steel mills, automobile assembly lines in Detroit and Flint, and tire factories in Cleveland and Toledo were all stilled. Declines in freight shipments laid off thousands from the docks of San Francisco, Memphis, and New Orleans, and slashed output at the American Locomotive Corporation in Schenectady. By 1933, idle blast furnaces at Birmingham's Tennessee Coal and Iron brought to that city the highest unemployment in the urban South. Only a few cities weathered the storm. Miami and Phoenix filled with sun worshippers, federal spending on Hoover Dam buoyed Las Vegas, and Washington, D.C., became the New Deal's company town.

THE RELIEF CRISIS

Although millions of jobless lived in the cities, few city governments distributed outdoor relief (with the notable exception of Boston). Most relied on voluntary charities and lodging shelters. Across

the South, businesses moved whites into jobs held by African Americans, and New Orleans Mayor T. Semmes Walmsley required municipal employees to show poll-tax receipts. Officials in the Southwest deported aliens; Los Angeles alone repatriated over eleven thousand Mexicans, and the city dispatched police to turn away migrants at California's borders. By the fall of 1933, 59 percent of the Phoenix's Mexican population was on relief, compared to 11 percent of Anglos. Atlanta's jobless rate reached 25 percent, but was triple that in black neighborhoods.

Business-led voluntarism tried to stem the disaster. Mayor's committees in Buffalo and Nashville prevailed on industrial leaders to stagger layoffs, and Buffalo's Man-a-Block and Household Helper schemes scrounged for part-time jobs. Philadelphia's (Horatio Gates Lloyd) Committee for Unemployment Relief raised \$4 million in private contributions. But when voluntary resources were exhausted in 1931, cities had to look elsewhere. The business-led Allegheny County Emergency Association launched a "Pittsburgh Plan" for quasi-public improvements, while Kansas City boss Tom Pendergast corralled the chamber of commerce behind a \$50 million "Ten Year Plan" for boulevards and other public works. New York City's Welfare Council forced Mayor James J. Walker to create a department of public welfare.

In suburban New Jersey towns, governments slashed public works, chiefly road and sewer repairs, while regional school districts juggled the loss in per-pupil reimbursements. Communities forced salary givebacks from police, firemen, and teachers, the latter stereotyped as single and female. Charities attempted to serve the "invisible" white-collar jobless in the suburbs. Ramsey's Committee of the Unemployed searched for odd jobs and collected funds from churches and fundraisers like the Young Ladies Community Club's "prosperity bridge." Ridgewood disbursed charitable aid via the Social Service Association, then in late 1931 formed the Emergency Relief Bureau to provide direct relief and made-work. By December 1933 the Ridgewood Taxpayers Association obtained a voluntary 5 percent salary cut from teachers, who acknowledged a "clear understanding of civic affairs."

The relief crisis encouraged labor and liberal activists to challenge business primacy. In Detroit,



Thousands of unemployed urban Americans relied on private charity during the early years of the Depression, before full-scale federal relief efforts were underway. These men lined up outside a soup kitchen in Chicago in 1931. The food was reportedly being supplied by the gangster Al Capone. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Frank Murphy scored an upset mayoral victory in 1930 over the issue of relief levels. The election in Minneapolis of Farmer-Laborite William A. Anderson touched off demonstrations that ousted the conservative relief administrator. But strong Republican city-manager governments in Cleveland and Cincinnati resisted deficits to finance relief, as did property owners' leagues in Denver and Houston. Conservative bankers in New York, who held Detroit's commercial paper, forced slashes in Motor City relief, and Rochester's banking fraternity threatened a credit strike against the city manager's budget. In spring 1933, the House of Morgan and Chase National Bank boycotted the underwriting of New York municipal bonds until

the city agreed to cut relief and hold down property taxes.

A GUARDED PARTNERSHIP

In May 1932, big-city mayors, led by Murphy of Detroit, pleaded for credit from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, and in February 1933 they launched the U.S. Conference of Mayors to demand \$5 billion for self-liquidating public works. They nudged President Franklin D. Roosevelt to accept federal emergency relief, and thereafter leveraged much New Deal spending, notably via the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and Works Progress Administration (WPA). Such urban leaders as New York settlement head Mary K. Sim-

khovitch and Cleveland activist Ernest J. Bohn, who spearheaded the nation's first municipal housing authority, demanded slum clearance and public housing.

Localities responded guardedly, notably Baltimore, Richmond, and Portland, Oregon, where Democrats who favored states' rights attacked federal intervention. Although Roosevelt was reelected on an urban tide in 1936, his sweep of 104 of the country's 106 cities with populations greater than 100,000 blanketed pockets of disenchantment. Roosevelt carried 68.3 percent of the vote in Baltimore, including bellwether Polish and Italian wards, but in Philadelphia, he suffered a falloff among Irish and working-class Italians. Chicago's

African Americans were weaned from Republican "race men" less by Roosevelt's appeal than by Mayor Edward Kelly's deft politics of recognition. Doubling his support from Chicago blacks, Roosevelt still garnered only 49 percent in 1936.

New Deal welfare spending did not bring a "Last Hurrah" for urban political machines. Relief was politicized in Jersey City, where Frank Hague controlled Public Works Administration (PWA) spending for the Margaret Hague Medical Center; and in Memphis, whose boss, Edward Hull Crump, tithed WPA employees and directed Army Corps of Engineers projects on the Mississippi River. The power of Tammany Hall had declined in New York City before Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia wielded New



Unemployed union members march in Camden, New Jersey, in 1935 to draw attention to their plight. Such parades were held in many cities during the Depression as massive numbers of disgruntled and desperate unemployed men and women demanded jobs and relief. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Deal patronage to forge his own reform coalition, and Bruce Stave concludes that David Lawrence's Democratic organization in Pittsburgh "had its roots in the New Deal."

MODERNIST URBANISM

In the absence of a national urban policy, federal programs rested largely on 1920s social theory and modernist design: assumptions about the "social disorganization" of the slums, the importance of the "neighborhood unit," and economies of scale that civic centers and hospital complexes provided the sprawling metropolis. Bauhaus architects such

as Marcel Breuer, the visionary architect Le Corbusier, famous for his "tower in the park," and industrial designers like Norman Bel Geddes helped popularize the Art Deco streamlined slab look, which has been dubbed PWA Moderne. Against machine-age efficiencies, proponents of small-scale English "garden cities" made little headway. Clarence Stein and Lewis Mumford of the Regional Planning Association of America envisioned new towns in suburban greenbelts. Although Resettlement Administration head Rexford G. Tugwell sympathized with this program, his agency realized only three such cities.



Many American cities confronted problems of homelessness and substandard housing during the Depression. These shacks on the outskirts of Paterson, New Jersey, in 1935 housed about twenty-five people, most of them unemployed textile workers. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Federal relief dollars enhanced modern urbanization that was already underway. Nashville and New York finished civic centers with court houses and state office buildings, although the completion of the Federal Triangle on Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C., proved the most imposing project. The WPA financed the removal of trolley tracks in 224 cities, replacing unsightly rails with green medians and smooth asphalt. Planning departments designed schemes for traffic separation, including beltways around central business districts, a dream of vehicular flow inspired by the U.S. Bureau of Public Roads' *Toll Roads and Free Roads* (1936) and General Motors' Futurama exhibit at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Redevelopers cleared decaying wharves for waterfront parks in Milwau-

kee and Des Moines and for riverside parkways like Boston's Storrow Drive.

New York City was transformed under Mayor La Guardia and Park Commissioner Robert Moses, the city's *de facto* public works czar. With its own WPA jurisdiction, the city accounted for one-seventh of all WPA appropriations. The agency refurbished scores of parks and playgrounds, over three hundred schools, and miles of parkways, along with North Beach Terminal (renamed La Guardia Field), the largest single WPA project in the country. Federal works also had a significant impact on cities in parts of the South, Southwest, and West that would later be called the Sunbelt, a region starved for such improvements. In New Orleans, the PWA improved sewerage, restored the

French Quarter, and built the Charity Hospital, then the second largest health-care facility in the country. The WPA overhauled Nashville's streets, while the PWA built three high schools, including Pearl High for African Americans. The WPA installed the sewerage and water mains of Albuquerque's Near Heights subdivision and completed Las Vegas's War Memorial Building, vital to the town's convention economy. California historian Kevin Starr argues that federal public works—notably the construction of Boulder (Hoover) Dam and Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) investment in the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge—made possible California's future as a sun-drenched, populous, vehicular world.

TRANSFORMATION OF HOUSING

To revive mortgage financing and construction, in June 1933, the Roosevelt administration enacted the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), which over the next two years saved more than one million non-farm residences from foreclosure. Kenneth T. Jackson has pointed out, however, that the HOLC's standardized appraisals rated neighborhoods *A* to *D* (with *D* indicating neighborhoods of greatest risk, which were usually inhabited by Eastern Europeans, Mexicans, and African Americans) and daubed red on "Residential Security Maps." Lizabeth Cohen found that 60 percent of HOLC's Chicago loans went to *C* and *D* neighborhoods, but redlining starved home refinance in inner-city Detroit and Philadelphia. Discriminatory practices also affected Federal Housing Administration mortgage insurance. Jackson showed that substantial mortgage relief was provided to *A* and *B* districts in suburban Essex County in New Jersey, and Ladue, Clayton, and Webster Groves in Missouri, compared to scant aid begrudged *C* and *D* streets in central Newark and Saint Louis.

Federal support engaged scores of cities in slum clearance and low-rent public housing. With data from the CWA Real Property Inventory, activists in Cleveland, Indianapolis, and Newark documented the dimensions of the slum problem and won referenda for municipal housing authorities. After the National Industrial Recovery Act authorized grants and loans to municipalities to clear lands and build

housing, PWA administrator Harold L. Ickes undertook direct federal construction (until deterred by the U.S. Court of Appeals' 1935 *Louisville Lands* decision, which rejected the federal government's use of eminent domain). By 1937, the PWA had completed 22,600 units at a cost of \$130 million, including Atlanta's Techwood Homes, the 10,800-room Cleveland Homes limited dividend, and Philadelphia's Carl Mackley Homes, sponsored by the Hosiery Workers Union. Working with more than 150 municipal authorities after 1937, the U.S. Housing Authority sponsored an additional 130,000 units by 1941.

The low-rent program dovetailed with local priorities by stimulating business districts and maintaining segregation. Atlanta's all-white Techwood cleared blacks from a twelve-block slum near downtown, while the all-black (Joel Chandler) Harris Homes reinforced a racial barrier. The Cleveland Housing Authority built three projects in the heart of the ghetto, while ignoring black applicants for white projects. The PWA constructed the all-white Williamsburg Houses in Brooklyn and the all-black Harlem River Houses, for which the New York City Housing Authority kept separate application offices. The Phoenix Housing Authority built distinct projects for Mexicans and blacks in South Phoenix and for Anglos on the city's west side.

URBAN STYLE IN GRITTY TIMES

The concentration of the unemployed made cities spawning grounds for radicalism (although Lizabeth Cohen argues that in Chicago, the city's common consumer culture provided a basis for working-class solidarity). As millions gave up on capitalism, self-help groups, such as Denver's Unemployed Citizens' League, canvassed for jobs and bartered work for food. In New York City, production-for-use enthusiasts organized an Emergency Exchange Association, which issued scrip and sparked similar exchanges in other cities. Stirred by African nationalists, eviction protests broke out in Harlem, while Communist Unemployed Councils stormed home relief offices. Communists staged food riots in Minneapolis, San Francisco, and Saint Louis, and led the epic Detroit Hunger March on Ford Motor Company on March 7, 1932. Strikes

also occurred among mortgage payers in Radburn, New Jersey, and renters in New York's Sunnyside, Queens, both garden city experiments of the 1920s. In January 1934, Denver's unemployed invaded the Colorado state capitol, demanding legislators fund state relief.

In New York, hundreds of writers, artists, and engineers were drawn to the Communist Party's Cultural Section and its John Reed Clubs. Eviction protests, sit-ins at relief offices, and other grassroots actions mobilized working-class anger behind Toledo's Auto Lite strike in 1935 and sit-down strikes in Flint and Detroit in 1937. San Francisco's left-wing tradition, with its boisterous Embarcadero, energized the general strike of July 1934. Cities provided the crucible for the Congress of Industrial Organization's growth in the mass production industries.

These urban pressures also transformed race relations. Anger at inadequate relief allowances and rage against evictions touched off African-American self-help efforts and store boycotts in Phoenix, in Cleveland's Woodland ghetto, and in Harlem along 125th street. After the March 19, 1935, Harlem riot, Mayor La Guardia appointed a commission that spotlighted the ghetto's overcrowding. Outrage also spawned Reverend Adam Clayton Powell's protest for equal employment, which picketed the 1939 New York World's Fair.

The Depression-era American city gave a gritty, hard-edge look to design and culture, while artists became determined to document widespread want and protest, producing the CWA's Public Works of Art Project, the murals of the Treasury Relief Arts Project, the Federal Art Project, the American Scene style of painting, and Ben Shahn's proletarian realism. The golden age of revelatory photography inspired Berenice Abbott and Arnold (Weegee) Felig in New York and Dorothea Lange in San Francisco, while the docudrama of the WPA "Living Newspaper" reflected what historian William Stott has called the era's "sublime fidelity to fact."

THE LEGACY OF THE 1930s

The Depression accentuated regional discrepancies in city development. Urban population growth, which had risen to 27.3 percent in the

1920s, sank to 7.9 percent during the 1930s. Slow-downs in immigration, slumping birthrates, and the end of suburban annexations halted central city growth across the industrial North. Five of the twelve largest cities in the Midwest (Cleveland, Saint Louis, Toledo, Akron, and Youngstown) suffered losses in population during the 1930s. Among cities with a population of 100,000 or more, the only ones that grew by 20 percent or more were Washington, D.C., and Sunbelt wonders, including Miami, San Diego, Houston, and Los Angeles. While nearly all the northern metropolitan areas grew by single-digit percentages, metropolitan Los Angeles jumped by 25 percent, Houston grew 51 percent, and Miami soared 90 percent.

Subsidies from Washington sped expansion and modernization of municipal government. With federal dollars, cities took on more responsibilities, ranging from social work for relief recipients and felons to WPA day nurseries and city planning. City governments streamlined tax assessment and collection and turned functions over to special authorities, including ports, highways, and toll bridges. The tax revolt also hastened the spread of manager cities in Michigan, Virginia, Texas, and Florida. In the suburbs, lean budgets spurred the amalgamation of Jacksonville and Duval counties, consolidated services in Milwaukee County, and spirited the move for "home rule" in Hamilton, Mahoning, Cuyahoga, and Stark counties in Ohio. Most metropolitan counties extended zoning and undertook comprehensive plans for parks, parkways, and subdivision regulations. Modern executive government emerged in Arlington and other northern Virginia counties and in Nassau and Westchester, New York.

Nevertheless, the 1930s left American cities with an uncertain future. While the New Deal spurred an urban-Washington axis, and theoretical statements like the National Resources Committee's *Our Cities* (1937) affirmed the role of cities in national recovery, the country lacked an urban policy. Experts predicted that central cities would remain stagnant, with unemployment at permanently high levels. Yet cities were centers of revitalization. A zeal to reclaim blighted districts would galvanize the Pittsburgh Regional Planning

Association's postwar "renaissance" and fuel Robert Moses's ambitions for the arterial highways and residential towers of modern New York. They remained the centers of an urban liberalism that would define American politics for the next two generations.

See Also: ARCHITECTURE; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); GREENBELT TOWNS; HARLEM RIOT (1935); HOUSING; HUNGER MARCHES; LA GUARDIA, FIORELLO H.; MOSES, ROBERT; MURPHY, FRANK; PLANNING; SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE (1934).

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CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC)

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was created in March 1933 during the first frantic "hundred days" of the New Deal. It was the first of a number of agencies created to cope with one of the most desperate and poignant of the social problems caused by the Depression—massive unemployment and economic deprivation amongst the nation's youth. It is impossible to get accurate figures on the extent of youth joblessness at the nadir of the Depression, but the best estimate would be that at least 50 percent of young people between fifteen and twenty-four years of age who were in the labor market were unemployed. Of these, at least 250,000 were simply drifting about the country; the writer Thomas Minehan labeled them the "boy and girl tramps of America." Millions more were mired in hopeless poverty and apathy, without the means even to complete their education. Franklin D. Roosevelt had built his election campaign in 1932 around his faith in the future. Clearly he had to do something quickly to alleviate the deprivation and the scarring of the generation who would inherit the future.

There was also an urgent need to confront a scar of a different kind—the havoc that generations of waste and exploitation had wreaked on the American landscape. Large-scale forest destruction and the resultant soil and wind erosion had created a potential environmental catastrophe. Roosevelt had a life-long interest in conservation. More than most he understood the urgency of repairing the ravaged environment, and he was determined to use his office to do so. Thus the CCC was in one



A CCC unit from Idaho arrives at a camp near Andersonville, Tennessee, in October 1933 to assist in reforestation work on the Clinch River watershed. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

sense a catalyst by which two squandered resources, young men and the land, were brought together in an attempt to save both.

The idea of putting young men to work in the woods was not new. The philosopher William James had long been an enthusiastic advocate of such a program, and various European governments had established conservation camps for their unemployed. Yet, of all the New Deal agencies, the CCC bore the new president's personal stamp, expressing both his conviction in the superior qualities of rural life and his concern for halting the destruction of America's natural environment. Roosevelt had outlined his plans during the campaign, and once inaugurated he moved quickly to act on them. The enabling legislation quickly passed through Congress, and on March 31 became law: The CCC was born.

The new agency's administrative structure was extremely simple. The need for speed was paramount, hence the decision to work through existing federal departments rather than set up a completely new structure. The CCC would be open to young men between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five who were already on the relief rolls. They would be enrolled in camps or companies of two hundred men each, put to work on conservation tasks, and paid \$30 monthly, \$25 of which went straight home to their families. The men were to be initially enrolled for six months, but enrollment could be renewed for up to two years. The Department of Labor had the responsibility of selecting the enrollees, and the War Department transported them to the camps, which it administered, while the departments of Agriculture and the Interior supervised the actual work projects. Coordinating the whole



Members of a CCC unit in Idaho display beavers they captured in 1938. The animals, which were destroying crops, were relocated to a forest watershed area, where their presence would aid conservation efforts. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

endeavor was a director and a small central office staff. Roosevelt's choice as director was Robert Fechner, a conservative southern-born labor leader, who was appointed, in part, to allay American Federation of Labor (AFL) disquiet at CCC wage scales. Fechner was hardly a typical New Dealer, but he ran the CCC efficiently until his death in 1939. He was succeeded by his deputy James J. McIntee, also of the AFL.

THE CCC BEGINS

Mobilization began quickly, and given the scale of the enterprise, it proceeded with surprising smoothness. By July 1 nearly 300,000 young men were already at work in more than 1,300 CCC camps. Moreover, those eligible for enrollment had already been extended. On April 14 it was decided to enroll fourteen thousand native Americans of all ages, and a month later the president directed that 250,000 World War I veterans should also be enrolled, again regardless of age. Many of the veterans

had marched in 1932 with the Bonus Army, which President Herbert Hoover had ordered dispersed at gunpoint; now a new president gave them a chance to work in the woods instead. The contrast was not lost. Finally, the CCC enrolled twenty-five thousand local woodsmen to help with the projects.

Once the CCC had been mobilized, Fechner and his staff began to think about possible policy developments. An early decision was to add an education program under the general direction of the commissioner for education, George F. Zook. A director of CCC education was appointed in December 1933 and given the responsibility of developing a suitable education program for the camps. The program was initially challenging, and the War Department opposed it, yet a prime measure of its success was that within three years thirty-five thousand enrollees had learned to read and write, and one thousand high school diplomas had been awarded, as well as thirty-nine college degrees.



Members of a CCC unit put up fencing in Greene county, Georgia, in 1941. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

In January 1934, buoyed by both the CCC's initial success and the extremely favorable public reaction to it, the president decided to expand the program. Enrollment grew steadily, peaking in September 1935 with more than 500,000 enrollees in 2,514 camps. Numbers were slowly reduced thereafter, partly because a second youth agency, the National Youth Administration (NYA), had been created in 1935, but also because of Roosevelt's increasing desire to cut spending. The efforts to close camps in the interest of economy, however, were often thwarted by local politicians, who were anxious not to lose the \$5,000 to \$10,000 spent monthly by camps in the local market, and the attendant community goodwill that resulted.

The CCC was the most popular of all the New Deal agencies, enjoying wide bipartisan political support. The corps was supported by those directly connected to it—the communities where the camps were established and the enrollees and their families. But the CCC was also popular with millions of ordinary Americans who received no direct benefits from it, but liked its image; most Americans could easily recognize the value of the work performed, while the idea of young men working with their hands in the wilderness appealed to the romantic and nostalgic imagination of a nation whose president had recently announced the closing of its last frontier. Ironically, the only group dubious about the corps was the liberal left, usually the New

Deal's most vocal supporters, whose members were disturbed by the military's dominant presence in the camps.

The CCC was extremely effective. Though associated in the public mind with reforestation, CCC enrollees were actually engaged in a myriad of tasks. They battled forest fires, developed camping grounds and park trails, improved grazing lands, fought soil erosion, protected wildlife (particularly in the nation's wetlands), constructed dams and irrigation ditches, and preserved and restored historical sites. Still, reforestation was the corps' most important task, and its contribution to the nation's environment was crucial, best measured by a single statistic. Of all the trees planted on public lands between 1789 and 1942, more than 75 percent were planted by the CCC.

The CCC conserved human beings along with the landscape. Its enrollees benefited physically from the hard work and healthy living, while also gaining a deeper perspective on their country. Many of them had traveled far from home to go to camp because many of the reforestation projects were located in western states. There they met and worked alongside people from many different ethnic or regional backgrounds.

White enrollees, however, were unlikely to find themselves living and working alongside black youths, and to some of those critical of the corps, this was its most serious shortcoming. The 1933 act that created the CCC contained a clause stating specifically that there should be no discrimination "on account of race, color or creed" in the selection of enrollees. Yet within a few weeks it was obvious that these provisions were being ignored, especially by southern selection agents. Black youths, despite the desperate nature of their poverty, were simply being passed over, and Department of Labor officials had to threaten to stop all selection in the South before local agents, reluctantly, began to comply. In addition, local white communities in many parts of the country were inclined to protest if a black camp was established nearby, in contrast to their enthusiastic welcoming of white corpsmen. This was a national rather than a regional response, although southern communities were generally less hostile to black camps than communities in other

regions, especially the Rocky Mountain states. Eventually, Fechner and his staff evolved a policy covering black enrollment. There was to be strict segregation in the CCC; as far as possible, black men would not be sent out of their home states, black camps would not be forced on local communities, and blacks would be selected according to their ratio in the general population (one in ten) and not according to need. Fechner, a conservative southerner, had no intention of engaging in social engineering, and though most black enrollees clearly benefited from their time in the CCC, it never provided them with the opportunities available to white members. They were not allowed the latitude of movement accorded white enrollees, command in black camps was firmly retained in white hands, and unlike its sister agency, the NYA (also directed by a southerner, the liberal Aubrey Williams), Fechner made no attempt to move against prevailing racial attitudes. The CCC did not fail its black enrollees; it simply ignored their particular circumstances and needs.

THE LAST YEARS

In January 1937 Roosevelt, fulfilling a campaign promise and in accordance with his strong personal wish, recommended that the CCC become a permanent agency of government, and legislation to effect this was introduced in March. It was never passed, for though the ensuing debate showed that bipartisan support for the agency remained strong, Congress was reluctant to concede that it should become more than a relief measure. Moreover, after Roosevelt's court-packing bill poisoned the legislative atmosphere, legislators decided to hand the president a rebuff by refusing to make permanent his pet project. Congress eventually renewed the program for three more years.

Beginning in 1939, the CCC slowly lost its importance as the economy started its long-awaited revival. Enrollee and camp numbers were steadily reduced, particularly as the demand for munitions and war materials absorbed the remaining pockets of unemployment. Fechner's successor, James McIntee, did what he could to meld the corps' activities into the nation's defense needs, but the demand for the abolition of all government spending

not directly relevant to the winning of the war became too strong to resist. In 1941, Congress created a Joint Committee on Non-Essential Federal Expenditures, charging it with recommending the elimination of all non-essential bodies. In December 1941 it recommended an end to the CCC. The president fought to save the corps, but to no avail. In June 1942 the Senate finally concurred with an earlier House resolution to deny further funding to the agency, and the CCC was abolished.

Although the CCC came to an end, it was certainly not forgotten. Both the California Conservation Corps, established in 1979, and the Wisconsin Conservation Corps, established in 1983, used the New Deal agency as their model, and for good reason. Despite its relatively high cost, the CCC added far more to the national wealth than the sum spent on it, not to mention the benefits to the health and morale of otherwise jobless young men. In its nine-year existence, nearly three million young men had passed through this essentially makeshift agency. Moreover, by the time of the CCC's abolition the United States was at war, and CCC members had received valuable experience in the military lifestyle, which the Army was able to build upon. More importantly, the members of the CCC made a genuine contribution to the heritage of every American in the billions of trees they planted or protected, the parks and recreation areas they developed, and the millions of acres they saved from soil erosion or flooding.

See Also: BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA; CONSERVATION MOVEMENT; HUNDRED DAYS; NEW DEAL.

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JOHN A. SALMOND

CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

The Great Depression is not remembered as a time of major advances in human rights, yet during the 1930s significant steps were taken in both civil rights and civil liberties: The U.S. Supreme Court established important protections for criminal defendants; Congress granted new powers to labor unions; and the civil liberties of unpopular groups were strengthened.

In the case of the "Scottsboro boys," the most infamous legal controversy of the decade, the Supreme Court demonstrated a newfound concern for the rights of accused criminals and a willingness to challenge judicial racism in the South. This case involved nine African-American males ranging in age from sixteen to twenty who were arrested in March 1931 near Scottsboro, Alabama, and charged with raping two white women. The young men were hastily tried and eight were sentenced to death. Although a lawyer was present at their trial, he was neither competent nor given time to prepare a defense. Activists who investigated the case found that the evidence against the young men was flimsy. The women who were their chief accusers were of dubious character, their testimony was inconsistent, and one later recanted her accusations. International Labor Defense retained Samuel Leibowitz to pursue the Scottsboro boys' appeals and mounted a worldwide campaign on their behalf.

Leibowitz petitioned the Supreme Court for relief and in *Powell v. Alabama* (1932) it ordered a new trial because the Scottsboro boys had been denied effective counsel, violating their right to a fair trial. The young men were tried a second time in 1934. Again they were convicted and sentenced to death and again their appeal reached the Supreme Court. In *Norris v. Alabama* (1935) the justices unanimously overturned their convictions on the grounds that African Americans had been excluded from the jury.

The Court further strengthened the rights of the accused in *Brown v. Mississippi* (1936). Here the justices rejected murder charges against three black men whose convictions were based solely on coerced confessions. In *Johnson v. Zerbst* (1938) the

Court ruled that indigent federal defendants were entitled to legal counsel. Twenty-five years later this right was extended to all defendants in *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963).

When it came to voting rights the Supreme Court was less courageous. In *Nixon v. Condon* (1932) the justices invalidated the whites-only Texas Democratic primary election, ruling that states cannot discriminate against voters on the basis of race. But when the state legislature gave political parties complete authority over primaries, the Court approved. In *Grovey v. Townsend* (1935) it ruled that parties were voluntary associations and thus allowed to discriminate. This decision would be reversed nine years later in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944). The Court further demonstrated its reluctance to meddle in political affairs by upholding the constitutionality of poll taxes in *Breedlove v. Suttles* (1937).

During the 1930s the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) focused much of its energy on passage of a federal anti-lynching law. Senators Robert F. Wagner of New York and Edward Costigan of Colorado introduced such a bill in 1934, but maneuvering by southern opponents blocked it from being considered by the full Senate. The NAACP executive secretary, Walter White, sought President Roosevelt's support for the bill, but Roosevelt was unwilling to antagonize powerful southern legislators: "If I come out for the anti-lynching bill now, they will block every bill I ask Congress to pass to keep America from collapsing. I just can't take that risk." In 1937 another anti-lynching bill sponsored by New York Representative Joseph Gavaghn passed in the House 277 to 120. A Gallup poll reported that 70 percent of Americans favored such legislation, but southern senators launched a filibuster and prevented a vote. Although Alabama's Tuskegee Institute recorded the lynching of twenty-four African Americans in 1933, this number steadily dwindled until only two such atrocities were logged in 1939. The NAACP was responsible for much of this decline.

In education, racial separation was the rule, but during the 1930s a small crack appeared in the wall of segregation. Donald Murray applied for admis-

sion to the University of Maryland Law School in 1934. When his application was refused, Thurgood Marshall brought suit arguing that Murray should be admitted since Maryland provided no opportunities for blacks to study law. Baltimore City Court Judge Eugene O'Dunne agreed and Murray entered law school in September 1935.

In 1938 Charles Houston argued a similar case. Lloyd Gaines had applied to the University of Missouri Law School. Missouri also provided no legal education for black students. In *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938) the Supreme Court ordered the state to admit Gaines. Although the justices were not yet willing to repudiate "separate but equal," the *Gaines* decision was the first step on the road to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954).

African Americans enjoyed few civil rights during this decade, but they built a foundation for future gains. In the words of Robert S. McElvaine, author of *The Great Depression* (1984), "The rebirth of that dream of true racial equality . . . was the real achievement of the New Deal years in race relations."

Without question, workers and organized labor enjoyed the greatest expansion of rights during the 1930s. Three major pieces of legislation were responsible for this progress: the Norris-La Guardia Act (1932), the National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), and the National Labor Relations Act (1935). Each of these bills, using different language, guaranteed workers the right to organize unions and bargain collectively with employers. Observers wondered whether the Supreme Court would follow its longstanding pro-business bias and strike down these laws. In the case of *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States* (1935), the Court invalidated most provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act, including section 7(a), which covered union organizing. However, in five separate 1937 decisions the Court upheld key provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, finding that the ability of workers to organize and engage in collective bargaining was "a fundamental right."

Subsequent decisions further expanded workers' rights. In *Senn v. Tile Layers Union* (1937) the Court recognized that picketing was a form of free speech protected by the Constitution. This decision

was broadened in *Thornhill v. Alabama* (1940). African Americans picketing stores as part of a “don’t buy where you can’t work” campaign received similar protection in *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery* (1938). In *Hague v. Congress of Industrial Organizations* (1939) the Court struck down a Jersey City anti-union ordinance requiring permits to hold public meetings or distribute literature in public places. Labor’s rights were also strengthened by the Senate in 1936 when it established a committee under the chairmanship of Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., “to make an investigation of violations of the rights of free speech and assembly and undue interference with the right of labor to organize and bargain collectively.”

In several important cases the Supreme Court expanded the rights of free speech and assembly. In *Stromberg v. California* (1931) the Court overturned the conviction of a counselor at a Communist youth camp for displaying a red flag. A few weeks later, in *Near v. Minnesota*, it ruled that the First Amendment free press guarantee protected even the publication of a malicious anti-Semitic scandal sheet. In 1933 New York federal court Judge John Munro Woolsey struck a blow against censorship by ruling that James Joyce’s novel *Ulysses* (1922) was not obscene. In *DeJonge v. Oregon* (1937) the Supreme Court overturned the conviction of a speaker at a Communist sponsored rally. Writing for a unanimous court, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes said that the state could not make “mere participation in a peaceable assembly and a lawful public discussion . . . basis for a criminal charge.” The Court relied on a somewhat different logic when it rejected the conviction of Communist Party organizer Angelo Herndon, who was given a twenty-year sentence for violating a Georgia anti-insurrection statute. In *Herndon v. Georgia* (1937) the majority opinion held that speech could not be punished “by reason of its supposed dangerous tendency even in the remote future.”

The Supreme Court also considered religious freedom cases with mixed results. In *Lovell v. City of Griffin* (1938) the Court ruled unconstitutional a local ordinance used to prevent Jehovah’s Witnesses from distributing religious tracts on city streets. The Court, however, was not willing to extend this

protection to other areas. In *Minersville School District v. Gobitis* (1940) it upheld the expulsion of two Pennsylvania students who refused to join in a compulsory salute to the flag in keeping with their religious beliefs. In the face of surprisingly strong public criticism, the justices admitted they had erred and three years later the Court reversed itself.

Meanwhile, developments in Congress indicated growing intolerance for radical political beliefs. In 1938 the House Select Committee on Un-American Activities, under the leadership of Representative Martin Dies, began a decades-long hunt for subversive influences. Its sensational public hearings became a platform for wild accusations of Communist infiltration in labor unions and New Deal agencies with a chilling effect on free speech.

During the Depression there were important gains, especially for organized labor. But the picture was not uniformly sanguine: the Jim Crow system remained in place in the South; African Americans would have to wait a quarter of a century before gaining full civil rights; and an anti-Communist crusade that would erode civil liberties began. With respect to civil rights, the 1930s were most significant for establishing the basis for advances that would be fully realized in later decades.

See Also: ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION; INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE (ILD); LA FOLLETTE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); SCOTTSBORO CASE; SUPREME COURT.

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PAUL T. MURRAY



Men employed by the Civil Works Administration clean and paint the dome of the Denver capitol building in 1934. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION (CWA)

The Civil Works Administration (CWA), created in the fall of 1933 and disbanded the following spring, was the first, public employment experiment of the New Deal. At its peak in January of 1934, CWA employed approximately four million workers. The program initiated many projects that later were absorbed by the Works Progress Administration (WPA, 1935 to 1941). Perhaps most importantly, CWA took several million relief recipients off of the federal "dole" and gave them employment and regular wages.

The CWA reflected the values of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his relief administrator Harry Hopkins, both of whom favored employment over direct relief. Both feared that the federal relief program (FERA) would institutionalize a permanent national "dole." During the summer of 1933, the New Deal had reduced the federal relief caseload significantly and forced some states to finance a larger share of the relief burden. But both the caseload and federal expenditures threatened to rise again during the coming winter. In late October, Hopkins's assistant Aubrey Williams prevailed on Hopkins to propose a dramatic expansion of public employment. The program would take large num-

bers of “employable” recipients off the relief rolls and also employ several million unemployed workers who were not on relief. The program would be financed by the large unexpended balances of the New Deal’s slow-moving public works program, the PWA. Hopkins presented the plan to Roosevelt on October 29. The president stunned Hopkins by immediately accepting the extraordinary proposal. The CWA was one of the most dramatic policy experiments of the New Deal era. Between November 1, when the program was announced, and December 15, approximately three and a half million workers were placed on hastily constructed federal projects. In mid-November, a large portion of federal resources was devoted entirely to issuing the first CWA paychecks. Although civil works drew on the staff and resources of the federal relief program, state Civil Works administrations hired engineers, efficiency experts, and professionals in the field of labor relations, making the program much more like public employment than work relief. Workers were paid regular wages and were not supervised by social workers.

During its brief lifetime CWA workers built approximately 500,000 miles of roads and worked on thousands of schools, airports, and playgrounds. Reflecting a gendered division of labor, CWA employed women in primitive workshops, sewing garments for the unemployed. Although civil works absorbed many projects from work relief programs established earlier in the Depression, a key goal of CWA was to move beyond traditional “made work” to projects of permanent value. The program’s pioneering “Civil Works Service” program for “white collar” professionals produced surveys of coastlines, harbors, and public buildings. The CWA employed artists, musicians, and actors on projects that were precursors to the more well known WPA arts projects.

The CWA was enormously popular. Hopkins later estimated that approximately ten million workers “walked up to a window and stood in line, many of them all night, asking for a [CWA] job.” The program also generated significant support in Congress for a permanent federal employment program. But the growing political support for CWA alarmed many New Deal officials, who feared that

public employment would become an expensive “habit” and create a permanent drain on the federal treasury. Fiscal conservatives within the New Deal, led by Bureau of the Budget Director Lewis Douglas, successfully lobbied Roosevelt to discontinue the program in the early spring of 1934.

The mercurial history of CWA once led historians to view the program as a noble but haphazard experiment, plagued by corruption and inefficiency. Recent research, however, has suggested that projects were relatively well run, free of graft, and represented a significant improvement over traditional “made work.” Perhaps most important, the CWA experiment greatly increased support for public employment, creating pressure both within the New Deal and in Congress for the administration to end the general relief grant program and launch the WPA in 1935.

See Also: HOPKINS, HARRY; NEW DEAL; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JEFF SINGLETON

CLASS

The Great Depression had a significant impact on class relations in the United States. Although the Depression did not create class divisions, it did help

to magnify the divisions that already existed. The working class, the group most likely to criticize capitalism as immoral, was joined by growing ranks of middle-class Americans who not only sympathized with those in the working class but also began to question the system that had caused so much grief. These class divisions became a battle over values. As historian Robert S. McElvaine explains in his book *The Great Depression* (1984), the working class and middle class valued the ideals embodied in cooperative individualism, calling for more equity, cooperation, ethics, and justice in the economic system, while elite Americans remained wedded to the ideal of acquisitive individualism, which was generally amoral, self-interested, and competitive.

While motion pictures certainly provided an opportunity for people to escape from the economic and emotional hardships of the Depression, many of the films also offered critical windows on to that very world. Many of the most popular gangster films of the era, including *Little Caesar* (1930) and *The Public Enemy* (1931), offered critiques of unbridled acquisitive individualism. Other films, including *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932) and *Dead End* (1937), offered more explicitly stinging critiques of the amoral marketplace that had ravaged the lives of millions of moviegoers. One sign of the growing influence of the state in society is the fact that films in the post-1933 era increasingly portrayed the federal government as a moral institution capable of addressing real questions of inequity and injustice.

While President Roosevelt proved adept at using class rhetoric to forge his New Deal coalition, he also found himself pushed further to the left by grassroots militancy on the streets and in the voting booths. In 1934, workers in San Francisco and Minneapolis engaged in successful general strikes with a great deal of support from the middle class. The 1934 congressional elections were a victory not only for Democrats but for those who were politically much further to the left than Roosevelt himself. Moreover, the popularity of governors Floyd Olson of Minnesota, who was elected on the Farmer-Labor Party ticket in 1930, and Philip La Follette of Wisconsin, who helped to bring that state's Socialist and Progressive parties together in 1935, was a

clear sign that many working-class and middle-class Americans were willing to consider radical alternatives. And perhaps most important, the phenomenal popularity of Louisiana senator Huey Long and "Radio Priest" Charles Coughlin, both of whom gathered a great deal of support from millions of lower-middle-class Americans tenaciously trying to hold on to their status, was a clear sign that the early New Deal alone could not satiate the appetite of an increasingly discontented, vocal, and class-conscious (albeit not necessarily in the Marxist sense) populace.

The growing influence of working-class Americans who questioned the morality of the market helped to convince Roosevelt that his political future lay with meeting their demands legislatively and not just rhetorically. The fruits of this influence were apparent in the most significant legislation of the second New Deal, including the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, which gave workers the legal right to bargain collectively and offered government oversight with the creation of the National Labor Relations Board. Congress also passed the Social Security Act in 1935, which provided unemployment insurance and old-age pensions to workers and their dependents. And finally, in 1938 Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act, which established minimum wages, maximum working hours, and child labor laws. All of these acts, although not completely supported by organized labor, insured that questions of equity would become a part of the emerging welfare state. In other words, the state would no longer simply protect property; rather, it would recognize class differences and attempt to broker those differences.

One of the most significant developments regarding class relations during the Great Depression was the creation of the Committee for Industrial Organization (later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO) in 1935. While United Mine Workers president John L. Lewis became the organization's first leader, it is clear that the impetus for industrial unions arose from below, among the ranks of industrial workers who had been excluded from the craft-oriented American Federation of Labor (AFL). Although the CIO is best remembered for organizing mass production

workers, it is also important to remember that it represented not just an organizational shift, but an ideological one as well. Unlike the AFL, which often excluded racial and ethnic minorities, the CIO unions confronted racism and segregation by inviting African Americans, eastern and southern European immigrants, and other ethnic Americans into their organizations. The CIO also pioneered in the use of new tactics, including sit-down and slow-down strikes, which paved the way for unionization in some of the nation's most powerful industries, including most famously General Motors. However, the CIO grew increasingly conservative by the end of the decade by helping to contain grassroots militancy within the parameters set up by the state for union organizing and bargaining.

Although the Great Depression exacerbated class differences between the working and elite classes, it also helped to remake the working class itself. As historian Lizabeth Cohen argues in her book *Making a New Deal* (1990), thousands of immigrant and ethnic Americans who had previously identified primarily with their ethnic communities came to see themselves in class terms. Certainly this process had begun before the decade of the Depression, as thousands of immigrants participated in a burgeoning national consumer culture and experienced the homogenizing influences of welfare capitalism during the 1920s. However, during the Depression, thousands of immigrant and ethnic Americans were disappointed by the inability of their own communities—from churches to ethnic banks to mutual aid societies—to meet the needs of their members. Increasingly, ethnic Americans, many of whom had joined CIO unions and had begun voting for the first time, began to look toward their unions and the state to address their needs.

Social scientists, who had largely ignored class as a conceptual tool to explain society before 1929, grew increasingly interested in analyzing American society in class terms during the Great Depression. In their 1929 study *Middletown*, sociologists Robert Lynd and Helen Lynd played a pioneering role in developing the concept of class. Although they relied largely on a notion of class that revolved around income and occupation, they also paid close

attention to social behavior, individual expectations, and consumption patterns. In Muncie, Indiana, they identified two main classes—a business class and a working class. In a later study, *Middletown in Transition* (1937), they further refined their definition of class by identifying six main classes. Based on these studies, the Lynds warned that either American democracy would transform the economy or that the economy, as represented by big business, would overwhelm and take over American democracy.

Though less well known than the Lynds, social scientist W. Lloyd Warner also played an important role in creating new conceptions of class to explain American society. After taking part as a consultant in a study of industrial fatigue among workers at the Western Electric Plant in Hawthorn, Illinois, Warner began his own investigation into class relations in Newburyport, Massachusetts. Like the Lynds, Warner identified six classes; however, he focused more on the cultural and social components of class by highlighting the important role that housing, neighborhoods, source of income, social contacts, and voluntary activity played in creating class divisions. While Warner largely accepted the necessity of class divisions because of the complex division of labor in modern industrial society, he nonetheless asserted that opportunity and mobility remained essential to maintaining a democratic nation and ideals.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CASTE AND CLASS; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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KATHY MAPES

COHEN, BENJAMIN V.

Benjamin Victor Cohen (September 23, 1894–August 15, 1983) was a well-known lawyer, public servant, author, and New Dealer. Born in Muncie, Indiana, to a wealthy family, Cohen received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Chicago in 1914, a doctorate in jurisprudence from the University of Chicago Law School in 1915, and a doctorate in judicial science from the Harvard Law School in 1916. While at Harvard, Cohen met Felix Frankfurter, who became his mentor. Frankfurter, in turn, was the protégé of Louis Brandeis, who was best known for his commitment to the small business ideal. Brandeis’s ideas and Frankfurter’s influence would have a great impact on Cohen’s career.

After graduation from Harvard, Cohen served as Judge Julian Mack’s legal secretary in the federal circuit court system. In 1917, Cohen began working for the U.S. Shipping Board and, between 1919 and 1922, he worked for the American Zionists. By 1922, Cohen had decided to enter private practice while continuing to serve gratis for the National Consumers League and helping Frankfurter prepare a minimum-wage bill for women. By 1933, Cohen had achieved the confidence of his mentor, and Frankfurter recommended him to Franklin D. Roosevelt for service in his New Deal.

Working closely with fellow Frankfurter protégé Thomas Corcoran, Cohen helped to draft a

number of important New Deal laws in 1933 and 1934, including the Truth-in-Securities Act and the Securities Exchange Act. Cohen also worked as legal counsel for Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes. Cohen’s importance in New Deal legislation continued to grow, especially after he worked on the 1935 Public Utilities Holding Company Act, which regulated large utility corporations. Again working alongside Corcoran, Cohen contributed his legal expertise to such New Deal laws as the Rural Electrification Act (1935) and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938).

Cohen’s political reputation was bruised when he became identified with Roosevelt’s 1937 court-packing plan. Instead of working behind the scenes, Cohen now became a public figure subject to criticism by New Deal opponents. Also, his association with court packing identified him even more with Tommy Corcoran who was already being labeled as one of Roosevelt’s political “hatchet” men.

As World War II erupted, Cohen helped the president implement the Lend-Lease plan, which gave aid to countries fighting the Axis Powers. Cohen also served as legal counsel to America’s wartime ambassador to Great Britain, John G. Winant. As the war drew to a close, Cohen participated in the Dumbarton Oaks conference, which set the stage for the formation of the United Nations. Cohen then served from 1948 to 1952 as a member of the U.S. delegation to the U.N. general assembly. Thereafter, Cohen retired to private life, although he remained active in Washington affairs. A private, humble man, Benjamin Cohen was a brilliant legal expert who used his talents to advance not only the New Deal, but world peace and disarmament.

See Also: CORCORAN, THOMAS G.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; SECURITIES REGULATION.

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining, which is considered to be the main purpose of labor unions today, first gained permanent government sanction in the New Deal era. Collective bargaining is defined by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics as the process by which "representatives of employees (unions) and employers determine the conditions of employment through direct negotiation, normally resulting in a written contract setting forth the wages, hours, and other conditions to be observed for a stipulated period." Since the founding of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1886, unions had sought to bargain collectively. This method worked for unions when they were powerful enough to bargain directly with employers, or in times of national emergency, such as during World War I, when the federal government decided that the best interests of the nation were served by collective bargaining. It was not until the onset of the Great Depression, however, that a permanent government body was created to promote collective bargaining agreements.

Senator Robert Wagner of New York was the leading politician in the promotion of collective bargaining. Wagner advocated expanding the government's role in planning the economy of the United States. As a part of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which allowed companies within targeted industries to form legal cartels and set prices and production quotas, Wagner insisted upon the insertion of section 7a, which guaranteed employees the right to join unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively. This was the first time that the government claimed the obligation to play a constructive role in managing industrial relations. The creation of this legislation was spurred by a bill introduced by Senator Hugo Black of Alabama, and drafted by the AFL, which would have created a thirty-hour workweek; although the National Industrial Recovery Act undermined that effort, the AFL enthusiastically endorsed the Act, section 7a in particular.

Soon after enactment of the legislation, the National Labor Board (NLB) was formed to adjudicate labor disputes. The NLB had members drawn from

industry, labor, and government. Wagner hoped the NLB would serve as a mediator between labor and management, but neither labor nor management was enthusiastic about this development. William M. Leiserson, who was appointed the NLB's secretary, warned Wagner that reliance upon mediation as a first step would simply reproduce the conflict within the NLB, which is indeed what happened. Leiserson recommended to Wagner that the NLB become an arbitral body that only considered matters of policy, and that a separate body of mediators be established, which is the direction toward which the NLB slowly evolved. The NLB issued rulings regarding the behavior of the two sides in the course of collective bargaining, but it did not mediate disputes itself. The NLB declared that each side had obligations that it had to meet during the collective bargaining process—management had to meet and bargain with employee representatives and sign written contracts, and unions had to present grievances and demands to the employer before striking. By obliging management to meet with representatives of employees, the NLB began to develop the idea of majority rule within union representation elections, which it began to oversee.

In response to the strike wave of 1934, however, it became apparent to the Roosevelt administration that the NLB was ineffective. After obtaining passage from Congress of public resolution 44, in which Congress gave to the president the power to establish one or more labor boards for a one-year period, Roosevelt created the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which had the authority to hold hearings and make findings of fact concerning violations of section 7a. Despite these changes, it became clear that new legislation was needed, and in 1935 the National Labor Relations Act, more popularly known as the Wagner Act, was passed. This act authorized the NLRB to oversee union elections in order to determine majority representation of employees by unions. The act also authorized the NLRB to investigate "unfair labor practices" by both employers and unions, and to seek injunctive relief from the courts while these investigations were ongoing. This induced both employers and unions to seek collective bargaining agreements in signed contracts. Industrial strife was not ended by this legislation; numerous strikes took

place throughout the second half of the New Deal era, including the famous sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, in early 1937. A structure was put in place, however, which eventually diminished the violence that had characterized strikes in earlier eras.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB); ORGANIZED LABOR; WAGNER, ROBERT F.

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GREGORY MILLER

COLLIER, JOHN

John Collier (May 4, 1884–May 8, 1968) was commissioner of Indian affairs from 1933 to 1945. Collier championed Native American concerns and advocated legislation under the New Deal banner to alleviate their suffering. Serving under Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, Collier, an astute promoter and publicist, held the commissionership of Indian affairs for twelve years, the longest reign in that division's history. During that time, a new concept of self-government emerged that delineated the federal government's approach to American Indian policy and forever changed the way Native Americans defined themselves.

A reformer of federal policy toward Native Americans, Collier was born in Atlanta, Georgia.

He graduated from Atlanta High School, studied at Columbia University, worked as civic secretary of the People's Institute in New York City, edited the *Civil Journal*, which sanctioned progressive urban reform, and established the Home School, a utopian experiment saturated with John Dewey's theories. After watching Native American dances at Taos, New Mexico, in 1920, Collier recognized the importance of preserving tribal life. He taught sociology at San Francisco State College in the early 1920s and then accepted an appointment as research agent for the Indian Welfare Committee of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Opposed to the Bursum Bill, named for U.S. Senator Holm O. Bursum of New Mexico, which would have terminated Pueblo water and land rights without proper remuneration, Collier successfully campaigned for its defeat. In 1923, one year before Congress enacted the Indian Citizenship Act, Collier organized and began serving as executive secretary of the American Indian Defense Association.

A lobbyist in the nation's capital for a decade, Collier promulgated his views in various ways. He favored the termination of the land allotment system, supported the revamping of the Indian Bureau in an attempt to improve services and avoid mismanagement, and advocated the cognizance and freedom of Native American cultures and the right of self-rule. Collier urged federal credit for reservations, accepted Native religious independence, endorsed the Indian Oil Act of 1927, wrote essays for *American Indian Life*, and emphasized the necessity for conserving tribal resources.

Collier's criticisms forced the Interior Department under Secretary Hubert Work and Indian Affairs Commissioner Charles Henry Burke to request an outside organization, the Brookings Institution, to examine the Indian Bureau. A task force led by Lewis Meriam submitted a report, *The Problem of Indian Administration*, issued in 1928. It concurred with some of Collier's suggestions, recommended an increase in federal appropriations for Native Americans, and proposed ending land allotment. Touring western reservations to investigate Native American living conditions and criticizing Interior Department officials under Secretary Ray L. Wilbur for not implementing the Meriam Report, Collier

kept himself visible and vocal during President Herbert Hoover's administration.

In April 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt selected Collier to serve as commissioner of Indian affairs. With this appointment, Roosevelt offered a New Deal to Native Americans and provided Collier, who had an ally in First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, with the opportunity to put his ideas into practice. Almost immediately changes occurred for Native Americans. Collier approved congressional legislation to compensate Pueblos whose lands had been lost to encroaching white settlers. He encouraged the dissolution of the Board of Indian Commissioners, ended the selling of Native trust land, and by limiting missionary work at Native American schools, he affirmed the right of freedom of religion for native peoples. Active in advancing Native American education and civil liberties, Collier surfaced as a dedicated and competent public official during the Great Depression.

The most important piece of Native American legislation that passed Congress under Collier's stewardship was the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, which marked a major turning point in the relationship between Native Americans and the United States government. It signaled a fundamental reversal of federal policy. Instead of forcing Native Americans to forsake their traditions for new lives on farms or cities, the 1934 act, also known as the Wheeler-Howard Bill, conceded their right to exist as a separate culture. Tribes were allowed to form their own governments, and reservations continued to be strongholds of Native identity. The main provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act were to restore to Native Americans management of their assets, prevent further depletion of reservation resources, build a sound economic foundation for the people of the reservations, and return to Native Americans local self-government on a tribal basis. The measure also established federal revolving credit to foster economic development and scholarships to encourage education. Government officials vigorously pursued the objectives of the bill until the outbreak of World War II.

Other reforms in Collier's New Deal for Native Americans included the creation in 1935 of an Indian Arts and Crafts Board within the Interior De-

partment to market the production and distribution of Native goods. The Johnson-O'Malley Act of 1934 offered general federal assistance to some Native American students to attend public schools and permitted the Indian Office to contract with the states to provide education, health, and welfare services to Natives on reservations within their borders. The Indian Civilian Conservation Corps enlisted Natives in relief programs. Collier also secured funds for Native service activities from the Public Works Administration. In fact, New Deal agencies funded 29 percent of Native service expenditures in 1934.

Despite his lofty aspirations, Collier frequently suffered setbacks. He met with native opposition to certain regulations and proposals and encountered criticism from Congress. Secretary of War Henry Stimson repudiated Collier's suggestion that the government create separate Native American military units for wartime purposes, preferring an integrated service during World War II. These and other problems enveloped Collier at times during his tenure.

Collier envisioned a time when Native American tribes would have their own governmental institutions to replace the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He believed that consolidation of individual and communal land under a tribal government was the means by which to achieve this independence. Puzzled by the lack of native support for the Indian Reorganization Act, Collier learned that his plans for consolidation offended tribes who had come to value personal ownership of land, some of whom angrily accused the commissioner of communism.

Following his resignation as commissioner of Indian affairs in January 1945, three months prior to the death of President Roosevelt, Collier became president of the Institute of Ethnic Affairs in Washington, D. C. Later he taught sociology and anthropology at the City College of New York, pursued research on Native America, and wrote newspaper columns. In 1964 Collier received a distinguished service award from the Interior Department headed by Stewart L. Udall. Collier died in Taos, New Mexico, having left a significant impression on government relations with Native Americans during the Great Depression.

See Also: INDIAN NEW DEAL; INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1934; NATIVE AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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LEONARD SCHLUP

COMICS

The comics had been a familiar daily distraction for Americans ever since Richard Outcault's *The Yellow Kid* debuted in Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World* in 1896. But it was during the Depression decade that they truly earned an enduring place in American culture, not only in the newspapers but also in the pulp magazines known as comic books. Still commonly known as "the funnies," comics of the 1930s actually branched out into genres of adventure, crime, and superhero fantasy. Generally dismissed as escapist entertainment of little social value, comic books in fact exerted a powerful influence on the popular imagination. They confronted the politics, contradictions, and social dislocations of the Great Depression in a way that young readers especially responded to. They presented a means for those readers to purchase entry into uniquely appealing fantasy worlds. And in the process they helped to invent the concept of commercial youth culture.

With a daily audience in the millions, newspaper comics were the property of powerful and

mostly conservative syndicates like the *Chicago Tribune*, United Features, and William Randolph Hearst's King Features. Popular funnies such as *Popeye*, *Mutt and Jeff*, and *Joe Palooka* dealt in apolitical slapstick humor, sometimes with vague populist undertones. But the *Tribune's* serialized adventure strip *Little Orphan Annie* featured the benevolent corporate billionaire, Daddy Warbucks, and rankled the Roosevelt administration with its attacks on the New Deal. Other comic strips, such as *Buck Rogers*, *Tarzan*, *Flash Gordon*, and *The Phantom*, offered heroic fantasies set in future times, distant worlds, and remote jungles—places where injustice could be redressed and order restored without challenging the status quo at home.

But there was plenty of domestic disorder elsewhere in the comics page. Based on the FBI's popularized crusade against organized crime, Chester Gould's *Dick Tracy* was an unusually streetwise strip featuring an angular-jawed detective and a wonderfully grotesque rogues gallery. The quintessential Depression-era comic strip, *Dick Tracy* picked up where the Hollywood gangster films of the early 1930s left off, and it played to the popular taste for urban violence and mayhem.

In 1933 the Eastern Color Printing Company published the pioneering *Funnies on Parade*. Featuring reprinted newspaper comic strips on pulp paper bound together under a slick cover with a ten-cent price tag, it launched a new publishing trend soon to be called comic books. By 1935 some comic books began to feature original material not owned by the syndicates. None of these made much of a commercial impact until 1938, when National Periodical's (later known as DC Comics) Action Comics hit the newsstands featuring on its cover a costumed superhero named Superman. The creation of teenagers Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, Superman immediately broadened the popularity of comic books and gave the medium its distinct identity. Within a year, Superman's comic books were selling close to a million copies per month. His success led very quickly to a proliferation of costumed heroes, including Batman, Captain Marvel, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, and Captain America.

Unlike their more conservative elders in the newspapers, comic books proved very adaptable to

idealistic, absurdist, and culturally subversive material aimed directly at youth sensibilities. Most creators working in the industry were young urban sons of immigrants with liberal politics and populist social values. Based in and around New York City, the fledgling comic book industry comprised novice but enthusiastic artists and writers, experienced illustrators down on their luck, and businessmen who shared an “anything-for-a-buck” philosophy of publishing. Resulting from this unusual association was a comic-book image of Depression-era America, crude and outrageous, yet oddly sincere and hopeful as well.

The superheroes symbolized American ideals filtered through the cynical reality of the 1930s. Typically cast as “champions of the oppressed,” colorfully costumed heroes aligned themselves squarely on the side of common people. Batman apprehended crooks who eluded the police and the courts on technicalities. Superman’s enemies included greedy stockbrokers, heartless mine-owners, and wicked munitions manufacturers. The Green Lantern protected poor citizens from malicious corporate leaders and their crooked lawyers. By acting as a benevolent outside force to redress the power imbalance between virtuous common people and abusive corporate interests, superheroes championed the interventionist and collectivist spirit of the New Deal. Comic books implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, endorsed President Roosevelt’s leadership and identified the enemies of the New Deal as the enemies of the nation.

Garish and direct, the entry of comic books into American discourse was the cultural equivalent to a sock on the jaw. Whereas adults generally read and adored the newspaper funnies—some of which were already being hailed as national treasures—comic books had a polarizing effect on the public. Even as they won legions of young fans, comic books sometimes left their parents bewildered and concerned. Critics accused them of inducing eye-strain, degrading cultural sensibilities, and desensitizing children towards violence. Comic books thus pointed toward a new era of “generation gaps” divided along lines of cultural preference. Initially regarded as a fad for young people in need of Depres-



National Periodical's Action Comics, featuring a superhero named Superman, hit the newsstands in 1938. Within a year, Superman comic books were selling close to one million copies per month. This young fan was photographed in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

sion-era escapism, few would have predicted that these comics would still be a vital part of American culture into the twenty-first century.

See Also: CARTOONS, POLITICAL; HUMOR; SUPERMAN.

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BRADFORD W. WRIGHT

COMMODITY CREDIT CORPORATION (CCC)

The boost in the farm economy in mid-1933 occasioned by early New Deal efforts in monetary reform and commodity reduction was threatened by a bearish fall slump unless significant amounts of cash could be quickly infused into farmers' pockets. Demands for inflated currency and above-market government loans reflected panic from both the Congress and the farm belt, especially the cash-deprived cotton South.

The Roosevelt administration showed no panic but acceded to a suggestion apparently made by Oscar G. Johnston, a big-time cotton planter from Mississippi and finance director of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), that the government make ten-cent-per-pound non-recourse loans to cotton farmers who agreed to participate in the New Deal's 1934 cotton reduction program. Such a loan would be slightly less than actual or spot market prices. The controversial non-recourse feature, which Jerome Frank, head of the AAA's Legal Division, thought was outrageous and a dangerous precedent, freed the borrower from any liability if prices fell. In such a case, the government would possess title to the cotton, but nothing more. When President Franklin Roosevelt told Jesse Jones, head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, to provide for the loans, a new agency, the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), was created to make them. With Congress out of session the CCC was authorized by Executive Order 6340 and chartered under the laws of Delaware on October 17, 1933. The quasi-public CCC was incorporated by Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau, and Oscar Johnston from the AAA. The new agency represented a creative legal and fiscal response to a very serious

economic threat to the cotton economy in the fall of 1933. Millions of loan dollars soon flowed into the cotton belt covering approximately two-and-a-half million new bales, thus permitting orderly marketing by producers. In fact, by early 1934, prices rose above the loans, vindicating the early process.

Developed to dispense funds to producers and support normal lending institutions, the CCC soon helped rescue commodities other than cotton. According to Commodity Credit's own internal study, its loans throughout the Depression (October 1933 to June 1940) pumped nearly \$900 million into the cotton economy, more than \$470 million into corn, nearly \$167 million into wheat, more than \$46 million into tobacco, and smaller amounts into figs, pecans, raisins, peanuts, and other crops. The result was an increase in commodity prices—nearly doubling cotton and tobacco prices, even more for corn, and dramatic increases for other commodities. The balance sheet registered a mere \$26 million loss during that time. Negatively, in some years, the CCC made loans excessively above market levels which led to the amassing of huge carry-over commodities; only World War II relieved the pressure and avoided a potential disaster. Positively, by employing a pragmatic mixture of government intervention and market forces, the CCC promoted price stability and orderly commodity marketing. In doing so, it quietly became an excellent antidote to poverty in the Great Depression and one of the most effective institutions to emerge from the New Deal.

See Also: FARM POLICY; FEDERAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES CORPORATION; RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION (RFC).

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LAWRENCE J. NELSON

COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934

The congressional architects of federal policy regulating communications were determined to not make the mistakes Congress had made in the development of the railroads. In that case Congress had invited corruption by distributing lands to the owners of the railroads, and aided in what became a continuing problematic relationship between private ownership of railroads and the industry's public service function.

The Communications Act of 1927 was an announcement by progressives that the federal government would own and administer the airwaves. The 1927 legislation established an experimental commission to oversee communications; the Communications Act of 1934 made that body, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), permanent. The Communications Act of 1927 was built upon the belief that the new technology of radio would serve the public by facilitating national education and the dissemination of valuable information collected by the federal government, such as weather reports to aid agriculture. The act also addressed the potential use of radio in transportation, and anticipated that seagoing vessels, for example, would come to rely on radio communication in that same way the railroads had relied on the telegraph.

The Communications Act of 1934—a forty-page document that was compiled after a single day of hearings—reaffirmed the FCC's authority and the federal government's control, but it also addressed the relationship between local radio stations and new national networks, a relationship that would produce confusion and political conflict for years to come. Later additions to the 1934 act extended the government's responsibility for public education and the dissemination of news, and pro-

vided for licensing with controls and limits that were politically useful. These and later amendments to the Communications Act of 1934 have continued to wrestle with the evolving relationship between the communications industry and the federal government. Try as they might, the progressives who had shaped the Communications Act of 1927 reached the same point their predecessors had reached in their effort to require national control over the railroads. By providing for local ownership of radio stations, the authors of the Communications Act of 1934 continued the debate between local independence and national control that had tormented the railroads.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS;
RADIO.

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BARRY DEAN KARL

COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS

Modern communications had congealed during the 1920s. Fashion and design, news, film, radio, promotion, and popular culture became intertwined and profitable as corporate entities. They projected public excitement about modern consumer culture, often from New York and Los Angeles, while slighting regional and ethnic variety. The condensation of news, seen in the newly established *Reader's Digest*, *Time Magazine*, the tabloid press, and the fast paced newsreels, exuded a gauzy glorification of the modern that often mocked traditional values while ostensibly speaking for the "democratic market."

With the Great Depression, the political stakes related to the corporate definitions of news and



Depression-era headlines in the San Francisco Examiner, photographed by Dorothea Lange in January 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

prevalent cultural values took on sharper relief and more urgency. The sliding economy devastated the communications industry, while business slipped in public esteem. Movie attendance was off by a quarter and many of the major studios declared bankruptcy. Newspaper circulation was down; advertising revenue was off 45 percent. In this context,

however, the consequences of bringing sound and sight together for the first time in feature films and newsreels were far reaching but subtle. Half of American homes had a radio by the mid 1930s. Warren Susman has written that “sound helped mold uniform national responses; it helped create or reinforce uniform national values and beliefs in

a way that no previous medium had ever before been able to do. Roosevelt was able to create a new kind of Presidency and a new kind of political and social power through his brilliant use of the medium."

Franklin Roosevelt's ability to make news was reinforced by his adept use of press conferences (he held 337 in his first term alone) and fireside chats. Photographers collaborated by not featuring him as a man without the use of his legs. Rivals such as Senator Huey Long and Father Charles Coughlin competed with Roosevelt for attention through commercial radio, and all of them received thousands of letters from listeners each week.

The National Industrial Recovery Act, through its codes of fair competition, put the stamp of approval on media oligopolies in 1933. The next year Roosevelt signed the momentous Communications Act, which updated the 1927 Radio Act and created the Federal Communications Commission. Corporate media gained a largely compliant commission and what was lost in the legislative rush was any significant place for noncommercial or educational broadcasting. As Robert McChesney has shown, NBC and a gaggle of lawyers and lobbyists re-framed questions about the value of noncommercial stations so that network control of broadcast frequencies was made to look patriotic. Educational radio was effectively limited, and commercial broadcasters were given free use of the public airwaves with little financial return to the public or control by regulators. That structure has dominated American cultural life and the communications industry with few challenges ever since.

Modern propaganda was being developed in Germany during the same years that New Dealers experimented with forms of mass persuasion. America's limited efforts resulted in controversy, such as the response to Pare Lorentz's pathbreaking Resettlement Administration documentary *The Plow That Broke the Plains* (1936), which highlighted the plight of those in the Dust Bowl and implicitly called for greater federal assistance. Republicans decried its message as overly partisan in an election year.

Reporting on social issues took on new urgency, as writers traveled about the land as never be-



A boy in Chicago sells the March 21, 1942, issue of The Chicago Defender, a leading African-American newspaper.

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fore. They developed a passion for documenting concrete facts and facing authentic misery by observing conditions firsthand, then translating their concerns into powerful writing, seen notably in the work of Edmund Wilson, Lorena Hickok, and James Agee, and in magazines such as *Survey Graphic* and *Life*. The documentary form expanded through the widespread use of photojournalism, under both government auspices and commercial syndicates. Dorothea Lange, Margaret Bourke-White, Walker Evans, and Paul Strand all galvanized public attention through the sensitivity and intimacy of their photographs. The picture of poverty described in John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) was so powerful that it was spun off as a feature film, although director John Ford gave the story a more conservative slant.

Newspaper chains, largely controlled by ideologically conservative owners, featured editorials that bristled with anti-Roosevelt invective, while their news columns often dished out the New Deal press releases. The larger chains included those controlled by William Randolph Hearst, Roy Howard, and Colonel Robert McCormick. New magazines created during the Depression years, including *Life*, *Look* and *Fortune*, all featured compelling photo essays.

Interpretive reporting, columnists, and specialized experts became more widely read in the 1930s as well. Louis Stark of the *New York Times* became the preeminent expert on labor relations. Prominent political columnists included Walter Lippman and David Lawrence. Dorothy Thompson wrote on international affairs for the *Herald Tribune*. Drew Pearson initiated his popular political gossip column. Americans could read the right-wing vitriol of Westbrook Pegler or the more gentle counsel of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt's column "My Day."

Censorship of news stories, feature films, and literature included such examples as the banning of Henry Miller's book *Tropic of Cancer* (1934). The Catholic Legion of Decency pressured Hollywood to adopt the Production Code in 1934. Yet in 1931, a landmark Supreme Court decision, *Near v. Minnesota*, had overturned state gag laws as unconstitutional forms of prior restraint, thus strengthening First Amendment guarantees.

Depression-era promotional strategies, the measurement of the public taste, and altered designs for consumer goods were masterfully explored in two books by Roland Marchand. He notes how advertising appeals often reinforced consumers' guilt over their economic failure as personal rather than systemic while championing products to make them more successful or attractive job applicants. Public relations efforts sought to identify corporations as patriotic community builders rather than union busters. Opinion surveys were becoming institutionalized, most often identified through the work of George Gallup or Elmo Roper and their organizations.

The prevailing view of communications has long told a story of growing homogenization of the public through the mass media. Propaganda

studies that began emanating from universities in larger numbers by the 1930s reinforced such a view. Yet in recent years, scholars have focused on resistance to mainstream media by workers, ethnic groups, and diverse regional affinities. The continuing attraction of "race movies" and the black press, the regional theaters promoted by the Federal Theatre Project, and the work of regional muralists, such as Thomas Hart Benton, all helped promote diverse local contexts, ideas, and images. Spanish-language radio had its first female host in 1932 when Maria Latigo Hernandez became host of a show called *La Voz de las Americas*, a daily afternoon program on KABC in San Antonio. Hernandez used the show as a platform for civil rights and other local issues. That same year the Japanese American Citizens League, organized in 1929 in California, first published *Pacific Citizen*, aimed at combating anti-Japanese sentiment in the United States.

Labor unions initiated their own newspapers, journals, and documentary film units during the 1930s. The Film and Photo League was created in the early 1930s by radical documentary filmmakers, some of whom were associated with the Communist International. The League covered strikes, hunger marches, racism, and other issues of social inequity that were often ignored by the mainstream media. Upton Sinclair, the famous writer and critic, ran for the governorship of California in 1934 and lost, but he aroused a strong constituency and the powerful wrath of the conservative movie moguls, who used newsreels and a major media campaign to bury his candidacy. In *Lords of the Press* (1938), journalist George Seldes attacked William Randolph Hearst and groups like the National Association of Manufacturers for assisting Spain's Francisco Franco, Germany's Adolf Hitler, and Italy's Benito Mussolini.

Americans were soon drawn to the crackling urgency of Edward R. Murrow's broadcasts describing the London bombings. Yet fundamental questions addressing the democratization of information and the oligarchic power of commercial media raised by Seldes and others had largely been finessed during the previous decade, and the new wartime climate would obfuscate them even more.

See Also: ADVERTISING IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION; COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934; FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC); HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; RADIO.

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GREGORY W. BUSH

COMMUNIST PARTY

The Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) dominated the Left during the 1930s and was in the forefront of struggles for social change. From the beginning of the Great Depression to the onset of World War II, the party enjoyed unprecedented influence and attained its highest membership totals. With added contingents of fellow travelers and numerous sympathizers, the Communist Party had considerable impact on reform and protest movements of the time.

Central to the Communist Party's growth and stature was its quick and ready response to the immediate needs and concerns of the masses of people to conditions stemming from the country's economic crisis. During the period, the party either initiated or substantially contributed to several highly visible grassroots struggles, among them the agitation on behalf of the unemployed, the fight for black rights, the antifascist campaign, and the unionization of workers.

A number of factors coalesced to place the party in a favorable position to assume a leading role in Depression-era struggles. Internally, the factional fighting that had occupied the party for much of the 1920s was settled with the expulsion of party leader Jay Lovestone and the ascension of a three-man secretariat consisting of William Z. Foster, William Weinstone, and Earl Browder. The leadership was further stabilized in 1934 with the election of Browder as general secretary; Browder led the party for the remainder of the 1930s and through the war years, directing policies and activities with a minimum of dissension. Moreover, the party had a functional base from which to launch its campaigns, and a skilled and disciplined cadre of experienced workers. Through the Trade Union Educational League and its successor, the Trade Union Unity League, party members had worked diligently to organize workers and gained credibility as determined and forthright fighters. The party had other established wings with solid reputations, including the International Labor Defense (ILD) and the Young Communist League, and quickly formed others to appeal to specific groups.

Additionally, the party's critique of capitalism meant that it was ideologically armed to deal with the economic cataclysm. "Third period" analysis (first articulated at the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International [Comintern] anticipated a crisis in Western capitalism and predicted economic collapse followed by a revolutionary upswing. Accordingly, Communists expected to seize the time, aggressively assume leadership, and lead the disgruntled masses in a radical working-class movement. By virtue of its political stance, the party offered explanations and alternatives and was poised for its anticipated vanguard role.

Despite the opportune circumstances, the party's sectarianism hindered its effectiveness. In accordance with third period analysis, the Communist Party saw itself as the leading light of the movement and thus disdained alliances and coalitions with groups with similar interests and concerns. Party rhetoric was vociferous in attacks on reformists and other radicals, whom it wildly labeled as enemies of the working class and "social fascists." Hence, Communist stridency precluded any cooperation with likeminded progressives and for the first half of the decade kept the party isolated from the mainstream of American liberalism.

Despite its sectarian stance, the party's accomplishments were substantial. In March of 1930, Communists launched an unemployment campaign with nationwide demonstrations. Nearly half a million people in over thirty cities answered the call, with an estimated 100,000 participating in New York alone. The party followed up with the organization of unemployed councils and the staging of local and national demonstrations. The party's program included demands for emergency relief, unemployment insurance, no evictions, and a seven-hour workday and five-day workweek. Through the councils, communist organizers called attention to the plight of the unemployed, obtained some concrete benefits for them, and gave political voice to suffering masses.

In addition to its activities with the unemployed the party expanded its outreach to African Americans. In keeping with the mandates of the Sixth World Congress, which defined blacks as an oppressed nation within a nation requiring special at-

tention, the CPUSA was intent on representing itself as the party of black Americans. In 1932 (and again in 1936 and 1940) an African American, James W. Ford, was the vice-presidential nominee on the Communist Party ticket. Beyond symbolic gestures, Communists aggressively recruited blacks and courageously entered the hostile South, where they attempted to organize blacks and whites together in defiance of law and etiquette. Facing considerable peril, in 1931 they helped form a sharecroppers union in Alabama that sought better conditions and fairer treatment for agricultural workers.

The party probably made its greatest inroads with blacks through the ILD's vigorous defense of black prisoners. The group's long-running campaign surrounding the "Scottsboro Boys," nine black youths convicted of raping two white women in Alabama in 1931, attracted worldwide attention and contributed greatly to the party's image as a militant opponent of racism and discrimination.

By the end of 1934, the party had began moderating its tone and moving closer to cooperation with other groups. The Seventh World Congress of the Comintern affirmed the shift in mid-1935 with its call for a united front of democratic forces to combat the growing threat of fascism. Attacks on liberals and socialists ceased as the CPUSA sought alliances with groups that it had formerly assailed. This new policy, the People's or Popular Front (later rechristened the Democratic Front), was reflected in support for President Franklin D. Roosevelt and New Deal policies, the abandonment of dual unionism, and generally a less doctrinaire and sectarian posture. In the wake of this changed attitude, the CPUSA took the lead in uniting its National Student League with the Socialist Student League for Industrial Democracy in 1935 to form the American Student Union (ASU). The ASU combined activism on college campuses with involvement in labor, antifascist, and civil rights issues. In the South, the ASU had its close counterpart in the Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC), a federation of black youth groups brought together by young African-American Communists in 1937. With a base originally in Richmond, Virginia, the SNYC spread to several southern states, where it spearheaded labor and civil rights initiatives.

The Popular Front's most enduring success was in the area of labor. John L. Lewis, head of the Committee for (later Congress of) Industrial Organizations (CIO), relied heavily on experienced and skilled Communist organizers when he undertook the task of unionizing the mass production industries. Communists and others strongly linked to the party could be found at nearly every level of the early CIO and came to dominate a number of CIO unions.

The CPUSA's successful foray into mainstream progressive movements came to an abrupt halt with the 1939 Nazi-Soviet nonaggression treaty. Although membership was largely unaffected, Democratic Front alliances dissolved because the party's shift from collective security to neutrality seemed a betrayal of its previously principled stand against fascism. The party sought to resurrect its former alliances during the 1940s, but its credibility had been undermined and its image badly tarnished.

See Also: ALABAMA SHARECROPPER'S UNION; AMERICAN STUDENT UNION; BROWDER, EARL; FOSTER, WILLIAM Z.; INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE (ILD); POPULAR FRONT; SCOTTSBORO CASE; SOUTHERN NEGRO YOUTH CONGRESS (SNYC).

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GWEN MOORE

CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO)

Dismal working conditions for millions of American industrial laborers inspired the creation of the

CIO. Originally called the Committee for Industrial Organization, the CIO began in November 1935 as a reformist movement within the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which had traditionally focused on organizing skilled workers, such as electricians and carpenters, into their own trade unions. The AFL had made only halfhearted efforts to organize the millions of workers in such basic industries as steel, automobiles, rubber, and meatpacking. These industrial workers had almost universal complaints about the general climate of job insecurity during the Great Depression, the lack of any meaningful input concerning their working conditions, and the arbitrary power of their foremen to hire, fire, and transfer. For most workers, having so little control over their lives proved to be humiliating and degrading. Anyone who was fortunate enough to work at an industrial job during the Depression had to accept long hours and the increasingly fast pace of the machinery. The combination proved to be exhausting, and often dangerous. If workers spoke up or complained, they risked losing their jobs, with no recourse.

ORIGINS

The CIO sought to change the balance of power in American factories. Three presidents of existing AFL unions—John L. Lewis of the United Mine-workers (UMW), David Dubinsky of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers—pushed hardest for the creation of the CIO and offered resources from their union treasuries to support the cause. Lewis's UMW had a direct interest in organizing the steel industry, because large steel companies owned a significant percentage of the nation's coal mines. Dubinsky and Hillman saw potential in linking the fortunes of industrial workers, through the CIO, with Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. All early CIO leaders feared that unrest among American workers, if not harnessed in positive ways, could be channeled into potential Communist or fascist movements.

Industrial workers had made their discontent obvious after the passage in 1933 of Roosevelt's National Industrial Recovery Act, which was designed primarily to allow businesses to regulate



Members of the CIO's Ford Local 600 carry flags and banners in Detroit's 1942 Labor Day parade. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

themselves out of the Great Depression, but which also contained a clause (section 7a) that guaranteed American workers the right to organize into unions without interference from their employers. Throughout 1934, hundreds of thousands of laborers, across industries and across regions, went on strike to claim their legal right to join unions, many of which were affiliates of the AFL. In most cases, however, employers ignored the law and fought hard, often violently, against their employees. Many leading union supporters lost their jobs, while the federal government did nothing to prevent or punish these blatant violations of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The prospects for widespread gains for organized labor fizzled with

the 1934 organizing defeats. But what would become of the unrest that prompted the uprisings? Lewis, Dubinsky, and Hillman hoped that it could be funneled into effective industrial unions within the AFL, making organized labor a significant national political force. The AFL's leadership, however, did not share this vision, and very shortly after its creation the CIO began to operate, for all practical purposes, as an independent labor organization.

AMBIGUOUS BREAKTHROUGHS

Two months after the Supreme Court declared the National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional in May 1935, President Roosevelt signed the

National Labor Relations Act—also known as the Wagner Act, after its chief sponsor, Senator Robert Wagner from New York—which once again guaranteed American workers the right to join unions without employer opposition. Workers were understandably wary. Likewise, while CIO officials appreciated the symbolic importance of the bill, they had no illusions that business owners would obey it. CIO leaders also faced the difficult task of convincing workers that the CIO was serious about supporting them, and that it had the power to stand up to intransigent managements.

In February 1936, rubber workers at Goodyear Tire in Akron, Ohio, forced these dynamics into the open with their fight for long-simmering demands: a measure of control over both their hours and their method of payment, and protection for union activists, who were being fired in violation of the Wagner Act. The struggle was far more complex than simply workers versus management. The CIO competed for the workers' allegiance with an AFL union and with Goodyear's company union, which was not an independent bargaining agent and which should have been outlawed under the Wagner Act. Rubber workers set the pace in this conflict, largely rejecting the AFL, but not entirely content with their alternatives. The CIO hoped to harness the workers' anger and use it to establish a permanent union with a collective bargaining agreement with Goodyear, but the company was still far stronger than any union. In late March, Goodyear offered minor changes in working hours, but refused to sign a formal contract. This was an ambiguous result, like many of the CIO's experiences in the 1930s. The rubber workers were not crushed, which was a major triumph when compared with earlier years, but by no means did the CIO create a solid institutional base in Akron, and rubber workers were without either a collective bargaining agreement or any other means to resolve their grievances.

The CIO also sought to organize steelworkers, who shared common complaints about the arbitrary power of foremen, but who also had experienced numerous routs at the hands of management, most recently in 1934. Steel was the heart of American industrial might, however, and there

were half a million potential steelworker union members. Girding for battle, the CIO created the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) in June 1936. Funded primarily by Lewis's UMW, SWOC ignored any AFL claims to jurisdiction over skilled steelworkers and began mass organizing.

While still technically part of the AFL, the CIO now operated independently and faced strong opposition from its parent organization. The CIO also acted on its own by supporting President Roosevelt in his successful bid for reelection in 1936. Whether or not they were influenced by the CIO's endorsement, most working-class Americans voted for Roosevelt, and CIO leaders hoped that this display of political power would help protect the fledgling industrial union movement.

The CIO's fortunes rose with the success in early 1937 of the famous Flint, Michigan, sit-down strike against General Motors (GM). Although it appears that most autoworkers in Flint desired greater control over their working lives, only a few were willing to risk their livelihoods by openly associating with a unionization drive sponsored by the upstart United Auto Workers (UAW). By organizing workers to stay inside factories rather than to picket outside them, UAW activists neutralized much of the power that GM (or any other intransigent employer) traditionally wielded in such conflicts. A police assault on the sit-down strikers would damage company property, and it was impossible to operate machines with strikebreakers while strikers occupied the plant. Although the Supreme Court would later declare the sit-down tactic to be an unconstitutional violation of a company's property rights, for a brief period, refusing to leave factories tipped the balance of power in labor conflicts. The CIO was not involved in the day-to-day conduct of the Flint strike. Lewis, however, personally negotiated with GM and government officials to broker the final settlement. As a result, the CIO gained much favorable publicity and the UAW became one of its largest and most important affiliates. The UAW's first agreement, however, proved to be more important for its symbolism than its substance. GM pledged to recognize the UAW as its labor force's sole bargaining agent for six months, but much remained unclear about what

concrete differences that would bring in labor-management relations.

With an eye toward GM's loss of market share during the Flint sit-down strike—the economy was experiencing a minor upswing in the midst of the Depression—U.S. Steel president Myron Taylor unexpectedly settled with SWOC in early March 1937. Once again, the agreement was an ambiguous triumph. U.S. Steel employees won a wage increase and a forty-hour workweek, but SWOC did not extract the right to be the sole bargaining agent for the company's workers. Nevertheless, the CIO benefited from having won any concessions at all from the nation's largest steelmaker, which had rebuffed all previous organizing campaigns. The following month, Chrysler Corporation signed a labor agreement with the UAW-CIO, and the Supreme Court declared the Wagner Act constitutional. Hundreds of thousands of workers across the country, from a staggering variety of jobs, soon joined CIO-affiliated unions. There was certainly reason to be hopeful about the future of the CIO's industrial union project.

DAUNTING CHALLENGES

However, there were also ominous developments. Ford Motor Company violently resisted UAW organizing efforts, and the Roosevelt administration failed to enforce the Wagner Act. Likewise, smaller steel companies fought successfully, sometimes lethally, against SWOC's efforts to complete organization in steel. These campaigns drained resources from the CIO, which, despite increasing its institutional presence around the country, was often unable to offer adequate support to the masses of hopeful workers in other industries who had recently joined unions. The CIO also relied heavily on organizers, and top leaders in a few affiliated unions, who were members of the Communist Party. Communist union activists, perhaps a quarter of the CIO organizing staff, were essential to the industrial union mission and appear almost without exception to have placed their commitment to workers above their party allegiances. Yet the presence of Communists in the CIO made the organization vulnerable to red-baiting politicians and industrialists. During the Depression years, however, top

CIO officials shrugged off such attacks and utilized the Communists' talents.

The biggest threat to the CIO proved to be the deep recession that began in late 1937. Industrial employment plummeted, severely reducing union membership and dues payments. When it officially split from the AFL in November 1938—changing its name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations—the CIO was far weaker than it had been a year earlier. The recession further emboldened anti-union employers like Ford and Republic Steel to flaunt the Wagner Act, the AFL continued its counterattack against what it considered to be the CIO's renegade operations, and John L. Lewis assumed increasing, often erratic, control of the CIO while still leading the UMW. It is unclear how many workers still belonged to CIO unions in late 1938, but it seems certain that the numbers were far lower than those released by CIO officials.

As the defense buildup for World War II brought the nation out of the Great Depression, the CIO's prospects for survival increased dramatically. The war years, indeed, would bring relative institutional stability, but with many constraints on union behavior. The central question continued to be whether or not industrial unionism, through the CIO, could maintain a lasting presence and improve the lives of millions of American workers. The jury remained out as the Depression ended. The alternative, however, seemed to be the grim, arbitrary autocracy that had prompted unionization. Adding to the complexity, while the CIO sought better lives for masses of Americans, the working class itself was not united. Improving opportunities for all workers would require serious challenges to racial and gender discrimination, hierarchies that were dear to many members of CIO unions. The CIO, indeed, faced daunting challenges.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; DUBINSKY, DAVID; HILLMAN, SIDNEY; LEWIS, JOHN L.; NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC); UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS (UAW); UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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DANIEL CLARK

CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

Popular wisdom has it that in times of scarcity or economic contraction the relative luxury of land or resource conservation loses its viability and appeal. Yet, during the Great Depression, the conservation movement, which had reached an apogee during the Progressive era, continued within a core of organizations and especially within the federal government to evolve as the New Deal linked conservation projects with its relief programs.

The Depression in agriculture that accompanied the end of World War I had drawn the atten-

tion of economists and agricultural planners to the challenges of inefficient agriculture and overproduction. Agricultural economists and politicians had spent the 1920s casting about for a solution to deflated commodity prices, and most had been attracted to the idea of parity price controls and government intervention in the marketing of agricultural surpluses. Yet, with the onset of nationwide Depression in 1929, and especially by 1931, many of the most progressive of the nation's planners and agricultural economists had begun to discuss land utilization and overproduction as the most pressing concerns facing American agriculture. The leading thinkers of this latter group, M. L. Wilson, Rexford G. Tugwell, Henry A. Wallace, and L. C. Gray, entered the upper ranks of the agricultural establishment after the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and they were pivotal in determining federal conservation policy during the Depression. The principal accomplishments of the conservation movement during the 1930s took place mostly within the programs of federal government through the coordination of forward-thinking policymakers.

FEDERAL CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Tugwell suggested in 1934 that the moment for action on conservation measures had arrived, not only because of the national emergency and its economic causes, but also because of the new leadership in which the American people had placed their trust. Roosevelt was a natural leader for conservationist thinking in government because of his concern for the conservation of resources and the efficiency of agriculture and forestry, which he had demonstrated during his career as a farmer and politician in New York state. In a speech in Montgomery, Alabama, in January 1933 the incoming president encompassed many of his ideas about conservation and planning: "We have an opportunity of setting an example of planning not just for ourselves but for the generations to come, tying in industry and agriculture and forestry and flood prevention, tying them all into a unified whole . . . so that we can afford better opportunities and better places for living for millions of yet unborn, in the days to come."

The continuation of the conservation movement during the Great Depression was most evi-



Conservation workers plant trees in 1937 to promote reforestation in support of the Withlacoochee Land Use Project in Florida.

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dent in federal land use planning, and the conservation projects of the New Deal were deeply rooted in progressive ideas about efficient land use that had characterized the early twentieth century. Significant among these was the identification and retirement of so-called submarginal land (agricultural land unsuited for the purposes for which it was being used), a project that began in divisions of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Retiring surplus, unprofitable farmland from production had been an element of New York's land use planning programs under Governor Roosevelt during the 1920s, but not until the New Deal did federal agencies embrace the idea of promoting similar reforms in land use. In 1935, the

Tugwell's Resettlement Administration took over the land utilization and land retirement work of the AAA and FERA, and attempted, in spite of widespread opposition, to conserve human and natural resources through the reorganization of the agricultural landscape.

Another corrective conservation measure, the Shelterbelt Project, was in part a response to the dust storms of the mid-1930s. The Shelterbelt was designed to include the planting of over two hundred million trees along the country's 100th meridian as a means of moderating drought and reducing dust storms, thus protecting crops and livestock.

Soil conservation was no less important to the prevention of dust storms and agricultural ineffi-

ciency, and shortly after \$5 million was allotted to erosion control in 1933, Ickes created the Soil Erosion Service (SES) in the Department of Interior, where it developed into an agency committed to spreading the use of such techniques as contour plowing and strip farming. With a 1934 study the SES drew attention to the plague of erosion, reporting that within the United States only 578 million of over two billion acres were unaffected by soil loss. In March 1935 the SES was transferred to the Department of Agriculture and renamed the Soil Conservation Service. In 1936, in response to the growing awareness of the destructive powers of erosion, Congress passed the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act, which offered inducements to farmers for replacing soil-draining commercial crops like cotton, wheat, or corn with grasses and legumes that returned nutrients to the soil and remained rooted in the soil yearlong. This legislative descendent of the AAA linked conservation to the earlier aims of reducing production, and it gave soil protection a permanent place in government.

Regional planning was no less important a part of the federal agenda during the New Deal, and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) embodied regional planning through the development of dams that provided flood control and generated electricity, the construction of new highways, and agricultural reforms that combined to transform the economic life of the region. Though no other regions received as much reorganization as the Tennessee Valley, this model of intensive regional planning informed national policies elsewhere.

The nation's forests were another subject of widespread interest among government officials, and the Forest Service's 1933 *National Plan for American Forestry* recommended that the federal government begin purchasing cutover and tax-delinquent land. As a consequence, between 1933 and 1936 the federal government doubled the size of the national forest system.

Work in the national forests was performed in large part by one of Roosevelt's, and the nation's, favorite New Deal programs, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which was designed as a refuge for the millions of unemployed young men be-

tween the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. Corps enrollees worked on both private and public land, constructing trails, reforesting national parks and forests, working to prevent erosion, and fighting forest fires, among dozens of other pursuits. The CCC's work offered tangible proof of the federal government's interest in the conservation of both human and natural resources, and as it offered new opportunities to the nation's young men it furthered the conservation agenda dramatically in the years preceding World War II.

With the national appeal of programs like the CCC and the growing attention in government to conservation issues, the historic conflict between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Interior over programs and power continued. During the 1930s Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes battled for control over the New Deal conservation projects. Both administrators saw the logic of combining the conservation functions of government in one department, but both also sought control over the programs. Ickes sought to change the name of the Department of the Interior to the Department of Conservation and Works, with an associated swapping of bureaus with Agriculture, but Wallace refused, arguing that the functions of forestry and soil conservation belonged with other agricultural pursuits in his department. Ultimately, in 1935 and 1936, both President Roosevelt and Congress refused to consolidate the government's conservation programs into one department, and the distribution of conservation bureaus through the several departments remains to the present.

BEYOND GOVERNMENT

Outside government, such advocacy groups as the Sierra Club similarly worked during the Depression to forward their agenda of expanding and preserving national parks, forests, and monuments, like Death Valley, Kings Canyon, and Olympic National Park. A newcomer to the conservation movement during the Depression was the Wilderness Society, founded by a small group of wilderness advocates who rejected the growing automobility of recreation and devoted themselves to the preservation of wilderness. One of the founding members,

Benton MacKaye, who worked for the TVA during the early 1930s, had been a primary advocate for the creation of the Appalachian Trail. MacKaye was concerned that the natural areas for which conservation activists had worked during the 1920s were being threatened by unprecedented government intrusion into conservation and recreational development. The Wilderness Society campaigned against the government's make-work programs, such as the Shenandoah National Park's Skyline Drive, which brought tourists—and their cars—to the wildest parts of the nation's parks and forests.

By the end of the 1930s, hundreds of millions of acres of land had come under federal management and been improved by the labor of relief workers. The subsidies and supervision provided to agriculture and public lands through the various federal agencies meant that the landscapes of production and recreation had changed, with conservation being a new and fundamental aspect of agricultural and land-management policy within the federal government.

See Also: CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC); RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA); SHELTERBELT PROJECT; SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE (SCS); TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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SARA M. GREGG

CONSERVATIVE COALITION

The roots of a conservative coalition opposing the New Deal of Franklin D. Roosevelt can be traced back to shifts in the major parties that predated the 1930s. As early as 1920, the Republican Party had jettisoned much of its progressive wing and defined itself as a more ideologically homogenous, conservative organization anchored in New England, the Midwest, and the West. The Democrats of the 1920s, for their part, were not a unified liberal party, but an ideological muddle of rural southerners and urban northerners, anti-alcohol dries and anti-Prohibition wets, nativists and immigrants, and Protestants and non-Protestants. Hungry to regain national power they had lost since the Wilson years, the Democrats' gratitude for Franklin Roosevelt's victory in 1932 encouraged short-term unity within the president's party in Congress during the first hundred days. But as early as 1934, the emergence of the American Liberty League, with its support from not only Republicans but also past Democratic leaders such as 1928 presidential nominee Al Smith, showed the potential for a bipartisan coalition of conservatives unified in support of states' rights, anticommunism, opposition to federal taxation and spending, and resistance to organized labor and civil rights.

As Roosevelt's programs increasingly redefined the national Democrats in the 1935–1936 period as a party championing the interests of the urban, in-

dustrial working class, some veteran Democratic lawmakers from the South openly resisted the shift. Conservatives from both parties fought vainly against the Wagner Act (National Labor Relations) and Social Security Acts, and Senator Carter Glass of Virginia led successful efforts to water down the president's "soak-the-rich" Wealth Tax Act of 1935. Roosevelt's 1936 landslide re-election appeared to foretell a pending rout of his remaining conservative adversaries in Congress, but the unpopularity of the president's "court-packing" bill in 1937 and the onset of a major economic recession reinvigorated conservative critics in both parties. During the 1937 session, an ever-more-formal partnership between southern Democrats and congressional Republicans, both often representing traditionalist white, rural constituencies, began to flex its legislative muscle.

In the "Conservative Manifesto" of December 1937, written mainly by North Carolina Democrat Josiah Bailey, anti-New Deal legislators from both parties attacked the sit-down strikes launched by organized labor, demanded lower taxes and a balanced federal budget, endorsed states' rights and private property rights, and attacked relief programs for fostering permanent dependency. With the exceptions of a watered-down Wagner-Steagall National Housing Act in 1937 and the Fair Labor Standards Act the following year, most Roosevelt domestic initiatives floundered. When the president tried to reverse his political fortunes by working to defeat his conservative Democrat nemeses in party primaries, the voters repudiated him, returning anti-New Deal senators Ellison Durant, "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina, Walter George of Georgia, and Millard Tydings of Maryland to Washington, and giving Republicans their greatest gains since 1928.

For all intents and purposes, the New Deal era had ended by 1938. Texas congressman Martin Dies led the House Un-American Activities Committee in headline-grabbing hearings alleging Communist influence in New Deal programs and the labor movement. Conservatives killed anti-lynching legislation, and pushed through passage of the Hatch Act, prohibiting federal employees, including relief workers, from participation in politi-

cal campaigns. As the danger of world war deepened by the late 1930s, the conservative coalition's asking price for its cooperation with the executive branch on foreign policy was the winding down of the New Deal—a price the Roosevelt administration increasingly paid. During World War II and for several decades after, as Cold War fears of communism at home and abroad mushroomed and civil rights emerged as an even more central and divisive national issue, bipartisan coalitions of conservative lawmakers would continue to act as a powerful brake on liberal presidential initiatives.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE; ELECTION OF 1938; NEW DEAL; RECESSION OF 1937; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY

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CONSUMERISM

In the 1920s, America became a modern consumer society. The number of automobiles, radios, refrigerators, and other new appliances exploded as factories introduced mass production techniques and advertisers developed new ways of selling these goods. But reformers feared that modern consumers found themselves powerless in the face of manipulative advertising, mass technology, and a maldistribution of income. Consumers could no longer judge the quality of packaged, technically complex items simply by taste, touch, or smell, nor could they bargain over prices. Those concerns gave rise to a consumer movement in the 1920s. The movement began with the publication of Stuart Chase and F. J. Schlink's *Your Money's Worth*

(1927), a best-selling book that exposed false advertising and adulteration of nationally advertised brand-name goods. In response to this book's success, Chase and Schlink established Consumers' Research, the country's first product-testing agency. Although the organization had only several thousand members, the idea that consumers needed help in reforming modern capitalism gained widespread acceptance during the Great Depression.

The Depression led to the creation of new governmental agencies dedicated to protecting consumers. Facing economic devastation and dire need, consumers wanted more for their money. Though the economy experienced massive deflation, not all prices declined as fast as wages, especially as large corporations sought to maintain prices and cut production as an attempt to stabilize profits. In addition, many manufacturers resorted to cheapening the quality of products as a way to cut costs. But the biggest problem that consumers faced during the Great Depression was lack of income. Indeed, many New Dealers believed that underconsumption resulting from a lack of mass purchasing power caused the Depression. Though capital spending fell far more than consumption, the idea of underconsumption as the country's main economic problem had widespread popular appeal.

When President Franklin Roosevelt introduced the New Deal, he adopted a purchasing power rationale and promised an expansion of governmental authority to end underconsumption and increase purchasing power: "The aim of this whole effort is to restore our rich domestic market by raising its vast consuming capacity." But the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act were necessarily inflationary. The National Recovery Administration (NRA) suspended antitrust provisions to allow businesses to stabilize production and prices. As a result, the NRA codes worsened the problem of what New Dealer Gardiner Means called "administered prices." Section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act was intended to increase wages, but industry noncompliance rendered collective bargaining ineffective. The efforts of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) to increase the purchasing power of farmers

by raising commodity prices was also inflationary. The initiatives of both the NRA and the AAA led to higher prices without substantially increasing national income, and higher prices threatened to undermine public support for the New Deal. As a result, Congress created new bodies to look out for the interests of consumers and to contain consumer protest.

The creation of the NRA's Consumer Advisory Board signaled the incorporation of a progressive attitude into the New Deal and the official recognition of the importance of consumers to economic recovery. The board's first chairman was Mary Rumsey. Born in New York in 1881 to E. H. Harri-man, a railroad financier, Rumsey grew up in elite circles, but she maintained a lifelong interest in social welfare. During World War I, Rumsey helped organize community councils under the Council of National Defense. Those councils played an important role in monitoring wartime prices and served as the basis of cooperatives after the war. During the 1920s, Rumsey developed close ties to the female reform community, and she received her appointment to the Consumer Advisory Board at the behest of her close friend and roommate Frances Perkins. Rumsey, who also had the ear of Eleanor Roosevelt, appointed to the board representatives from women's groups that were sympathetic to consumer issues, including the American Home Economics Association, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the National Consumers' League, the Women's Trade Union League, the League of Women Voters, and the American Association of University Women. Rumsey also appointed social scientists, such as Gardiner Means, Robert Lynd, and Paul Douglas.

In the AAA, Secretary Henry Wallace created the Consumers' Counsel to protect consumer interests, and he appointed Frederic Howe as its first head. Howe was a leading municipal reformer who had long advocated the need for public markets. World War I was a formative experience for Howe, as it had been for Rumsey. While serving as commissioner of immigration at Ellis Island in New York Harbor, Howe wrote *The High Cost of Living* (1917), in which he argued that food monopolies paid farmers too little for their products and

charged urban consumers too much. As head of the Consumers' Counsel, Howe argued that processors raised prices more than was necessary to make up the value of the processing tax, and thus gouged the American public. Howe's theories about monopolistic pricing in the food industry, as well as in other important industrial sectors, received support from Gardiner Means, who served as Wallace's economic adviser. In addition, liberals within the AAA, such as Modercai Ezekiel, Louis Bean, and Jerome Frank, along with Undersecretary of Agriculture Rexford Tugwell, supported the Consumers' Counsel's attack on high prices, low wages, and degraded quality, which they believed to be impediments to economic recovery.

Although the NRA Consumer Advisory Board and the AAA Consumers' Counsel were established to diffuse consumer protests, they legitimized and fueled growing activism. At the policy level, they had little impact, but at a popular level, they gave administrative endorsement to the idea of high prices as profiteering and low wages as economically unsound. In the fall of 1933, the formation of the Emergency Conference of Consumer Organizations, which represented fifty consumer groups, signaled a growing unrest, as did the hundreds of thousands of letters that citizens sent to Washington with details of economic difficulty. Especially telling were the thousands of bread wrappers that consumers sent to demonstrate what they believed to be, and what Secretary Wallace had told them were, unjustified prices. In response to increasing agitation, Eleanor Roosevelt invited the Emergency Conference of Consumer Organizations to the White House for a high profile meeting on consumer problems. One of the most vocal representatives, Leon Henderson, condemned the Consumer Advisory Board as ineffective. As the director of the remedial loan division for the Russell Sage Foundation, Henderson saw first-hand how economic necessity drove low-income wage earners into the grips of loan sharks. After the White House meeting, NRA administrator Hugh Johnson hired Henderson as an advisor on consumer problems. He was soon promoted to the post of chief of the NRA research and planning division, a position he used to continue his attack on high prices and low wages.

New Deal consumer advocates pushed for three programs. First, they sought to organize county consumer councils to create a consumer movement. In response, the NRA created the Bureau of Consumer Economic Education under the direction of economist Paul Douglas and underconsumption theorist William Trufant Foster. The bureau established councils in two hundred counties; each council included home economists and county agents, as well as housewives, wage earners, and farmers of modest means. These councils, along with women's clubs, churches, labor unions, and other organized groups, received new government publications on consumer issues. The Consumers' Counsel, for example, sent out tens of thousands of copies of *Consumers Guide*, which listed average prices for basic goods like meat, milk, and bread, and urged consumers not to pay more. Second, in addition to grassroots organizing, consumer advocates pushed for an end to price fixing in NRA codes. Finally, consumer advocates called for a government system of quality standards to provide consumers with essential product information. The Consumer Advisory Board hired well-known sociologist Robert Lynd and consumer advocate Caroline Ware to investigate the possibility of government-imposed grade labeling on the theory that even if consumers were not well organized, they could benefit from knowing more about the goods they purchased. Demands for better standards culminated in the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938 that required better product labeling and extended the Food and Drug Administration's regulation to the cosmetic industry.

New Deal rhetoric aroused consumers who felt entitled to fair prices and good quality, especially during a time of serious economic need. In the spring of 1935, when record-breaking droughts caused a shortage of cattle, consumers protested rising meat prices. In cities across the country, housewives formed High Cost of Living Committees to demand price cuts on meat, milk, and bread. Regardless of the real causes for price increases, these angry consumers blamed food monopolies and demanded justice in the marketplace. Some of this movement's leaders came from the country's most politically radical groups, including the Communist Party, but many of the movement's follow-

ers were ordinary housewives having a hard time making ends meet. The League of Women Shoppers, for example, was a Popular Front organization that gained a middle-class following during the meat crisis by mobilizing housewives against price increases. In Detroit, Mary Zuk, another radical activist, led housewives on a meat boycott while also helping to form the United Auto Workers.

By the late 1930s, business was forced to acknowledge the presence of a growing consumer movement as testified by the popularity of Consumers' Research and the spread of consumer boycotts. *Business Week* argued that the business community should support the demands of consumer groups for a Department of the Consumer as a way to keep track of this burgeoning threat. The mobilization for World War II bolstered the consumer movement. Both New Deal consumer advocates and grassroots organizations staffed the newly created Office of Price Administration (OPA), which was set up to curb wartime inflation. Its first administrator was Leon Henderson, who implemented a national system of price controls, rationing for fair distribution, and government grade labeling. To enforce compliance, the OPA set up "little OPAs" in every community. These boards were the heirs of the NRA county councils. Though not the Department of the Consumer that advocates had desired, the OPA pushed for many of the programs that had been at the heart of the consumer movement during the Depression.

See Also: ADVERTISING IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION; HENDERSON, LEON; NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA); SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

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MEG JACOBS

COOLIDGE, CALVIN

Calvin Coolidge (July 4, 1872–January 5, 1933) was vice president of the United States in the administration of President Warren G. Harding and became president upon Harding's death on August 2, 1923. Elected in his own right the next year, Coolidge served a full term, until March 4, 1929.

Coolidge was born and raised in Plymouth Notch, Vermont, a tiny locality, and after graduation from Amherst College in Massachusetts he moved to nearby Northampton, where he read for the law in a local law office. Passing the bar at the age of twenty-five he soon turned to Republican politics and thereafter occupied a series of local offices, eventually ascending to the houses of the state legislature, the mayoralty of Northampton, and lieutenant governor and governor of Massachusetts.

In the politics of Massachusetts Coolidge was by no means a conservative and took interest in issues of workers' rights, voting for them during the Progressive era. He came to believe, however, that social and economic legislation had advanced too rapidly and he withdrew his support of it. As governor of Massachusetts he chose to reorganize the state's bureaucracy, abolishing dozens of departments in the name of efficiency.

It was the Boston police strike of 1919 that catapulted Coolidge into national prominence. His statement that "There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time" caught the attention of the nation.

As vice president Coolidge was almost invisible, so much so that when he became president the



Calvin Coolidge with labor leader Mary Harris "Mother" Jones in 1924. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

nation's reporters at first were at a loss to define his personality, not to mention his economic ideas, and took refuge in descriptions of "Silent Cal." They predicted a tight-fisted chief executive of pure Vermont lineage. To be sure, Coolidge's economic ideas were largely the truisms and prejudices of the time. He was against government spending to stimulate the economy. He appears to have agreed with Secretary of the Treasury Andrew W. Mellon that taxation, institutional and personal, should be held at a minimum, not to stimulate spending but to encourage investment, especially by wealthy Americans. He and Mellon agreed that the wealthy needed to take chances in investment while low-income citizens should invest cautiously, in only the most conservative ways.

During Coolidge's years in the presidency the expenditures of the federal government hovered around \$3.3 billion. In 1923 the top five percent of the population received 22.89 percent of the national income and in 1929 it received 26.09 percent. Married couples with incomes below \$3,500, a very comfortable income for the time, paid no taxes (leaving only 2.5 million taxpayers).

The above arrangements were no prescription for the debacle of the stock market in 1929 and the subsequent Great Depression. The best that can be said for President Coolidge's leadership was that he followed the nation's leaders, business and financial, who beheld ever higher plateaus of prosperity. The president did not give much attention to the Federal Reserve System, presuming that everything



President Calvin Coolidge signing the tax bill in February 1926. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

was all right, and when the system moved timidly against the speculation already visible in 1927, he did nothing. Against the rising numbers of holding companies and investment trusts he said little beyond telling a press conference in January, 1926, that he had spoken with William Z. Ripley of Harvard University, who was complaining about holding company excesses. The president advocated installment buying, saying it was better than allowing credit at his father's Vermont store. He offered no criticism of the rise of brokers' loans, relating that they were not too large, a remark that lifted stock prices the next day.

Not long before Coolidge died, he told a reporter friend that he had lived beyond his time—the Great Depression was then reaching its lowest point—which was true enough.

See Also: CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION;
MONETARY POLICY; REPUBLICAN PARTY;
TAXATION.

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ROBERT H. FERRELL

CORCORAN, THOMAS G.

Thomas Gardiner Corcoran (December 29, 1900–December 6, 1981) was an ebullient New Deal legislative draftsman and presidential confidant. Born in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, Corcoran overcame anti-Irish prejudices to graduate at the head of his class at Brown University and the Harvard Law School, and to clerk for Supreme Court

Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. At the Wall Street law firm of Cotton & Franklin, Corcoran handled securities issues and aimed at making his own fortune in the stocks, but he lost badly when the market crashed in 1929. In 1932 Corcoran went to Washington as a counsel to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC).

At the start of the Roosevelt administration, Harvard law professor Felix Frankfurter recruited Corcoran, James M. Landis, and Benjamin V. Cohen to draft the federal Securities Act of 1933. Corcoran spent most of his time keeping peace between his brilliant but high-strung collaborators. Winning acclaim for their work, the young lawyers were dubbed the "Happy Hotdogs" for their patron. Afterwards, Landis was appointed to the Federal Trade Commission to help enforce the Securities Act, while Corcoran joined Cohen to work on other legislation. Together they drafted the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Public Utilities Holding Company Act of 1935, and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. As a team, Cohen was the more innovative thinker, while Corcoran was the energetic lobbyist for their ideas. Both bachelors at the time, Corcoran and Cohen rented a large house in Georgetown and made it a social as well as political center for other liberal New Dealers.

Corcoran drew the personal attention of President Roosevelt, who nicknamed him "Tommy the Cork." At social gatherings, Corcoran entertained the president by playing the accordion and singing Irish ballads. Roosevelt also appreciated his talents as a writer. Corcoran drafted Roosevelt's speech accepting renomination in 1936, with its memorable imagery of a "rendezvous with destiny." On Frankfurter's advice, however, Roosevelt kept Corcoran and Cohen in their lower-level positions to do utility work on a range of New Deal projects rather than appoint them to the higher offices they expected. Although he worked temporarily in the Treasury and Justice departments and frequently at the White House, Corcoran spent most of his government service on the RFC's payroll. He loyally supported Roosevelt's efforts to enlarge the Supreme Court in 1937 and was suspected of being an instigator of the president's efforts to purge conservative Democrats from the party in 1938.

Corcoran married his secretary, Margaret (Peggy) Dowd, in 1940, and had five children. To provide for his family he returned to private practice, anticipating that Roosevelt would name him solicitor general during this third term. But Corcoran had become too controversial and the threat of a divisive confirmation fight dissuaded Roosevelt from nominating him. Corcoran shifted from New Dealer to wheeler-dealer, growing wealthy as a Washington lobbyist who represented corporate interests on Capitol Hill and at the federal agencies. Although he never held another government post, he remained close to such prominent politicians as Lyndon Johnson. Corcoran's K street office conspicuously displayed photographs of himself and Johnson to confirm his status as an insider, along with copies of the conservative magazine *National Review* to reassure his clients.

See Also: COHEN, BENJAMIN V.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; SECURITIES REGULATION.

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DONALD A. RITCHIE

COSTIGAN, EDWARD

Edward Prentiss Costigan (July 1, 1874–January 17, 1939) was a U.S. senator from Colorado from 1930 to 1936. Born in Virginia, Costigan moved to Colorado when he was three years old. He became politically active as a young adult, campaigning for William McKinley in the 1896 and 1900 presidential elections. After finishing his Harvard degree and entering the bar in 1897, Costigan returned to Denver dedicated to political activism for the underprivileged and opposed to the self-interested political machines that dominated Colorado politics.

Frustrated by Republican Party conservatism, Costigan helped found the Progressive Republican

Club of Denver in 1910, which joined the new National Progressive Republican League the following year, setting the stage for Theodore Roosevelt's third party campaign for the presidency in 1912. Costigan took a leading role in that campaign, running for governor of Colorado on the Progressive ticket and coming in a solid second.

Costigan's political activism found full expression after the Ludlow coal strike in 1914, when he successfully acted as defense counsel to the strike leaders accused of inciting violence against the mine-employed militia. The issue served to crystallize Costigan's developing views on the need for the fair treatment of industrial workers in the new age of industrial capitalism. With the decline of the progressive movement, Costigan felt he had no choice in 1916 but to endorse Democratic President Woodrow Wilson for re-election. Costigan was rewarded with a place on Wilson's new Tariff Commission, on which he served until his resignation in 1928.

The onset of the Great Depression provided Costigan with a campaign issue with which to return to active political life. Fighting on the issue of Republican paralysis in the face of unprecedented nationwide poverty and economic collapse, he won a convincing victory as a Democrat in the 1930 Senate race in Colorado.

Costigan was at the forefront of legislative efforts to create a federal welfare safety net to combat the Depression in 1931 and 1932; he participated in a conference of progressive legislators in March 1931 and drew up plans for a joint federal-state program of grants-in-aid to the destitute the following November. The Costigan-La Follette bill failed in the Senate, but a less ambitious version passed in early 1932. In September 1932 Costigan became vice-chairman of a National Progressive League, which worked for the election of Franklin Roosevelt to the presidency.

One of the most significant acts of the First Hundred Days of the Roosevelt administration in 1933 was the signing of the Federal Emergency Relief Act, which was based on the Costigan-La Follette proposals. The first allocation of aid under this act went to Colorado in recognition of Costigan's role in passing the bill. Costigan also drew up plans

for six billion dollars of federal public works, supplemented by loans and grants to states for further local construction. He was also co-sponsor of an unsuccessful anti-lynching bill, and of successful efforts to strengthen emergency banking legislation by forcing the government to guarantee bank deposits. The strain of his intensive legislative duties took its toll: Costigan suffered a stroke in 1934 that was to lead to his decision not to seek renomination to his Senate seat in 1936.

See Also: ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION; FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA); HUNDRED DAYS.

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JONATHAN W. BELL

COUGHLIN, CHARLES

Charles Coughlin (October 25, 1891–October 27, 1979) was a Roman Catholic priest and a radio pioneer who used the new medium to broadcast popular but anti-Semitic and isolationist views during the Depression. Coughlin was born in Hamilton, Ontario, to Thomas and Amelia Mahoney Coughlin, pious Catholics who immersed their son in the Church. Charles attended Saint Michael's College in Toronto, where he established himself as a strong student and a talented public speaker. The school was run by the Basilian Fathers, an order that stressed social action and justice. After graduating in 1911, Coughlin entered Saint Basil's Seminary in Toronto. He became an ordained priest in 1916.

After seven years teaching at Assumption College outside of Windsor, Ontario, Coughlin was assigned as a parish priest to the Archdiocese of Detroit, Michigan. He served as an assistant pastor in both Kalamazoo and Detroit before securing his own parish in North Branch, Michigan. After six months, Coughlin was moved to the growing community of Royal Oak, Michigan. Here, in 1926, Coughlin arranged for a loan of \$79,000 and oversaw the building of a new church that would seat six hundred congregants. To bolster his new church, which was known as the Shrine of the Little Flower, Coughlin purchased radio time and began broadcasting, at times right from his pulpit. By 1928, Coughlin's popular shows had attracted numerous new congregants and pulled in enough money to fund the construction of a larger church with an 111-foot granite tower.

Detroit was one of the first cities to feel the effects of the Great Depression because the automobile industry, which was the city's main source of employment, was hit hard by the economic downturn. Coughlin's Sunday radio show, which by 1929 was broadcast by stations in Chicago and Cincinnati as well as Detroit, eased the pain of the Depression for many listeners. In 1930, Coughlin signed a deal with CBS to broadcast his *Golden Hour of the Little Flower* to a potential audience of up to forty million listeners. When Coughlin's increasingly controversial views caused CBS to refuse to renew his contract in 1931, he established contracts with individual radio stations and continued to reach millions of listeners. Coughlin's magazine, *Social Justice*, which was launched in 1936 and published until 1942, also claimed six hundred thousand subscribers.

Coughlin's early broadcasts were delivered in a mainstream rhetorical style. By 1930, however, Coughlin's style had changed, and he exhibited a growing obsession with the international banking industry, which he blamed for many of the nation's problems and which he considered the bastion of Jews. He initially supported President Franklin D. Roosevelt and considered himself, erroneously, to be one of Roosevelt's key advisors. But despite the efforts of Joseph Kennedy to bring the men together, the relationship was rocky at best. In 1934,

Coughlin spearheaded the National Union for Social Justice, which was built around support of an annual living wage for workers, greater profit for farmers, and central control of the monetary system. Coughlin insisted the group was a lobbying organization only and not a third party. Yet in 1936, Coughlin, along with Dr. Francis E. Townsend and Rev. Gerald L. K. Smith, founded the Union Party. The party was based on similar principles as the NUSJ and supported the presidential bid of William Lemke of North Dakota. The party pulled in only 2 percent of the national vote, greatly hurting Coughlin's credibility. By 1938, Coughlin's radio broadcasts had become blatantly isolationist and anti-Semitic in tone and content, and he expressed sympathy for Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. Although he continued to attract millions of listeners, Coughlin bowed to church pressure and stopped broadcasting in 1940. Under the order of his bishop, Coughlin ceased all political activity by 1942, although he was allowed to continue serving as a parish priest until 1966. He died in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, in 1979.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; DICTATORSHIP, FEAR OF IN THE UNITED STATES; ISOLATIONISM; RADIO; RELIGION.

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LISA KRISOFF BOEHM

COWLEY, MALCOLM

Malcolm Cowley (August 24, 1898–March 28, 1989) was a critic, editor, and literary historian, and the preeminent chronicler of the 1920s literary genera-

tion. Born in western Pennsylvania, Cowley grew up in Pittsburgh with a number of future literary figures, including his lifelong friend, the critic Kenneth Burke. In 1915 Cowley matriculated in Harvard, where he associated with a literary circle that included Conrad Aiken and e. e. cummings. Despite being ranked second in his class, Cowley withdrew from Harvard to drive a munitions truck for the American Field Service in France and later served in the U.S. Army. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1920.

Cowley studied French literature at the University of Montpellier from 1921 to 1922. While there, he became friends with, among others, Tristan Tzara, Louis Aragon, Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, and John Dos Passos. These were the key years described in his classic memoir *Exile's Return* (1934). Back in the United States, Cowley did various literary jobs and wrote for the little magazines of the day.

In 1929 Cowley became literary editor of the *New Republic*, the most powerful position of its type. As Cowley became more involved with editorial responsibilities and political activities, he became a leader in the political movement leftward of American writers. In 1935 he helped organize the League of American Writers and became its vice president. Cowley was sympathetic to the Soviet Union and Joseph Stalin, but conspicuously never joined the American Communist Party. He justified the show trials, but quickly cut all Communist connections after the 1939 Nazi-Soviet Pact. After joining the Office of Facts and Figures in 1940, Cowley was attacked for his earlier radical positions and forced to resign.

Cowley made some of the great literary discoveries of his day, most notably John Cheever, Jack Kerouac, Ken Kesey, and Larry McMurtry, and his championing of William Faulkner led to Faulkner's rediscovery.

After World War II, Cowley became an editor at Viking where he made some of the great literary discoveries of his day, most notably Jack Kerouac, John Cheever, and Ken Kesey, and successfully championed the republication of such neglected figures as William Faulkner, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Walt Whitman. In his own work, Cowley con-

tinued to mine the veins begun in *Exile's Return* in such autobiographical works as *The Dream of the Golden Mountain: Remembering the 1930s* (1980) and *And I Worked at the Writer's Trade*, and such critical works as *After the Genteel Tradition* (1964) and *A Many-Windowed House* (1970).

See Also: LITERATURE.

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MARK C. SMITH

CRADLE WILL ROCK, THE

The Cradle Will Rock, a modernist labor opera produced by the Federal Theatre Project, opened on June 16, 1937, and immediately made headlines. It told the story of the struggle between steel unionism and Mister Mister in Steeltown, USA, and of the middle-class members of the Liberty Committee who had prostituted themselves to Mister Mister. Composer Marc Blitzstein's opera effectively combined vernacular speech and diverse musical styles to tell a compelling story of the pressures on professionals, artists, small business people, and union leaders to sell out, but also of the ultimate triumph of a powerful working-class movement.

Opening night came just two weeks after the Memorial Day massacre by Chicago police of supporters of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee. Conservative opposition to the New Deal was rising in the wake of the sit-down strikes and President Roosevelt's 1937 court-packing proposal. Works Progress Administration (WPA) arts project workers in New York conducted a one-day work stoppage on May 27, 1937, and some theater people and audiences sat down to protest threatened cuts. Responding to conservative pressures, however, the WPA announced a 30 percent staffing cut in the New York project, and, in a move aimed at *The Cra-*

dle Will Rock, a suspension in the opening of any new play, musical performance, or art gallery before July 1, 1937.

Determined to see the play performed, Blitzstein, director Orson Welles, and producer John Houseman planned a performance at the Venice Theatre, twenty-one blocks north of the Maxine Elliot Theatre where they had rehearsed and expected to open in a benefit performance for the left-wing Downtown Music School. Performers Will Geer and Howard da Silva led a march uptown. Officials of the Musicians Union and Actors Equity had told their members that they could not perform, and nonprofessional relief workers feared being cut off relief if they participated. Houseman suggested that Equity members could play their roles from the audience without violating union instructions against appearing on stage. As the curtain went up in the packed house, Blitzstein was on stage alone, prepared to perform the entire opera himself. As he began to sing the lead female role of Moll, however, Olive Stanton, a relief worker, joined in and sang her part from her place in the audience. Most other cast members followed in turn to play their parts from the audience. The play was a hit and ran for another two weeks, with the actors continuing to perform from the audience with the approval of Equity. Welles and Houseman staged the play again at their new Mercury Theatre, as did amateur theater groups throughout the country. The success of *The Cradle Will Rock* owed much to the growth of a new left-wing working-class audience.

The Federal Theatre Project provided the opportunity for the creators of *The Cradle Will Rock* to develop their vision, but it did not share in its triumph due to the WPA suspension. At its height, the Federal Theatre Project staged hundreds of classical and contemporary plays, successfully implementing project director Hallie Flanagan's vision of a "relevant theatre."

See Also: FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP);
FLANNAGAN, HALLIE; WELLES, ORSON.

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MARTIN HALPERN

CRIME

In the popular imagination, the Great Depression is not seen as an era of violence or of criminality. Viewed through the lens of nostalgia, it is thought to be a simpler, calmer time. But nothing could be further from the truth. The early Depression saw a stunning increase in the homicide rate, and was one of the most violent periods to that point in American history. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, criminals also played an important role in American culture, with many Americans following their actions closely—and, one imagines, identifying with them on some level, despite the fear many people had of violence or of being a target of crime.

It is difficult to come by meaningful crime statistics for the period before the 1930s. The federal government only began to count crime statistics in 1930, and experts believe that crime was systematically underreported early in the century, so it is hard to make valid comparisons for property crimes, burglaries, robberies, rapes, and other criminal activity between the Great Depression and earlier periods. The significant exception is the murder rate. During the early part of the twentieth century the murder rate in the United States rose from 1.2 homicides per 100,000 people in 1900 to 6.8 in 1920. Between 1920 and 1930, it climbed again, reaching 8.8 in 1930—a higher murder rate than in the 1970s. In the early 1930s it reached a high point for the entire century, peaking at 9.7 homicides per 100,000 people in 1933, and declining afterwards for the rest of the decade.

THE CRIMINAL AS BUSINESSMAN

Why was American society so violent in the 1920s and early 1930s? The most generally accepted



The FBI's most wanted criminals in 1934 included (clockwise from top left) John Dillinger, Arthur Barker, Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd, Homer Van Meter, Alvin Karpis, and Baby Face Nelson. BETTMANN/CORBIS

explanation is that rampant violence was one of the unexpected consequences of prohibition, the ban on producing, distributing, or selling intoxicating beverages that began with the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution in 1919 and the Volstead Act the next year. Bound by the fiscal conservatism of the times, the federal government quickly found that it was all but impossible to enforce prohibition. Alcohol intended for any variety of commercial or industrial purposes was re-distilled and sold as

drinking liquor, produced in shops that employed sweated labor. People smuggling alcohol from other countries did a brisk business. In 1925 alone, prohibition agents shut down 172,000 illegal alcohol shops.

Most important, however, was the rise of a \$2 billion illegal industry of producing and selling alcohol, run by organized crime. Paralleling the rise of the corporation, organized crime became big business during the prohibition years. Contracts

between producers, distributors and salesmen could not be enforced through any courts, and the market was highly competitive. So the bootleggers sought to make their agreements stick and eliminate their competitors through shootings, beatings, threats, and other kinds of violence. Often, Italian and Irish immigrants ran these criminal organizations, and for many they represented one of the few chances working-class ethnics had to make phenomenal amounts of money and join the American elite. Despite the extreme violence of the gangs, for many working-class Americans—especially those who resented prohibition—the wealth and notoriety of the ethnic mobs became a point of identification and pride.

The Torrio-Capone gang in Chicago was the model for this new kind of organized crime. A few months after the passage of the Volstead Act, Frankie Yale of Brooklyn, New York, executed one of Chicago's preeminent mobsters, James "Big Jim" Colosimo. Legend has it that Johnny Torrio, one of Colosimo's henchmen, hired Yale to commit the murder so that Torrio could diversify the gang from brothels and illegal gaming into the purchase and sale of liquor. Torrio brought in a group of hired guns from Brooklyn, one of whom was Alphonse "Al" Capone. Capone was one of the most colorful characters in Chicago's underworld. A young man who listed his occupation on his business cards as "secondhand furniture dealer," he ran the Chicago gang's business to the tune of two hundred gang-related murders a year in Chicago in the mid-1920s. He was very open with reporters and the press—who covered him enthusiastically—about his role in murders, such as that of Dion O'Banion, a nemesis of the Torrio-Capone gang, in 1924. The rivalry between the Torrio-Capone gang and the O'Banions reached its peak with the St. Valentine's Day massacre of 1929, when members of the Capone gang dressed as police officers slaughtered seven unarmed O'Banions. When Capone finally was brought down for income tax evasion, federal investigators estimated that his organization's annual income from liquor, prostitution, loan-sharking, extortion, slot machines, and gambling was \$70 million. He was truly the big businessman of the crime world, and his power seemed to mirror that of corporations during the 1920s.

With the stock market crash of 1929 came revelations of corporate malfeasance often not captured in crime statistics. The great crash may have made it appear to ordinary Americans that some kind of massive criminal operation was afoot—how else could all that money simply vanish? But while ordinary speculation and irresponsible lending decisions were primarily responsible for driving stock prices sky-high during the bubble, there were speculative "bull pools" and insider trading operations. There were also white-collar criminals like Ivar Kreuger, a Swedish mogul who ran the International Match Company, which sold \$150 million worth of stock before being revealed as little more than Ponzi scheme in the crash.

THE CRIMINAL AS FOLK HERO

The early 1930s saw a dramatic acceleration of violent crime—murders, robberies, and kidnappings alike. The late days of prohibition may have been one cause, and the social dislocation of the Depression another. The baby of aviation celebrity Charles A. Lindbergh was kidnapped and murdered. Businessmen were kidnapped and held for ransom. The Barker-Karpis Gang stole \$240,000 from the Cloud County Bank at Condordia, Kansas.

But the imagination of the American public was especially captivated in the early 1930s by a pair of robbers who drove the back roads of Texas, holding up banks and stores: Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker. The young duo met in 1930, as the Depression swept across the country. Parker, born to a poor family in West Dallas, had waited tables as a teenager in the late 1920s as her first marriage fell apart. Barrow had grown up in a desperately poor family outside of Dallas, and was involved in car theft and robbery as a teen in the late 1920s. They met, fell in love, and—though separated for two years by imprisonment—embarked in 1932 on a series of bank robberies and hold-ups at stores such as the Piggly Wiggly, which would lead to the deaths of twelve people and the wounding of several more.

Bonnie and Clyde were on the run for a year and a half, driving aimlessly through Texas, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas (Barrow wrote a letter to Henry Ford, telling him that the Ford was the best car ever made), committing robberies and killing

police officers and paying occasional visits to family members, to whom they were deeply attached. In May 1934, they were ambushed and shot in Louisiana. Bonnie was twenty-three years old at the time of her death, and Clyde was twenty-five. Quickly, they became legends. Before being killed, Bonnie had already started to contribute to the story of their nihilistic romance, writing "The Ballad of Bonnie and Clyde" and other poems in the country-ballad tradition celebrating her hopeless life on the road. After their deaths, crowds gathered around the ambush site to seek bits of the bullets that had killed them, and their funerals were mass public events.

Bonnie and Clyde were not the only violent criminals to gain a public following. There were other bank robbers and criminals who became almost like folk heroes in the early 1930s. Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd was the son of a tenant farmer, born in Georgia and raised in Arkansas. He stole from banks and acquired the status of a Robin Hood figure, with the desperation of a small farmer in the Great Depression. George "Machine Gun" Kelly gained his notoriety by kidnapping Charles F. Urschel, an Oklahoma City oil millionaire. John Dillinger, scion of a strict Indianapolis grocer, became a juvenile delinquent at an early age, leading a child gang known as the Dirty Dozen. The Dillinger Gang was one of the best known bank-robbing gangs of the early 1930s. It flaunted authority and mocked the F.B.I. and the police, and the gang members claimed legitimacy by presenting themselves as the people's thieves. As Henry Pierpont, one member of the gang, said, "I stole from the banks who stole from the people." F.B.I. agents shot Dillinger down in front of Chicago's Biograph Theater in the summer of 1934. He had had plastic surgery while on the run, however, and as befits a larger than life legend, there were many people who doubted that he had really died.

Although it is difficult to know why certain figures attract so much more cultural attention than others, it does seem that in the late 1920s and early 1930s, each historical era had the criminals best suited to it. For people in the business-crazed world of the late 1920s, there was little to separate legitimate business from crime. Figures like Al Capone

dramatized the violent competition of the free market and represented the anarchic dimensions of market hysteria. In the early years of the Depression, the evaporation of possibility, the dire poverty of unemployment, and the absence of direction exemplified by the wandering rage of Bonnie and Clyde struck a deep chord in people across the country, for whom the young, desperate, and doomed pair seemed less violent murderers than star-crossed lovers, outmatched by the law. The violence of the early Depression began to decline later in the decade, as liquor became legal once again, mob activity declined, and political activism began to replace the fear and uncertainty of the early 1930s. But the spike in violence of the early 1930s should make people who rhapsodize about the calm and social cohesion of the past think twice, for the chaos and criminality of the era—both its famous criminals and its less well-known high crime rate—easily match the crime waves of the more recent past.

See Also: "BALLAD OF PRETTY BOY FLOYD";

BONNIE AND CLYDE (BONNIE PARKER AND CLYDE BARROW); CAPONE, AL; HEROES; LAW ENFORCEMENT; PROHIBITION.

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KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

CROSBY, BING. See MUSIC; RADIO.

CULTURE AND THE CRISIS

Culture and the Crisis: An Open Letter to the Writers, Artists, Teachers, Physicians, Engineers, Scientists, and Other Professional Workers of America was an influential pamphlet-manifesto issued in 1932 by the League of Professional Groups. Its immediate goal was to boost support among American professionals for the Communist Party's 1932 presidential ticket of William Z. Foster and James W. Ford. The pamphlet maintained that the Communist candidates alone acknowledged the collapse of capitalism behind the suffering of the Great Depression. The pamphlet struck a more distinctive note in arguing that only a Communist America would allow professionals freedom in the studio, classroom, or lab. Professionals composed a social class in their own right, one distinct from the class of "muscle workers" and that of the "irresponsible business men." The economic crisis presented this class of professional "brain workers" with the historic opportunity to join with their "true comrades," the muscle workers, and to liberate themselves from "false money-standards."

Historians justly remember *Culture and the Crisis* for signaling the radical turn of American literature in the early 1930s. Sherwood Anderson, Malcolm Cowley, Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos, Waldo Frank, Langston Hughes, and Edmund Wilson were among the fifty-two signatories willing to declare their intent to vote Communist. No less significant, however, is the pamphlet's trailblazing effort to theorize the rise of a technical-intellectual "New Class" in modern society, a central concern of social theory beginning in the 1970s. *Culture and the Crisis* is also notable for predicting the focus on the political economy of culture that would characterize the Popular Front years of 1935 to 1939, and for announcing what Michael Denning calls the "cultural front" of mid-century America, "the terrain where the Popular Front social movement met the cultural apparatus during the age of the CIO" (Congress of Industrial Organizations).

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; FOSTER, WILLIAM Z.; LITERATURE; POPULAR FRONT; SOCIALIST PARTY.

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WILLIAM J. MAXWELL

CUMMINGS, HOMER

Homer Stille Cummings (April 30, 1870–September 10, 1956) was the attorney general of the United States from March 4, 1933, to January 2, 1939. Born in Chicago, he took his undergraduate and law degrees from Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut. He developed a successful trial practice in Stamford, Connecticut, founding the firm of Cummings and Lockwood in 1909. Always active in Democratic politics, Cummings was a floor leader in support of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932, and was rewarded with the attorney generalship.

While in office Cummings sponsored a number of reforms, which included establishing uniform rules of practice and procedure for the federal courts and expanding the functions of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He secured legislation beefing up federal authority over firearms and such interstate crimes as kidnapping and bank robbery, and his penal reforms included the establishment of the penitentiary at Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay. Yet while he successfully defended the administration's monetary policy in the "gold clause" cases, his department was unable to replicate the feat in cases challenging such central New Deal programs as the National Industrial Recovery Act and the Agricultural Adjustment Act. These frustrations prompted President Roosevelt to instruct Cummings to draft the ill-fated Court-packing bill, which was introduced in 1937.

History's judgment of Cummings's tenure has not been altogether favorable. Many prominent

New Dealers criticized the quality of legal work produced by Cummings's staff. The department, they complained, was staffed with too many political appointees and too few able lawyers. Nor did Cummings enjoy the confidence of the justices of the Supreme Court. Associate justices Louis Brandeis and Harlan Fiske Stone each expressed to Roosevelt concern over the department's competence. At the height of the Court-packing fight, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes privately complained to New Deal Senator Burton Wheeler that under Cummings's supervision New Deal statutes had been poorly drafted and the briefs and arguments offered in their defense badly drawn and poorly presented. Had the office been occupied by a different attorney general, Hughes suggested, the troubled history of New Deal legislation might have been quite different.

Cummings resigned in January of 1939. He remained in Washington, where he practiced law until his death.

See Also: LAW ENFORCEMENT; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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BARRY CUSHMAN

CURRIE, LAUHLIN

Lauchlin Currie (October 8, 1902–December 23, 1993) was born in a small fishing village in Nova Scotia, Canada, where his father owned a fleet of vessels. When his father died in 1906 his family moved to the town of Bridgewater, but Currie's early schooling also included short periods in Massachusetts and California. After two years at St. Francis Xavier's University, Nova Scotia

(1920–1922), Currie studied at the London School of Economics (1922–1925) where his teachers included Edwin Cannan, Hugh Dalton, A. L. Bowley, and Harold Laski. In 1925 Currie joined Harvard's graduate program, where his chief inspiration was Allyn Abbott Young. His Ph.D. was on banking theory, and he remained at Harvard until 1934 as assistant to, successively, Ralph Hawtrey, John H. Williams, and Joseph Schumpeter. In 1934 he became a U.S. citizen and joined Jacob Viner's famous "freshman brain trust" at the U.S. Treasury. There he outlined an "ideal" monetary system for the United States (including a 100 percent reserve banking plan) and teamed up with Marriner Eccles shortly before the latter became governor of the Federal Reserve Board (November 1934). Eccles recruited Currie as his personal assistant.

At the Fed Currie drafted what became the 1935 Banking Act, which created a true central bank for the United States with increased control over money. At Harvard he had bitterly attacked Fed policy, blaming its "commercial loan theory" of banking (or real bills doctrine) for monetary tightening at a time when the economy was already declining (mid-1929), and then for its passivity in the face of mass liquidations and bank failures from 1929 to 1933. In a January 1932 Harvard memorandum on anti-Depression policy, Currie and two fellow instructors, Harry Dexter White and Paul T. Ellsworth, urged large fiscal deficits, open-market operations to expand bank reserves, the removal of tariffs, and the relief of inter-allied debts. White, another "freshman brain trust" recruit in 1934, became top adviser (and later the assistant secretary) to Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau. White and Currie worked closely in their respective roles at the Treasury and Fed, from 1934 to 1939, and also after 1939 when President Roosevelt appointed Currie as his White House adviser on economic affairs.

At the Fed Currie constructed an important "net federal income-creating expenditure series" to show the influence of fiscal policy in acute Depression. When, after four years of recovery, the economy declined sharply in 1937, he was able to explain to President Roosevelt, in an unprecedented four-hour interview, how damaging was the declared

aim of balancing the budget “to restore business confidence.” This dialogue was part of the “struggle for the soul of FDR” between Secretary Morgenthau and Governor Eccles. At first the president sided with Morgenthau and disaster followed. Not until April 1938, after the worst period of his long tenure in the White House, did Roosevelt at last ask Congress for more than \$3 billion of spending on relief and public works. In May 1939 Currie joined Harvard’s Alvin Hansen in testimony before the Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC) to explain the additions and offsets to the circular flow of income and expenditure and the role of government in stabilizing this flow at full employment.

As the White House economist from July 1939, Currie advised on budgetary policy, social security, and peacetime and wartime production plans. In March 1940, at the President’s request, he prepared a lengthy Memorandum on Full Employment Policy that attempted to allay the President’s fears that the large expenditures being planned for defense, housing and social security were economically unsound. Currie wrote: “I have come to suspect that you are somewhat bothered by the apparent conflict between the humanitarian and social aims of the New Deal and the dictates of ‘sound economics.’ I feel convinced that in place of conflict there is really complete harmony and for that reason only the New Deal can solve the economic problem.”

After a mission to China in January 1941 Currie advised that China be added to the lend-lease program, which he then administered. In 1943 and 1944 he ran the Foreign Economic Administration, and in early 1945 he headed a mission to Switzerland to secure the freezing of Nazi assets. After the

war Currie was one of those blamed for “losing” China. It was also alleged that he had participated in wartime Soviet espionage. No charges were laid and in 1949 and 1950 he headed an important World Bank mission to Colombia. He stayed on to advise on the implementation of his report. He assumed Colombian citizenship in 1958 and was the country’s leading economic adviser until his death in 1993. Currie’s extensive collected papers are archived at Duke University’s Special Collections.

See Also: BRAIN(S) TRUST; ECCLES, MARRINER; FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; MONETARY POLICY.

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ROGER J. SANDILANDS

CURRY, JOHN STEUART. *See* AMERICAN SCENE, THE.

CWA. *See* CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION.



DAVIS, CHESTER

Born in rural Iowa, Chester C. Davis (November 17, 1887–September 25, 1975) graduated from Grinnell College in 1911 and became a journalist in South Dakota and Montana. While editor of the Bozeman *Weekly Courier*, Davis became seriously interested in farm issues and his career in journalism yielded to agricultural advocacy instead. He became editor of the *Montana Farmer* in 1917, involved himself in various agricultural groups, and won gubernatorial appointment as Montana’s commissioner of agriculture and labor in 1921.

Sharply analytical, full of reformist ideas, and demonstrating patience and executive skill, Davis earned the confidence of farmers. In the 1920s, he joined farm advocate George N. Peek in the campaign for national farm parity, a formula designed to improve farmers’ purchasing power, and worked for passage of the doomed McNary-Haugen bills, which would have authorized federal acquisition of farm commodities. Success proved elusive until the onetime Republican joined the farmer-friendly New Deal administration of Franklin Roosevelt in 1933.

When George Peek became head of the new Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), he turned to Davis to run the AAA’s Production Divi-

sion. They were joined by others who saw the AAA’s task as primarily to raise prices for farm commodities, a view not shared by socially conscious liberals in the AAA’s Legal Division and Consumers Counsel who wanted justice for farm tenants. When internecine conflict in the AAA forced Peek out by the end of 1933, he was replaced by Davis, whose personality seemed better suited to mitigate differences within the agency. However, more than a year later—in early 1935—when the Legal Division tried to reinterpret a controversial section of the AAA’s cotton contract for 1934 and 1935 in favor of retention of the *same* tenants on plantations despite acreage reduction, an angry Davis, with the pragmatic support of Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, fired a number of liberals in both the Legal Division and Consumers Counsel. Both Wallace and Davis knew that the agency could not alienate the conservative landlord establishment in or out of government. Davis even believed that Wallace would be forced out of the cabinet if the firings were not sustained.

Davis left the AAA in 1936 but continued to hold a series of federal positions, including membership on the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve, War Food Administrator (briefly) during World War II, and advisor to the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. Active in postwar famine relief and European reconstruction, he also

served as associate director of the Ford Foundation, working with programs in India and Pakistan. Davis retired in the 1950s and died in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, in 1975.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); WALLACE, HENRY A.

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LAWRENCE J. NELSON

DEFICIT SPENDING

The Great Depression marked a turning point in America's fiscal history. Prior to the 1930s, balanced federal budgets in which tax receipts exceeded expenditure were the norm, but thereafter they have been rare. The unbroken sequence of unbalanced budgets that operated from fiscal year 1931 to fiscal year 1947 heralded the predominance of deficit budgets in the second half of the twentieth century. In contrast to the post-World War II period, however, Depression-era fiscal policy was only belatedly influenced by the new Keynesian economic theories.

The budget moved from a \$734 million surplus in fiscal year 1929 to a \$2.7 billion deficit in fiscal year 1932. President Herbert Hoover initially regarded deficits as a short-term necessity while the economy underwent correction. Under his lead, Congress cut taxes, increased public-works spending, and established loan programs to assist state and local public works and state unemployment re-

lief. These measures were utterly insufficient to boost recovery, but Hoover held back from large-scale deficit spending for fear of engendering big government. Moreover, the tax-increasing Revenue Act of 1932 vainly attempted to restore balanced-budget orthodoxy so that government borrowing would not crowd out business from tight credit markets. Its reduction of purchasing power only aggravated economic decline with the consequence that the deficit remained stubbornly high.

Hoover came under attack most often not for the inadequacy of his deficit spending but for its excess. Business leaders feared that unbalanced budgets would have severe inflationary consequences if government expanded the money supply to ease its borrowing requirements. To the mass public, deficits were evidence of government extravagance and mismanagement. In the 1932 presidential election, therefore, economic and political considerations induced Democratic candidate Franklin D. Roosevelt to promise that his administration would balance the budget.

The core ideas of what became known as Keynesianism—that consumption rather than investment drove economic growth and that public spending could stimulate mass purchasing power when the private economy was in recession—had few adherents. In the 1890s, University of Pennsylvania economist Simon Patten had pioneered the idea that increased consumption was the foundation for economic well-being, a view later promoted by his students, Wesley Mitchell and Rexford Tugwell, and journalist Stuart Chase in the 1920s and 1930s. Meanwhile, lay analysts William Truffant Foster and Waddill Catchings turned the conventional economic belief that consumption was the result of production on its head in a number of popular tracts, such as *Plenty* (1925), *Business without a Buyer* (1927), and *The Road to Plenty* (1928). They further contended that government spending was the best means to counteract recession when many people lacked private income to spend. British economist John Maynard Keynes promoted similar views in works like *The Means to Prosperity* (1933). "Too good to be true—You can't get something for nothing," Roosevelt had commented in the margin of his copy of *The Road to Plenty*. He was

similarly unimpressed with Keynes, whom he dubbed “a mathematician rather than a political economist” after their 1934 meeting.

Nevertheless, Roosevelt had no more success than Hoover in balancing the budget. New Deal emergency spending on public works, relief, and rural programs drove up federal outlays to \$6.6 billion in fiscal year 1934 and \$8.2 billion in fiscal year 1936, well above Hoover’s largest budget of \$4.7 billion in fiscal year 1932. Tax revenues could not cover this expansion in a depressed economy, so the deficit grew to \$4.3 billion in fiscal year 1936 compared with \$2.6 billion in Hoover’s fiscal year 1933 budget. Ever mindful of his campaign pledge, Roosevelt viewed the New Deal deficits as an embarrassment rather than an instrument for recovery. Accordingly, he repeatedly raised taxes—both direct and indirect—and was a reluctant spender. Significantly, congressional enactment over the presidential veto of a \$2.2 billion appropriation for immediate payment of the World War I veterans’ bonus helped make the fiscal year 1936 deficit the largest operated by the New Deal. The true measure of New Deal fiscal activism was not the actual deficit but the full-employment deficit that would have accrued had the economy been operating to its full potential. This hypothetical index differentiates between intentional policy and the effect of depressed economic activity on the tax base. It reveals that only four New Deal budgets—fiscal years 1934, 1936, 1939, and 1940—operated expansionary deficits, while the others provided no greater stimulus than Hoover’s budgets of fiscal years 1930 to 1932. Moreover, in contrast to Hoover, Roosevelt could have operated larger deficits without fear of driving up interest rates because the early New Deal had liberated monetary and credit policy from Federal Reserve control.

In 1937 Roosevelt’s fiscal orthodoxy prompted his decision to balance the fiscal year 1938 budget as an anti-inflation precaution in advance of full recovery. The reduction of federal spending coincided with the first collection of the social security taxes, which sucked purchasing power from the economy, and the tightening of monetary policy. The combined effect of these three actions tipped the recovering economy into deep recession. Roosevelt now

faced a stark choice of adhering to orthodoxy or spending his way out of recession. Conservative advisers led by Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau insisted that a balanced budget was vital to restore business confidence. Conversely, Federal Reserve chairman Marriner Eccles, a longtime advocate of counter-cyclical policy, warned that only deficit spending would restore purchasing power in the economy. The effort to speed recovery by placating business, he told Roosevelt, had “borne no fruits in either dollar terms or goodwill.” Once a lone voice, Eccles now found himself at the center of a group of liberal New Dealers whom the recession had converted to the same cause. These included such cabinet members as Harry Hopkins, Harold Ickes, and Henry Wallace, as well as younger officials spread throughout the federal bureaucracy, such as Laughlan Currie, Mordecai Ezekiel, Leon Henderson, and Aubrey Williams. They found theoretical justification in Keynes’s recently published master work, *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936), which contended that in advanced industrial economies permanent deficits were needed to boost consumption and full employment.

The battle for the president’s ear ended in victory for the spenders. Though unconvinced about permanent deficits, Roosevelt adopted Keynesian remedies against the recession and justified these with Keynesian rhetoric. In April 1938 he recommended that Congress appropriate \$3 billion for emergency spending and credit programs without corollary tax increases to boost “the purchasing power of the Nation.” Federal spending consequently rose beyond \$9 billion in both fiscal years 1939 and 1940, and the deficit grew from \$0.1 billion in fiscal year 1938 to \$2.8 billion in fiscal year 1939.

In marked contrast to the early New Deal, the later New Deal adopted deficit spending as its principal weapon against recession. Presidential statements that routinely justified deficits as necessary to compensate for underconsumption helped to break down the public’s antipathy to unbalanced budgets. By 1940 important socioeconomic groups, including farmers and organized labor, had come to regard fiscal activism as essential. Deficit spending

also acquired intellectual legitimacy with the growing acceptance of Keynesian doctrine among professional economists. However the triumph of the new thinking was far from complete. Lacking a strategy to determine the requisite level of compensatory finance, the New Deal deficits of fiscal years 1939 and 1940 were too small to generate full recovery, which had to await the expansion of defense expenditure in 1941. Moreover, a congressional coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats had been emboldened by liberal reverses in the recession-affected 1938 midterm elections to enact reductions in New Deal appropriations in 1939. For this group, deficits had become a political evil as the embodiment of big government.

America's experience in World War II finally institutionalized deficit spending as national economic policy. Driven by military needs, the federal deficit skyrocketed from \$6.2 billion in fiscal year 1941 to \$57.4 billion in fiscal year 1943. The conjunction of massive deficits and dramatic growth of the economy by 56 percent between 1941 and 1945 seemingly provided justification of Keynesian theory, even in the eyes of business leaders. This was the foundation for enactment of the Employment Act of 1946, which consolidated Roosevelt's economic legacy. Like New Deal fiscal policy, the legislation was imprecise and limited, most notably in its failure to guarantee full employment. Nevertheless it formally mandated the federal government's obligation to combat recession and rising unemployment and established the president as the manager of prosperity. In essence, the priority of fiscal policy had changed from protecting capital markets in 1932 to protecting and creating jobs by 1946, and deficit spending had become the essential instrument to achieve this new purpose.

See Also: ECONOMY, AMERICAN; KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS.

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IWAN MORGAN

DEMOCRATIC PARTY

As the oldest existing political party in the world, the Democratic Party of the United States experienced its most significant expansion in voter registration and party organization, consistent electoral success in national elections, and fundamental changes in its coalition, policy agenda, and ideology during the Great Depression. Despite Democratic presidential nominee Alfred E. Smith's resounding defeat in the 1928 election, there was evidence of the potential for a future political realignment favoring the Democratic Party. Smith was the first Democratic presidential nominee in many years to win pluralities in the twelve largest American cities. He also carried the two most Catholic, urban states: Massachusetts and Rhode Island. The presidential election of 1928 also stimulated a sharp increase in voter registration and turnout among foreign-born citizens and the voting-age children of immigrants, especially women, who voted overwhelmingly for Smith.

After being nominated for president, Smith had designated John J. Raskob, a wealthy, Catholic, anti-prohibition or "wet," former Republican and General Motors executive, as chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Through his vigorous fund-raising among his business contacts, Raskob succeeded in liquidating the DNC's \$1.5 million campaign debt. He also created and financed a full-time publicity division for then DNC. Its director, Charles Michelson, researched and publicized the policy behavior and statements of Republican president Herbert Hoover, the RNC chairman, and Republicans in Congress so that Raskob and other Democrats could regularly and publicly criticize and oppose Republican policies, especially after the Great Depression began in late 1929.

Nonetheless, Raskob wanted to continue to focus the efforts of the Democratic Party in general

and the DNC's apparatus in particular on repealing the national prohibition of alcohol. By concentrating on the prohibition issue, Raskob hoped that the Democratic Party would nominate Smith for president in 1932 and adopt a platform as conservative and pro-big business as the Republican platform on economic issues. Like other conservative Democrats, Raskob blamed the worsening economic conditions on excessive spending, bureaucratic bloat, and an unbalanced federal budget by the Hoover administration.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The major obstacle to Raskob's strategy for the 1932 presidential election was Democratic governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York. Roosevelt had served as assistant secretary of the navy during the Woodrow Wilson administration and as the Democratic vice presidential nominee of 1920. He had also made nominating speeches for Al Smith at the 1924 and 1928 Democratic national conventions, earning Roosevelt the respect of many Catholic Democrats. Reluctantly accepting Smith's request that he run for governor in 1928, Roosevelt won by a narrow margin as Smith decisively lost his home state to Hoover.

Frustrated by his failed efforts throughout the 1920s to change the national Democratic Party's organization, decision-making processes, ideology, and future economic platform, Roosevelt used his governorship and titular leadership of the New York Democratic Party as a role model for his future national party leadership as president. In order to attract the support of traditionally Republican, rural upstate New Yorkers, Roosevelt's policy agenda included property tax relief for farmers, the construction of farm-to-market roads, and the development of state-sponsored hydroelectric power for rural areas. With James A. Farley serving as secretary and later chairman of the New York Democratic state committee, Roosevelt directed Farley and Secretary of State Edward J. Flynn to secure the removal of local Democratic chairmen in heavily Republican areas who had been collaborating with Republican politicians in exchange for patronage. The governor also encouraged Farley and Flynn to recruit Democratic candidates for state and local offices in order

to provide contested elections in Republican-dominated areas and increase Democratic representation in the Republican-controlled state legislature. Shrewdly attuned to the power of publicity through modern technology, Roosevelt had Farley arrange and finance monthly radio broadcasts and later, for his 1930 reelection campaign, talking movies.

Reelected governor in 1930 with 62 percent of the votes and a winning margin of more than 167,000 votes in upstate counties, Roosevelt used his second term to develop a successful campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination of 1932. He distinguished himself as the first governor to advocate unemployment insurance and old age pensions. Roosevelt also educated himself on policy issues that were of greater concern in the South and West, such as cotton prices, railroad rates, soil and forest conservation, flood control, and rural electrification. Meanwhile, James A. Farley and Roosevelt's aide Louis Howe traveled throughout the United States, but especially in the South and West, to lobby for delegate support for Roosevelt at the 1932 Democratic national convention. Roosevelt, Farley, and Howe assumed that most northern delegates controlled by Catholic Democratic politicians would probably vote for Smith at the convention. Consequently, their strategy was to gradually develop a consensus-building yet ideologically diverse coalition of southern conservatives and western progressives whose delegates would eventually provide Roosevelt with at least the two-thirds majority needed for the presidential nomination. But this strategy also required the pro-Roosevelt Democrats to discourage and minimize the number of favorite son and other minor presidential candidates at the convention. After they persuaded Speaker of the House John N. Garner of Texas to end his presidential candidacy in exchange for the vice-presidential nomination, Roosevelt was nominated for president on the fourth ballot.

With approximately one third of the voters identified as Democrats in 1932, Roosevelt recognized the need to attract the votes of disaffected Republicans, independents, and minor party members so that he could win a decisive victory that would provide a mandate for major policy changes and for

transforming the Democratic Party into the new majority party in the two-party system. Therefore, Roosevelt rarely used the word *Republican* in his post-convention campaign speeches. His policy proposals and the Democratic national platform were a dichotomous, contradictory mixture of promises to balance the federal budget, reduce bureaucratic centralization, and protect states' rights, but also to provide vigorous presidential leadership and more federal intervention to reduce unemployment, raise farm prices, and protect Americans against the economic abuses and mistakes of banks and big business.

Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated Republican president Herbert Hoover with 59 percent of the popular votes and carried forty-two states in the electoral college. Although about 65 percent of black voters supported Hoover, Roosevelt's electoral support from white Republicans and independents was broadly distributed among income levels and various ethnic groups and between urban and rural areas. Only 25 percent of Roosevelt's plurality in 1932 was derived from the nation's twelve largest cities.

From 1932 until 1940, James A. Farley served as DNC chairman. Roosevelt agreed with Farley that the DNC apparatus and activities should be used to promote intra-party harmony at such events as Jefferson-Jackson Day dinners and through fundraising efforts. For example, the Colored Division, a special division of the DNC that concentrated on black voters, cultivated the realignment of non-southern blacks from the Republican to the Democratic Party, but ignored controversial racial issues like segregation and the disfranchisement of southern blacks. Other DNC special divisions, such as those for labor, agriculture, and foreign-language ethnic groups, were used to promote the expansion and diversification of the Democratic coalition during this era.

By far, though, the most innovative, effective, and regularly active special division of the DNC from 1932 to 1940 was the Women's Division. Mary "Molly" Dewson, director of and later adviser to this division, shrewdly realized that Democratic women could increase their status and influence in the party organization and the Roosevelt adminis-

tration if they impressed the president, DNC chairman, and other male Democratic politicians with their ability to raise funds, distribute publicity, mobilize voters, and win elections. For example, in the 1936 election, the DNC Women's Division produced and distributed about 80 percent of all Democratic campaign literature. It also published the *Democratic Digest*, a monthly newsletter, and increased the number of female Democratic campaign workers from approximately 73,000 in 1936 to 109,000 in 1940. Dewson used these impressive campaign accomplishments and her long-time friendships with Eleanor Roosevelt and Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins to lobby and persuade the president and Farley to increase DNC funding of the Women's Division, the representation of women on party committees and at national conventions, and the number and status of federal jobs given to women. By the time of the 1940 election, however, Edward J. Flynn replaced the disgruntled Farley as DNC chairman, Dewson had left the Women's Division, and the DNC's apparatus played a smaller role in campaign finances and services.

NEW DEAL

Roosevelt hoped that the New Deal's economic policies would not only unite and satisfy the voting blocs and interest groups that elected him in 1932 but would eventually persuade enough disaffected Republican and independent voters to become loyal Democrats so that the Democratic Party would become the new majority party in the two-party system for a long time. However, after the Supreme Court struck down the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and similar New Deal policies that emphasized economic cooperation and planning, Roosevelt moved New Deal liberalism and the national Democratic Party in a more controversial, leftist, divisive programmatic and ideological direction that favored labor and northern urban policy interests and was more antagonistic toward big business and upper-income Americans. Roosevelt wanted this more liberal, social welfare character of his administration and party to co-opt growing grassroots support for various economic protest movements, such as those led by Huey Long and Francis Townsend, before the 1936 election. Enact-

ment of the Social Security Act of 1935 and the Wealth Tax Act of 1935 served to satisfy much of this demand for a broader redistribution of income by the federal government.

WAGNER ACT OF 1935

Likewise, Roosevelt's support of the National Labor Relations (or Wagner) Act of 1935 helped to prevent the possibility of labor unions creating their own party for the 1936 election and to attract the endorsement of John L. Lewis, a Republican and the most powerful labor leader in the nation. Despite growing complaints from southern Democrats in Congress that Roosevelt's policies and party leadership pandered to blacks, Roosevelt cultivated black voters by appointing a so-called black cabinet. This was an informal group of black federal officials who tried to reduce racial discrimination in the distribution of federal relief benefits and public works jobs. For the first time ever, a black minister delivered the opening prayer at a Democratic national convention in 1936.

No matter how controversial the New Deal and the Democratic Party under Roosevelt had become among conservatives and business interests, Roosevelt's landslide reelection in 1936 confirmed that a political realignment had occurred. Roosevelt defeated Alfred Landon, the Republican presidential nominee, with more than 60 percent of the popular votes and carried all but two states in the electoral college. Approximately 65 percent of black voters supported Hoover in 1932, but 76 percent of them voted for Roosevelt in 1936. In addition, 80 percent of Catholics, 90 percent of Jews, and 60 percent of low-income, non-southern white Protestants voted for Roosevelt in 1936.

REALIGNMENT

The fact that these voting statistics signaled a partisan realignment, rather than merely a personal following for Roosevelt, is evident in the increasing number and proportion of non-southern Democratic seats in Congress as a consequence of the 1930 to 1936 congressional elections. In 1920, 82 percent of the Democratic representatives and 70 percent of the Democratic senators were southerners. By 1936, only 35 percent of the Democrats in

Congress were southerners, and only 23 percent of Roosevelt's electoral college votes in that election came from the South. Even more ominous for the decline of southern influence in the Democratic Party, the Democratic national convention of 1936 repealed the two-thirds rule. This requirement of at least a two-thirds majority of delegate votes for presidential nominations had, in effect, given the South as a region the power to reject any presidential candidate objectionable to it, especially on racial issues.

Determined to solidify the policy accomplishments of the New Deal and to further develop the national Democratic Party as a liberal party, Roosevelt became embroiled with southern Democrats in Congress on two especially divisive issues: the court reform bill of 1937 and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. Most southern Democrats in Congress opposed Roosevelt on both bills, claiming that his apparent attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court with liberal justices violated the spirit of the Constitution and that the minimum wage legislation would unfairly punish the South for its lower labor costs and threaten race relations by requiring southern employers to pay blacks and whites the same wages. Frustrated with the increasing intra-party opposition in Congress from southern Democrats, Roosevelt decided to dramatically enforce party discipline by attempting to "purge" several conservative southern Democratic senators by opposing their re-nomination in their states' 1938 Democratic primaries. Roosevelt and his preferred Democratic candidates failed to defeat any of these senators, and the Republicans made substantial gains in the 1938 congressional elections.

After the 1938 elections, southern Democrats and Republicans in Congress cooperated with each other more openly and regularly, especially within the committee system, by forming a bipartisan conservative coalition that could prevent, defeat, or weaken any new liberal legislation. But the ever growing intra-party influence of blacks, labor unions, big city mayors, and liberal activists on Roosevelt's presidency and the party leadership was evident in his creation of the Fair Employment Practices Commission (FEPC) by an executive order in 1940. The FEPC was authorized to investigate

and prohibit racial discrimination in hiring by defense contractors.

Despite the regional and ideological diversity of Democratic support in Congress for Roosevelt's pre-Pearl Harbor foreign and defense policies, the Democratic national convention of 1940 proved to be unusually restless and rancorous because of the controversy over the anticipation of Roosevelt's nomination for an unprecedented third term. Former DNC chairman James A. Farley and Vice President John N. Garner both ran against Roosevelt for the presidential nomination. But Roosevelt was easily and overwhelmingly renominated on the first ballot after Chicago machine politicians organized a rousing pro-Roosevelt demonstration. By contrast, Roosevelt's new running mate, Henry A. Wallace, was nominated by a narrow margin because of his reputation among delegates as a politically inept former Republican who was outspoken in his liberalism on race and other matters.

Franklin D. Roosevelt was reelected president in 1940 with 55 percent of the popular votes and he carried thirty-eight states in the electoral college. American entry into and participation in World War II finally ended the lingering economic effects of the Great Depression and slowed the rising southern white rebellion against the increasingly liberal, northern-dominated national Democratic Party, especially on racial issues. Nonetheless, the immediate political and economic effects of the Great Depression stimulated a realignment that enabled the Democratic Party under Franklin D. Roosevelt to transform itself into the new majority party with a broad, diverse coalition, a new ideology based on New Deal liberalism, and a policy agenda that appealed to a wide range of voting blocs and interest groups that dominated the presidency, Congress, policy making, and even the internal politics of the Republican Party until the 1970s.

See Also: DEWSON, MARY (MOLLY); ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1930; ELECTION OF 1932; ELECTION OF 1934; ELECTION OF 1936; ELECTION OF 1938; ELECTION OF 1940; FARLEY, JAMES A.; POLITICAL REALIGNMENT; RASKOB, JOHN J.; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; SMITH, ALFRED E.

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SEAN J. SAVAGE

DE PRIEST, OSCAR

On April 15, 1929, Oscar Stanton De Priest (March 9, 1871–May 12, 1951) took the oath of office as representative for the First District in Illinois, becoming the first African American elected to the U.S. Congress from the North. Born in the Reconstruction South in the heyday of enfranchisement, De Priest helped to reestablish black citizenship by serving Chicago's Loop, Gold Coast, and black South Side districts. Soon after De Priest's historic victory, the black historian Carter G. Woodson organized a \$1.50-a-plate banquet for "living congressmen" that featured three Reconstruction-era congressmen and Rep. De Priest.

Born in 1871, the light-skinned son of former slaves from Alabama, De Priest migrated with his family to Kansas when he was a child. He ran away to Ohio with a white friend at the age of seventeen and later began working as a teamster in Chicago. De Priest cut his political teeth on the Chicago Republican Party machine, winning favors from congressmen, election to the post of Cook County Commissioner, and, after building a decorating business, a seat on the city council to become Chicago's first black alderman. When the incumbent representative in the district died, De Priest was widely assumed to be the frontrunner. The election, however, was close, in part because of an untimely fraud and vice investigation that ensnared De Priest

in controversy. The investigation was dropped due to insufficient evidence. De Priest won the 1928 election by four thousand black votes, but lost virtually every white vote.

De Priest won instant recognition as a black congressman; he also won notoriety. Before moving to Washington, he applied to occupy offices in the House of Representatives building, but a senior congressman challenged De Priest's assignment. Although De Priest graciously conceded, his next assignment was also challenged when a southern congressman threatened to vacate his offices rather than neighbor a black man. Liberals from the Republican Party came to De Priest's aid. An economic conservative in the mold of Booker T. Washington, De Priest served his party in a non-ideological fashion, although he did address racial issues. He lobbied for appropriations for Howard University and pensions for ex-slaves. He also lectured at various black functions, and accepted invitations to speak on black politics to state legislatures. During his term, De Priest's most controversial activities concerned desegregation of a congressional dining room. Although De Priest was permitted to dine, neither his black staff nor black visitors could enter, while all whites were welcomed. De Priest introduced a measure to the floor to integrate the dining room but lost in committee by a two (Republicans) to three (Democrats) vote. He blasted the decision as a betrayal of equal protection.

De Priest faced a tough reelection in 1934, primarily because of black disaffection from the Republican Party. He was opposed by Arthur Wergs Mitchell, a well-educated and astute New Deal Democrat who employed cartoons and able oratory against the De Priest campaign. At one point De Priest lost his characteristic calm demeanor and sharply criticized the black religious community, particularly local Baptists, for bolting to the Democrats with their promises of relief. Then, given Republican Party disarray in Chicago, his strategists could not regain control of the local machine, signaling voter disaffection. As part and parcel of the realignment of black voters from the Republican Party of Frederick Douglass to the New Deal coalition, Mitchell outpolled De Priest by three thousand votes in 1934. Bitter with disappointment, De

Priest conducted several recounts of the ballots, but in the end graciously conceded defeat. That year he was named Man of the Year by the *Chicago Defender* in recognition of the esteem he received from African Americans. De Priest continued to serve in a public capacity until his death in 1951.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAUSET, CRYSTAL BIRD; MITCHELL, ARTHUR, W.

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KEVIN MUMFORD

DEWEY, JOHN. *See* LEAGUE OF INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION.

DEWEY, THOMAS E.

Thomas Edmund Dewey (March 24, 1902–March 16, 1971) was a spectacularly successful prosecutor of racketeers, a three-term governor of New York state, and a twice unsuccessful Republican presidential candidate. Born in Owosso, Michigan, the son of a local newspaper editor, Dewey graduated from the University of Michigan and earned his law degree at Columbia University in 1925. Admitted to the bar the following year, he was an associate in the law firms of Larkin, Rathbone, and Perry (from 1925 to 1927), and MacNamara and Seymour (from 1927 to 1931). While pursuing vocal training, he met fellow vocalist Frances Ellen Hutt, whom he married in 1928. They had two sons.

Dewey entered public service in 1931 as chief assistant to United States attorney for the southern

district of New York. Establishing efficient control over that office's administrative duties, he soon entered the courtroom, where he delivered dramatic performances anchored in tenacious examination of details gleaned from bank and telephone records, handwriting analyses, wiretaps, and interviews with hundreds of witnesses. Briefly serving as U.S. attorney in 1933, he successfully prosecuted bootlegger Waxey Gordon (Irving Wexler) for tax evasion. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt named a Democrat to the post at the end of the year, Dewey established a promising private practice.

Recalled to public service in 1935 by New York Governor Herbert Lehman, Dewey was named a special prosecutor to investigate organized crime. Over the next two and a half years, he earned fame as a "rackets buster," winning seventy-two convictions out of seventy-three cases. Dewey and his staff were especially interested in industrial racketeering, where payoffs and bribes added as much as 20 percent to the cost of living in New York. Since 1933, Dewey had pursued Dutch Schultz (Arthur Flegenheimer), a bootlegger who had moved into the "policy" or "numbers" racket, as well as loan-sharking. Dewey's staff was gathering evidence to prosecute Schultz when the mobster was fatally shot only two days before the date Schultz had set for Dewey's own assassination.

While investigating racketeers' involvement with prostitution, the special prosecutor's staff developed a compelling case against Lucky Luciano (Salvatore Luciania, also known as Charley Lucky), the *capo di tutto capi* (boss of all bosses), whose major interests involved narcotics and gambling. Using his established technique of engaging minor miscreants to impugn their superiors, Dewey again captured headlines with his successful prosecution of Luciano and his co-defendants in 1936. Dewey's account of his racket-busting years, part of an incomplete autobiography, was published a few years after his death as *Twenty against the Underworld*.

Dewey entered electoral politics in 1937, winning the race for district attorney for New York County, a post he held until 1943. After a widely publicized mistrial, he eventually won the conviction of Tammany boss Jimmy Hines. Defeated in

the 1938 New York gubernatorial contest, Dewey failed to win the Republican presidential nomination in 1940. But in 1942, he was elected governor of New York and was reelected in 1946 and 1950. His tenure was marked by moderate progressivism, fiscal conservatism, efficient administration, and careful attention to patronage. Under his leadership, New York became the first state to legislate against racial or religious discrimination in employment. He also promoted the development of the New York State Thruway.

In 1944, the Republicans nominated Dewey for president of the United States, but incumbent Franklin D. Roosevelt won a fourth term. In 1948, Dewey again headed the Republican ticket and seemed the likely victor. However, Harry S. Truman's attacks on the record of the Republican-dominated eightieth Congress and his now-legendary "whistle-stop" campaign out-paced Dewey's overconfident middle-of-the-road canvass.

At the end of his third term as governor, Dewey returned to private law practice as a member of the Dewey, Ballantine, Bushby, Palmer, and Wood firm in New York City. In the 1950s and 1960s, Dewey became both elder statesman and kingmaker in the Republican Party, where he was a prominent member of the eastern internationalist wing. He was instrumental in Dwight Eisenhower's defeat of Robert Taft for the 1952 nomination, and he also fostered the political career of Richard M. Nixon. A collection of lectures Dewey delivered at Princeton University in 1950 was published in 1966 as *Thomas E. Dewey and the Two-Party System*. It presaged a redefined Republican Party in the wake of the Goldwater debacle in 1964.

The same meticulous attention to facts and rational analysis that brought him fame as a rackets buster and wealth in private law practice may well account for Thomas E. Dewey's lack of success in presidential politics, where the game had come to be played in very different terms.

See Also: CRIME; LAW ENFORCEMENT; REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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SUSAN ESTABROOK KENNEDY

DEWSON, MARY (MOLLY)

Mary Williams “Molly” Dewson (February 18, 1874–October 21, 1962) was one of the most influential women in the Democratic Party in the 1930s and in Roosevelt’s New Deal administration. She held numerous posts, including serving as an advisor to the National Recovery Administration. Dewson’s service culminated with a position on the Social Security Board.

Dewson graduated from Wellesley College in Massachusetts in 1897 with a degree in social work. She was first employed by the Domestic Reform Committee of the Women’s Educational and Industrial Union, where she provided assistance to domestic workers and taught at a housekeeping school. In 1900, she took a job with the Massachusetts State Industrial School for Girls, where she worked until 1912. This work and several publications brought her to the attention of state officials, who asked her to help lead an inquiry into minimum wages for workers in Massachusetts. This project led to the nation’s first minimum wage law in 1912.

During World War I, Dewson volunteered for the American Red Cross, worked with war refugees in France, and led the Red Cross Mediterranean op-

erations by 1918. During the 1920s, Dewson became involved with political issues in New York, as well as at the national level. She worked with Florence Kelley to push New York to adopt a minimum wage for women and children, and she lobbied successfully to limit the workweek for women to forty-eight hours. These efforts brought her to the attention of Eleanor Roosevelt. At Mrs. Roosevelt’s request, Dewson became the organizer of women for the Democratic Party, assisting in the campaigns of Al Smith in 1928 and Franklin Roosevelt in 1930 and 1932.

Due to her success in mobilizing female voters, the Democratic National Committee asked Dewson to head their Women’s Division, a full-time position she used to secure jobs for women throughout the government, including Francis Perkins’s appointment as secretary of labor. Dewson’s work in this regard stressed the importance of women playing more prominent roles in the day-to-day work of the government and the party. To this end, she organized a “Reporter” program, which educated women on New Deal issues and had a significant impact on the tremendous electoral victory of 1936.

Due to ill health, Dewson withdrew from politics in 1938 and retired to Castine, Maine, with her longtime partner, Polly Porter. Dewson was America’s first female political boss, a reformer who expanded employment opportunities for women and pushed for their equal protection under the law.

See Also: BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; NATIONAL WOMEN’S PARTY; ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR.

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LAURA J. HILTON

DICTATORSHIP

The response to the problems posed by the Great Depression in countries such as Germany, the Soviet Union, Italy, and elsewhere, was the rise or tightening of dictatorial regimes to the point that dictatorship was considered by many people to be a feasible alternative to liberal democracy during the 1930s. Certain features characterized these dictatorships: the concentration of power in the hands of a single leader, a one-party system with mass membership, a secret police prepared to use terror as a tool of policy, and a control of the popular media to promote the regime's doctrine. These features were certainly all present to varying degrees under the Nazi regime in Germany, Communism in the Soviet Union, and Fascism in Italy.

In Germany, against a backdrop of economic chaos caused by the Great Depression, Adolf Hitler, without ever winning a national election or having a popular majority, was appointed chancellor on January 30, 1933, just four weeks before Franklin Roosevelt took office. Once in office Hitler employed the attributes of a dictatorship to remove domestic opposition and established the preeminence of the Nazi Party. He sought to increase industrial production, especially through rearmament and public works schemes, and so provide work for millions of unemployed Germans. Considerable scholarly debate exists over how far Hitler intended to follow the foreign policy espoused in *Mein Kampf* (1925) or whether he was merely pragmatic in pursuing an expansionist foreign policy during the late 1930s. In remilitarizing the Rhineland in March 1936, completing the *Anschluss* (unification) of Austria and Germany in February 1938, and then securing the Sudetenland in September 1938, Hitler seemed to be rectifying the perceived deficiencies of the Treaty of Versailles. This was widely popular within Germany and received tacit support abroad. Even after Hitler invaded Poland in September 1939, the quick successes of Nazi Germany in 1940 made many consider that Hitler's dictatorship provided the way ahead.

Joseph Stalin had become leader of the Soviet Union following V. I. Lenin's death in 1924. By 1929 Stalin had consolidated his leadership, totally over-

coming opponents within the Communist Party and eliminating all organized opposition outside the party. In 1928 Stalin embarked the Soviet Union upon the first Five-Year Plan. This plan for economic growth through mass industrialization and collectivization of agriculture came under the banner of "Socialism in One Country" and saw notable achievements, such as the establishment of the city of Magnitogorsk in the Urals dedicated to steel production. This success and others seemed to show that despite Western scepticism, with Stalin as dictator Communism could avoid the problems of the Great Depression. However, the price for economic progress in the Soviet Union was extremely high. Stalin deported over ten million people to Siberia, and purged the Soviet officer corps with disastrous effect during World War II.

In Italy, Benito Mussolini, prime minister since 1922, tightened the grip of his dictatorship in the face of the Great Depression. The policy of the "Corporate State," combined employer-employee syndicates established during the 1920s, seemed to prevent Italy from suffering the worst effects of the economic downturn. However, the regime failed to wholly implement an integrated economic program, as state investment did not begin until the 1930s and then only sporadically. Mussolini also sought to promote Italian national prestige in foreign affairs, most notably through the invasion and subsequent occupation of Abyssinia in 1935. Italy was criticized by the League of Nations and this encouraged closer collaboration with Nazi Germany. An Axis with Berlin encouraged Mussolini to claim that Italy was ready for war, despite Italian industry and military being underprepared. Indeed, when Mussolini joined the war in June 1940, Italy proved a drain on German resources.

While these three regimes would be devastated in different ways during World War II, the era of the Great Depression saw the rise of other dictatorships. The Francisco Franco regime in Spain began in 1936 and overcame the republicans in the Spanish civil war by 1939 with the support of Germany and Italy. Franco modeled his regime on Mussolini's corporate state under a single party (the Falange), and remained in office until his death in 1975. Other dictatorships were also established

during this era in South America. The influence of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, although receiving tacit approval from the United States, became increasingly dictatorial during the period, as did the regime of President Getúlio Vargas, who had assumed power in Brazil in 1930.

Whatever the fate of the dictatorships of the 1930s their most remarkable feature was their physical and intellectual control over their own populations, which in the case of Stalin and Hitler allowed for the mass slaughter of millions of people.

See Also: DICTATORSHIP, FEAR OF IN THE UNITED STATES; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; HITLER, ADOLF; MUSSOLINI, BENITO; STALIN, JOSEF.

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J. SIMON ROFE

DICTATORSHIP, FEAR OF IN THE UNITED STATES

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidential administration reinvented the federal government in the United States during the Great Depression and World War II. From being a minimal state with scant taxing power, which played little role in the economy and made no effort to guarantee material

or social wellbeing, the New Deal created and defined public responsibility for ensuring a minimal level of economic well-being for the American people.

The rise of the federal government was a great transformation in American life. It elicited a prolonged reaction from conservatives and from businessmen whose power it seemed to limit, while traditional liberal intellectuals were alarmed by what they perceived as the rise of a newly powerful federal government. During the New Deal years, the idea that the Roosevelt administration might become a dictatorship circulated throughout nervous conservative and liberal circles alike. The rise of fascism in Germany and Italy accentuated the fear that the National Recovery Administration and other early New Deal planning efforts might be harbingers of fascism in the United States. Especially after Roosevelt introduced his plan to expand the number of judges on the Supreme Court in 1937, conservatives sought to paint him as a politician who wished to eliminate the checks and balances provided in the Constitution. In addition, the rise of populist leaders like Huey Long of Louisiana and Father Charles Coughlin of Detroit frightened liberals and conservatives who thought that these firebrands could be fascist dictators in the making.

In reality, there was never any danger that the Roosevelt administration would become a dictatorship, nor of it sliding into fascism. In fact, the cries of dictatorship accelerated later in the New Deal, when Roosevelt undertook the kind of controversial legislation permitting the self-organization of workers—such as the Wagner Act—that Europe's fascist governments had sought to destroy as soon as they came into power. Still, even during World War II, conservatives compared the New Deal to Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. For example, David Sarnoff, the president of RCA, said in a 1943 speech criticizing wartime social legislation, "If we have learned anything from the history of the past ten years, we have learned how empty were the claims of those demagogues who wheedled away the freedoms of their people with the mirage of an all-powerful state that would provide security at the expense of liberty."

In the early 1940s, fears about dictatorship and fascism changed into anxieties about Communism.

Ex-Trotskyist James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution* (1941) and Austrian exile Friedrich Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) both marked the rising level of anxiety about centralized government power. This intellectual shift transformed the anti-fascism of World War II, with its egalitarian dimensions and support of social democracy, shifting it to a more conservative politics after the war was over. Often, the measures denounced as evidence of totalitarianism were simply those that sought greater welfare state protections or an expansion of social democracy. By targeting these as dictatorial or totalitarian politics, conservatives were able to use the language of World War II to support their own aim of rolling back social democracy in the postwar period.

The new paranoia about totalitarianism afflicted liberals as well. Anxious and frustrated by the limitations and failures of the New Deal and horrified by Stalinist Russia, some liberal intellectuals in the United States began during the late Depression days to fear the rise of a brutal central state as much as the power of corporations or the plight of the poor. They became afraid that their efforts to create a welfare state would have the unintentional effect of moving the country towards dictatorship. This fear prompted many to draw back from the radical politics they had espoused in an earlier era, and to seek ways to regulate capitalism without excessively strengthening the state. This new liberal timidity and radical self-doubt was the real victory of the rising conservative reaction at the end of the New Deal. Unfounded fears of totalitarianism—which never threatened the United States—would constrain postwar liberalism, especially when it came to domestic social and economic policy.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE;
CONSERVATIVE COALITION; DICTATORSHIP.

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KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

DILLINGER, JOHN. *See* CRIME.

DISNEY, WALT

Walter Elias Disney (December 5, 1901–December 15, 1966) was a motion picture and television producer and entrepreneur. After a childhood and youth in the Midwest, Walt Disney entered the field of animated cartoon films in the 1920s and ultimately achieved world fame with the creation of Mickey Mouse. He went on to a long and successful career producing cartoons, feature-length films, and wildlife documentaries, then branched out into television during the 1950s and broke new ground in that medium as well. He also pioneered the concept of theme parks with Disneyland in Anaheim, California, and Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida, the latter in progress at the time of his death.

Although Disney achieved recognition in a variety of fields during his life, his lasting reputation as an artist rests on his work in animated cartoons. The Disney studio introduced technological innovations and a new level of artistic brilliance into animation, transforming a relatively crude medium into a dazzling and sophisticated form. The years of this transformation, and Walt Disney's peak years as an artist, were the 1930s and early 1940s—a period corresponding almost exactly to the Great Depression—during which Disney produced a series of one-reel Mickey Mouse and Silly Symphony cartoons, then ambitiously tackled the making of feature-length animated films. *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), Disney's first full-length animated film, was a commercial success that captivated audiences and demonstrated the viability of the genre. By the early 1940s, in films like *The Old Mill* (1937), *Snow White*, and *Fantasia* (1940), the studio had established a standard of artistic excellence in animation that has never since been equaled.

The Depression years lent more than a backdrop to this creative phenomenon; they had a direct

bearing on the process. In the early 1930s, when Disney's explosive growth was beginning, numerous artists were drawn to his studio out of simple necessity. Veterans of the period have testified that, in those bleak economic times, jobs for artists were exceedingly scarce. Cartoonists, fine draftsmen, skilled painters, and other artists flocked to the Disney studio, grateful for a chance at steady employment. Disney, in turn, displayed an uncanny knack for assessing the varied gifts of these artists, and encouraged them to use their distinctive abilities to elevate the quality of the films.

In addition, the films themselves reflected the spirit of their time. Mickey Mouse, created in 1928, gradually achieved nationwide recognition during 1929, and thus the rise of his popularity coincided with the onset of the Depression. Mickey, with his humble barnyard origins, made an ideal mascot for an America faced with hard times; his unflagging good cheer and plucky resourcefulness seemed to symbolize the indomitable spirit of the country. In his very first film, *Plane Crazy*, he improvises an airplane out of an old jalopy and other found objects, and in many succeeding films he similarly makes do with whatever unlikely items may be at hand.

An even more striking morale builder was the 1933 Silly Symphony *Three Little Pigs*. In this immensely popular cartoon, a nation facing a figurative "wolf at the door" saw the title characters defeat their Big Bad Wolf through a combination of optimism and hard work. The Pigs and their taunting theme song, "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" sparked a nationwide craze in 1933, and observers have often seen the film as an antidote to the Depression. Other Silly Symphonies like *Grasshopper and the Ants* and *The Wise Little Hen* (both 1934) entertainingly stressed the benefits of diligence and industry.

The happy antics of Mickey, the Pigs, and other Disney creations made life a little more bearable for millions of Americans during the 1930s. Small wonder that those same Americans continued to reward Disney with their loyal support in succeeding decades.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY;
SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS.



Walt Disney, 1935. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

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J. B. KAUFMAN

DOCUMENTARY FILM

The American people spent more time at the movies during the Depression years than in any other decade, and they wanted their money's worth. Before each feature they expected to see a cartoon, a short comedy, and a newsreel.

Newsreels were the documentaries of the 1930s, and the newsreel archives are an important source of visual evidence of the period. All five major studios produced their own twice-weekly editions. Five items were generally packaged together, and few items ran for more than two minutes. The studios, ever conscious of their vulnerability to government censorship and the disapproval of powerful religious and special interest groups, favored lighthearted fare. Beauty pageants, animal acts, and novelties were staples. Many items were faked by stringers, the freelance cameramen who got paid only when their coverage appeared on the screen. So it is astounding to see the degree to which the true life of the times actually got recorded, in spite of all the obstacles.

In many newsreels, it was the voiceover narration that provided both the comedy and the political bias. Stripped of this sound, as most footage is in today's archives, modern filmmakers use this haphazard documentation to say something more than the original filmmakers intended. It is important to keep in mind that a great deal of the most revealing material recorded at the time was never projected in theaters. Considered too gloomy and depressing to please audiences who had come to escape their own dark times, the unused footage went directly into the vaults, considered hardly worth the storage costs involved.

By 1967, when the last of the newsreel makers went out of business, the owners of these archives gave them to universities and the U.S. government in exchange for generous tax write-offs. Given the highly biased origins of the newsreels, today's filmmakers and their audiences need to view their legacy with caution, if not outright skepticism. Yet when guided by historians and witnesses with hindsight, the material the 1930s cameramen left us can help bring the period to life in a way that printed evidence alone seldom can. This is best seen,

perhaps, in the seven-part series *The Great Depression*, made for the Public Broadcasting Service by Blackside in 1993.

The March of Time, a newsreel-like affiliate of *Time* magazine that appeared in 1935, was produced by filmmakers with more serious intent. Chapters were issued monthly, ran as long as twenty minutes, and were devoted to a single topic. In 1937 the series showed the bombing of Manchuria by the Japanese. The next year a chapter called "Inside Nazi Germany" showed American audiences vivid pictures of the racial policies of a rapidly rearming future enemy. In 1939, *The March of Time* included film of sharecroppers in Mississippi in a pathetically unequal struggle with plantation owners. The series often resorted to dramatized recreations when reality footage could not be obtained, a practice much criticized at the time by professional observers and now considered unethical. Though the series received an Academy Award in 1937, its producers lacked the bargaining power of the studio-sponsored newsreels, and many theater managers found their audiences did not clamor for *The March of Time's* tendency to present unpleasant news. The series ceased production in 1951, a decade and a half before television brought all newsreels to an end.

The early days of the Depression were also recorded by a small group of politically radical members of the New York Film and Photo League, an organization that for a short time had corresponding chapters in half a dozen other cities. Thanks to the Film and Photo League, the major protest movements of the 1930 to 1934 period can still be brought to life, though the bulk of their footage was not saved. The Museum of Modern Art in New York circulates brief compilations, silent with titles (as they were originally shown), that are powerful reminders of the days when tens of thousands of people were thronging the streets carrying banners for such "socialist" programs as unemployment insurance and subsidized public housing.

The most notable documentary filmmaker of the period was Pare Lorentz, a film critic turned producer, who persuaded the Roosevelt administration to present the need for its reform programs in films of such power and quality that they could,

and did, win widespread theatrical distribution in spite of strong film industry opposition. Lorentz's first film, *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936), dramatized the disasters caused by unwise land use, a condition made all too evident by massive dust storms that swept across middle America that spring. His next film, *The River* (1937), was an equally powerful lesson about flood control, again made vividly current by news of recurring disastrous floods along the Mississippi. Building on his critical success, Lorentz and his New Deal supporters established the U.S. Film Service, which they hoped would nurture the production of still more "films of merit." However, both of Lorentz's films, although popular with critics and the public, were greeted by howls of protest from local and state government officials, who resented their cities and states being depicted as problem areas. Only three other films were finished and released by the U.S. Film Service, with increasingly less success.

Many contemporary viewers find both *The Plow* and *The River* flawed by the features that won them widespread critical and public acceptance at the time of their release: namely, narrations composed in Whitmanesque poetics and delivered with overwhelming stridency. But it would be a mistake to ignore the message underlying the persuasive visuals; Lorentz, in these two films of less than one half hour each, managed to state the essential philosophy of the New Deal, both its willingness to accept responsibility for correcting the sins of the past and its certainty that its methods of alleviation, its "social engineering," would triumph over all adversity. Many contemporary environmentalists and social scientists, however, question the "solutions" presented in Lorentz's films.

Toward the end of the 1930s, a small but growing group of filmmakers was beginning to produce documentaries that were more in line with contemporary documentary film. Film was an expensive medium, so the filmmakers were dependent on foundations or corporations for sponsorship, with the inevitable artistic and political compromises this type of partnership implies. Yet some veterans of the Film and Photo League and some who had gained experience under Lorentz managed to make a few films that are clear-eyed about the hard truths the nation faced as it reluctantly prepared for war.

Ralph Steiner and Willard Van Dyke's *The City* (1939) remains a sharp, poignant, and even witty comment on urban society and its discontents, though its utopian solutions now seem unconvincing. Van Dyke's *Valley Town* (1940) probes the dilemmas of automation, unemployment resulting from new technology, and social upheavals that are as baffling now as then. These films put us inside the heads and hearts of those who lived in the 1930s in a way rarely achieved in any other medium.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS;
HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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GEORGE C. STONEY

DOMESTIC SERVICE

Although the Great Depression adversely affected a broad spectrum of Americans between 1929 and



Young men practice serving a meal at the WPA household workers training center in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO

ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

1941, the economic calamity was particularly devastating for the millions of workers employed in the domestic and personal service labor force. New Deal programs did little to remedy the financial difficulties of this group. Before the 1929 stock market crash, domestic and personal service employees, such as maids, cooks, washerwomen, and laundresses, comprised 8 percent of the American workforce. The crash, along with falling manufacturing sales, increased debt, the shrinking money supply, bank failures, small business closings, tariff policies, the boll weevil epidemic, and the overproduction of agricultural goods, increased the size of the domestic and personal service sector slightly to 10 percent of the labor force by 1930.

The domestic labor force in the early twentieth century was comprised mostly of immigrants from Ireland, Eastern Europe, Mexico, Japan, and China, as well as many native-born, single white females and married and single African-American women, whose fathers, husbands, and sons faced routine periods of underemployment and unemployment. Between 1900 and 1920, native whites and immigrants from northern and western Europe made up the majority of domestics. However, a gradual racial and ethnic shift occurred during and after World War I. In the northern United States, Eastern European immigrants and African Americans began to replace German, Scandinavian, Irish, and native-born single white women as household help. As

native-born and foreign-born white females found better-paying jobs outside the domestic labor sector, the numbers of black servants increased substantially. African-American females comprised 40 percent of all female household workers in 1920, 36 percent in 1930, and 47 percent the following decade. Not surprisingly, they led in the numbers of domestics in the Jim Crow South. In the southwestern United States, Mexican and Mexican-American women comprised a large percentage of household workers. Like African-American women, they increasingly dominated the domestic and personal service sector after their white counterparts found employment opportunities elsewhere. In 1930, Latina household workers comprised 45 percent of all Mexican females employed outside the home. In major southwestern cities such as El Paso, Denver, and Albuquerque, young unmarried female domestics constituted two-thirds of all Mexican women employed outside the home.

Although women overwhelmingly dominated the domestic service sector, men also worked as household help, mainly as butlers, chauffeurs, gardeners, and cooks. Only in California and Washington state, where high numbers of Chinese male immigrants lived, did men lead in the domestic service area. For the duration of the Depression, men made up 10 percent of all household servants in the nation.

White women remained the largest segment of the female domestic service category—54 percent in 1930 and 53 percent in 1940. Still, some of them had other options. Those with skills increasingly found work in the growing female-oriented service sector economy, where they worked in nursing, education, newly created government agencies, social services, and sales, as well as in business as clerical staff. Although they dominated the domestic sector, those working as servants made up only 10 percent of the overall white female labor force.

Black women, of whom 60 percent labored as domestics, had a different experience, and found themselves at the bottom rung of the labor sector. Like their white counterparts, black wives, mothers, and sisters, attempted to supplement the meager earnings of their husbands, fathers, or brothers. During the Depression, however, they faced com-

petition from both whites and other black women for their domestic jobs. Although the white female labor force increased by 17 percent, the black female labor force declined by 5 percent during the Depression. Given a choice, many employers preferred white domestics over black domestics. Furthermore, unemployed African-American high school and college graduates—displaced teachers, secretaries, sales consultants, and social workers—sought domestic work in growing numbers after losing their jobs. Faced with this uncertainty, African-American domestics sought alternatives.

A newly elected President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, with the help of advisers, unleashed a number of programs that attempted to increase industrial profits, improve consumer spending, alleviate unemployment, and relieve destitution: These programs included the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Legislation with similar aims included the National Industrial Recovery Act, which improved working conditions and wages and guaranteed employees the right to unionize; the Fair Labor Standards Act, which created maximum working hours and minimum wages; and the Social Security Act, which established unemployment compensation and retirement pensions for the unemployed. Unfortunately, this legislation excluded domestics and farm laborers because many New Dealers, especially southerners, argued that the provisions would have put undue financial strain on the employers of household help and agricultural workers. Domestics, thus, continued to experience economic contraction and widespread discrimination. Many household workers went on temporary relief, provided by such agencies as FERA and the WPA. Other disillusioned household workers abandoned domestic work altogether. Only with the entry of the United States into World War II in December 1941 did the Depression end for domestic workers.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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BERNADETTE PRUITT

DON'T BUY WHERE YOU CAN'T WORK MOVEMENT

The “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” movement, also known as the “Buy Where You Can Work” movement, emerged in major northern U.S. cities during the Great Depression to protest black unemployment rates that often were double or triple the national average. In 1929 the Chicago newspaper the *Whip*, under editor Joseph Bibb, sponsored a campaign to boycott Chicago stores that refused to hire blacks. Supported by the Reverend J. C. Austin of the Pilgrim Baptist Church, the program resulted in the hiring of more than two thousand blacks, mostly as clerks in Chicago department stores.

The movement spread rapidly to other cities, drawing support from the major civil rights organizations. In 1931 black ministers, politicians, and businessmen published appeals in Harlem newspapers to follow Chicago’s example. Calls for boycotts came from the Harlem Business Men’s Club and from supporters of the black nationalist Marcus Garvey. Harlem Reverend John H. Johnson of Saint Martin’s Protestant Episcopal Church formed the Citizens League for Fair Play and used Harlem newspapers to promote its picketing efforts. In 1933 in Washington, D.C., the New Negro Alliance, Inc., created the motto “Buy Where You Work—Buy Where You Clerk.” Responding to layoffs of black workers at a Washington hamburger grill, the alli-

ance targeted such black district stores as Kaufman department stores, the A. & P., and the High Ice Cream Company stores. Overall, the alliance developed a comprehensive agenda advocating increased black employment, opportunities for black advancement and promotion, combined African Americans’ purchasing power, and the creation of larger black businesses.

The “Don’t Buy Where You Can’t Work” movement had several legacies. In some cities such as New York, it helped to create hiring programs that were among the first affirmative action programs in U. S. history. The movement also provided a model for 1960s direct-action civil rights protests, such as lunch counter sit-ins, and led the way for later federal efforts to address structural unemployment and equal purchasing and earning power in black communities.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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BILL V. MULLEN

DOS PASSOS, JOHN

John Roderigo Dos Passos (January 14, 1896–September 28, 1970) was a prominent leftist and one of

the great writers of the Depression era. The illegitimate son of a Portuguese immigrant, Dos Passos graduated from Harvard University in 1916 and volunteered as an ambulance driver in France and Italy during World War I. In the 1920s, Dos Passos established himself as a writer of some talent with works such as *Manhattan Transfer* (1925). Yet he is best known for his epic 1930s trilogy, *U.S.A.*, widely hailed by contemporaries as the great American novel. The trilogy consists of *The 42nd Parallel* (1930), *1919* (1932), and *The Big Money* (1936). An ambitious 1,200-page attempt to depict "the slice of a continent" and "the speech of the people," *U.S.A.* blends the experimental modernism of the 1920s with the social novel of the 1930s. The novel consists of four different types of writing: biographical portraits of important Americans, "newsreels" quoting the headlines and popular culture of the time, "camera eye" sections of free-form prose poetry (often autobiographical in nature), and a series of interlocking narratives of a dozen fictional characters who appear rootless and directionless while trying to make their way through modern America. When combined, these sections form an elegy on the decline of American democracy in the first decades of the twentieth century and offer a sharply critical view of the dominance of "big money" in the contemporary United States.

U.S.A. won the respect of literary critics, and it also achieved political significance in the 1930s as the Popular Front coalition of Communists and liberals adopted it as essential reading. Dos Passos, however, had professed left-wing ideas prior to the Great Depression; in fact, it was the execution of Italian anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti in 1927 that radicalized him. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Dos Passos was close to the Communist Party. He helped found the Communist literary magazine *New Masses*, and he famously denounced the Socialist Party as "near beer." In 1931, along with a number of other writers, Dos Passos traveled to Harlan County in Kentucky to publicize the unjust working conditions of striking miners. Dos Passos also helped organize American support for the antifascist side in the Spanish civil war. He traveled to Spain in 1937, where he learned of the brutality of Stalinist Communists who secretly used ruthless tactics against their antifascist al-

lies. After hearing of the murder of a friend by Spanish Communists, Dos Passos drifted away from the left in the late 1930s.

After Dos Passos publicly criticized the Communists, the *New Masses* suddenly declared Ernest Hemingway a better writer than Dos Passos. After the 1930s, Dos Passos turned toward conservative politics, associating himself with the *National Review* and writing a right-wing counter-trilogy to *U.S.A.* Dos Passos's literary reputation suffered as his right-wing turn discredited his work among liberals and his new conservative friends had little liking for his earlier leftist work. Thus, after the 1930s, too many forgot that Dos Passos's *U.S.A.* is one of a select number of works worthy of the title "great American novel."

See Also: LITERATURE; SPANISH CIVIL WAR.

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DANIEL GEARY

DOUGLAS, WILLIAM O.

William Orville Douglas (1898–1980), Supreme Court justice, was born in Maine, Minnesota, the second of the three children of Julia Fisk and William Douglas, a Presbyterian minister. At age three, Douglas moved west with his parents, first to Estrella, California, then to Cleveland, Washington. When his father died in 1904, his mother settled with her children near relatives in Yakima, Washington.

Douglas had been crippled with polio before his family moved west, and life in Yakima was hard for his practically penniless mother and her children. Eventually, however, Douglas not only regained the use of his legs but became an inveterate mountain hiker, developing the love of nature and

solitude that later characterized his lifestyle and personality. He, his sister, and his younger brother helped their mother financially with odd jobs and work in area orchards. He excelled academically, becoming valedictorian of his high school class in 1916 and a 1920 Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Whitman College in Walla Walla. After teaching English and Latin for two years at Yakima's high school, and reportedly with only \$75 in his pocket, Douglas took a train east, herding a carload of sheep to pay his fare, and enrolled at Columbia Law School. Although obliged to devote much of his time to tutoring and odd jobs, he graduated second in his class.

Douglas had hoped to clerk for Supreme Court Justice Harlan Fiske Stone after law school. But when the clerkship went to another Columbia graduate, he reluctantly joined a prominent Wall Street firm. After two unsatisfying years there, he left private practice to teach law, first at Columbia, then at Yale, where he specialized in corporate law, became one of the school's youngest endowed chair professors, and enthusiastically embraced the legal realist movement then flourishing at Yale, including its conception of judges as social engineers.

When the Depression returned the Democrats to power in Washington and gave birth to the New Deal, Douglas, like many other prominent scholars, went to work in the Roosevelt administration. In 1936, he became a member of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the next year its chair. He also developed close ties with members of the Roosevelt inner circle, often joining the weekly poker games at the White House.

Ultimately, such connections paid off handsomely. Roosevelt had no opportunities to fill Supreme Court vacancies during his first term, but beginning with his appointment of Hugo Black in 1937, the president eventually was able to completely remake the Court. Black and Roosevelt's second appointee, Stanley Reed, were southerners, Felix Frankfurter, his third selection, was an easterner; and Roosevelt promised to appoint a westerner to the next vacancy on the Court.

Justice Louis Brandeis's retirement in 1939 gave the president another appointment. Although Douglas had spent his youth on the west coast, Roosevelt considered the SEC chairman an east-

erner from Yale. The depth of Douglas's commitment to the New Deal and rigorous regulation of the stock market was questionable as well. But a Douglas speech applauding New Deal programs and attacking financial interests helped to calm such concerns, and in late March, the president submitted Douglas's name to the Senate. In early April, the Senate confirmed the nomination 62–4; those voting no, all Republicans, complained, ironically, that Douglas was a tool of Wall Street.

As a member of the Court, Douglas enthusiastically joined the justices in completing the dismantling of the pre-1937 Court's laissez-faire economic precedents. Indeed, his opinion for the Court in *Olsen v. Nebraska* (1941) remains a classic Roosevelt Court repudiation of the Old Court's assumption of superlegislative powers in regulatory cases. Albeit with a number of lapses, most notably his stance in *Korematsu v. United States* (1944) and in other World War II cases involving sanctions against Japanese Americans, Douglas was also a leader in the modern Court's increasing scrutiny of laws restricting First Amendment freedoms, the rights of suspects and defendants in criminal cases, and racial equality.

Unlike his frequent ally Justice Black, however, Douglas did not rest his jurisprudence on a positivist framework, championing only those individual liberties and other restrictions on governmental authority that are rooted in constitutional language or evidence of the framers' intent. Instead, he ultimately rejected the laissez-faire Court's decisions as simply inconsistent with society's needs, while readily embracing the modern Court's use of due process and equal protection in recognizing sexual privacy, abortion, and related rights that have no basis in the Constitution's text or records of historical intent.

Justice Douglas's expansive reading of civil liberties infuriated conservative politicians. His unorthodox personal life attracted controversy as well. In the early 1950s, he divorced his wife of nearly thirty years. He later remarried three times, on the last occasion to a twenty-six-year-old when he was sixty-six. A 1970 impeachment effort—ostensibly directed at ethical improprieties but more likely at Douglas's judicial record—failed. A severe stroke in

1975 forced his retirement, but not before he had served thirty-six and a half years on the high bench, the record to date for Supreme Court service. Before his death in 1980, Congress recognized the veteran justice's love of hiking and nature by designating parkland along a favorite Washington walking trail as the William O. Douglas National Park.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL, JR.; HUGHES, CHARLES EVANS; SECURITIES REGULATION; SUPREME COURT.

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TINSLEY E. YARBROUGH

DUBINSKY, DAVID

The life of the labor leader and political activist David Dubinsky (February 22, 1892–September 17, 1982) was governed by three great passions: trade unionism, social reform, and anticommunism. Raised as the youngest son of a Jewish baker in Lodz in Russian Poland, Dubinsky started his labor activism early. After a rudimentary secular Zionist education, he went to work for his father at the age of eleven and led his first strike at fifteen. Dubinsky also joined the Jewish Bund, a socialist organization banned by czarist authorities. Imprisoned and later exiled to Siberia at eighteen, he escaped. Recogniz-

ing that he was a hunted man, Dubinsky left Poland, arriving in New York on New Year's Day, 1911.

Dubinsky became a U.S. citizen and joined the Socialist Party and garment cutters' Local 10 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU). He embraced the cutters' craft culture, moderate socialism, and practical trade unionism. Elected president of his local in 1921, he played a vital role in the bitter "civil war" between Communists and Socialists that decimated New York's garment unions during the 1920s. Several factors led to the ILGWU's demise, but Dubinsky blamed an ill-fated 1926 strike and supported the expulsion of the Communists. ILGWU membership fell from a high of 120,000 in the early 1920s to only 40,000 in early 1933 shortly after Dubinsky's ascent to the presidency. His tenure became closely entwined with Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. Taking advantage of the National Recovery Administration's nominal recognition of collective bargaining rights, Dubinsky launched organizing drives in sixty cities, as well as a series of successful strikes. By May 1934 membership in the ILGWU had jumped to more than 400,000, and Dubinsky emerged as a major figure in New Deal labor circles. Placing its new strength behind the NRA code authority, the ILGWU established a thirty-five hour work week, substantially raised wages, and transformed conditions in its industry. In the process, it provided a model for the industrial union explosion of the late 1930s.

Convinced that the labor movement's future lay in the development of giant industrial unions, in late 1935 Dubinsky formed the Committee for Industrial Organization with Sidney Hillman, John L. Lewis, and other American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders to push the AFL into organizing basic industry. Although he supported organizing drives throughout 1936 and 1937 and recognized the need to revitalize the labor movement, Dubinsky opposed the formation of the CIO as a separate labor federation in November 1938, fearing dual unionism and Communist Party influence in the new group. He led his union back into the AFL in 1940 and rejoined the Federation's executive board in 1945. Dubinsky retired from the ILGWU presidency in 1966.

Dubinsky's political life was shaped both by his strong commitment to social justice and his staunch anti-Communism. He helped to form the American Labor Party in 1936 but eventually renounced it, alleging Communist influence. He cofounded the New York Liberal Party, Americans for Democratic Action, and the International Confederation of Trade Unions, all bastions of Cold War liberal anti-Communism. Throughout, he remained an avid supporter of Roosevelt and later Democratic presidents.

See Also: AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS (ACW); AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); ANTICOMMUNISM; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR.

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JAMES R. BARRETT

DU BOIS, W. E. B.

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois (February 23, 1868–August 27, 1963), who was born in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, in the year of Andrew Johnson's impeachment and died ninety-five years later in the year of Lyndon Johnson's installation, cut an amazing swath through four continents. He was a Lenin Peace Prize laureate and his birthday was officially celebrated in China. He wrote fourteen pioneering books of sociology, history, and politics, and in his eighties a second autobiography and three historical novels, complementing the two large works of fiction he wrote in the first two decades of the twentieth century. The premier architect of the civil rights movement in the United States, Du Bois was among the first American intellectuals

to grasp the international implications of the struggle for racial justice, memorably proclaiming at the dawn of the century that the problem of the twentieth century would be the problem of the color line. *The Souls of Black Folk*, his 1903 collection of fourteen essays, transformed race relations in the United States and, by redefining the terms of the three-hundred-year-old interaction between blacks and whites, reshaped the cultural and political psychology of peoples of African descent not only throughout the western hemisphere but on the African continent as well.

By 1910, the problem of the color line in America had become so acute that Du Bois gave up his Atlanta University professorship for the editor's desk at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in New York. Du Bois's magazine, *The Crisis*, was entirely the editor's creature, its policies virtually independent of the NAACP's board of directors, and its extraordinary monthly circulation of more than 100,000 by 1920 due almost entirely to Du Bois's pen. For fourteen years, Du Bois spoke through *The Crisis* to demand full civil rights and complete racial integration as the NAACP grew from a small operation into a corporate body increasingly staffed by lawyers, lobbyists, and accountants. Du Bois grew increasingly impatient with the legalistic tack of the NAACP after the onset of the Great Depression.

Having failed to reform the NAACP, Du Bois devoted the years after 1934 to reading Karl Marx and supervising graduate students. Du Bois's period of Talented Tenth Marxism (1935 to 1948) was distinguished by a deepening economic radicalism, but also by a renewal of his social science meliorism. He wrote with increasing enthusiasm for communism in Russia and with mounting condemnation for European imperialism in Africa and Asia. His 1935 book, *Black Reconstruction in America*, was ultimately to transform the historiography of a period, although initially it appalled most professional historians by positing a general strike by the slaves during the Civil War and a proletarian bid for power in the South after the war. Flaws it certainly had, but Du Bois's sprawling monograph would return the African American to the Reconstruction drama as a significant agent. Historians Howard K. Beale

and C. Vann Woodward wrote the author of their admiration for the work and of its influence upon them.

Pressured by several members of the NAACP board, secretary Walter White invited the septuagenarian back. As consulting delegate with White and Mary McLeod Bethune to the founding of the United Nations in May 1945, Du Bois began what would become ever sharper public attacks upon the policies of an international body whose charter was ambiguous about the rights of colonial peoples. His 1947 United Nations petition, "An Appeal to the World: A Statement on the Denial of Human Rights to Minorities in the Case of Citizens of Negro Descent in the United States of America," was a bold initiative for the NAACP. Although the NAACP board had unanimously endorsed the document the previous August, by June 1948 new board member and UN delegate Eleanor Roosevelt made it plain that international circulation of the petition and repeated attempts at General Assembly presentation "embarrassed" her and the nation. By then, Du Bois had virtually endorsed Henry Wallace's Progressive Party candidacy, denounced the Marshall Plan and NATO as building blocks in the aggressive American containment of the Soviet Union, and roiled the NAACP directorate by distributing a detailed memorandum for restructuring the national headquarters. Already shaken in 1947 by historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s charges in *Life* magazine of Communist infiltration, the NAACP chose Mrs. Roosevelt and fired Du Bois in September 1948.

During the 1950s Du Bois aligned himself increasingly with the communist-dominated peace movement. Tried and acquitted in 1951 as an agent of a foreign power, he was barred from travel abroad until the return of his passport in 1958. After several years of extensive travel in the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe, Du Bois joined the American Communist Party in 1961 and departed for Accra, Ghana. He died there in 1963 on the eve of the March on Washington.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP; ROBESON, PAUL.

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DAVID LEVERING LEWIS

DUST BOWL

The Dust Bowl refers to a ninety-seven-million-acre area in the southern Great Plains where drought and wind erosion were the most severe during the 1930s. Extending approximately four hundred miles from north to south and three hundred miles from east to west, the Dust Bowl encompassed southeastern Colorado, northeastern New Mexico, western Kansas, and the panhandles of Texas and Oklahoma. The region of the southern Great Plains that became known as the Dust Bowl received its name after a gigantic dust storm, known as a black blizzard, struck the area on April 14, 1935. Robert E. Geiger, a reporter for the Associated Press who was traveling in the area, sent a series of articles from the region to the Washington, D.C. *Evening Star*. Geiger referred to the southern Great Plains as a "dust bowl." The public and the Soil Conservation Service quickly adopted the term, and it became the sobriquet for this windblown, drought-stricken area.

CAUSES

Sandy loess soil, drought, lack of soil-holding vegetation, and wind have caused the dust to blow on the southern Great Plains since the prehistoric period. During the nineteenth century, drought and prairie fires sometimes destroyed the grass and exposed the soil to wind erosion. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries the settlement of the region and drought contributed to dust



This farmer in Cimarron Country, Oklahoma, put up fencing in 1936 to protect his farm from drifting sand. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

storms as farmers plowed the grassland for crops. Similarly, between 1900 and 1930, farmers on the southern plains broke even more native sod for wheat. Steam traction engines, gasoline-powered tractors, and one-way disc plows helped farmers plow the sod and expose the soil to the nearly constant wind. High agricultural prices stimulated by World War I and adequate precipitation encour-

aged agricultural expansion on the southern plains, and few farmers gave much thought to soil conservation. Many factors, then, contributed to the creation of the Dust Bowl—soils subject to wind erosion, drought that killed the soil-holding vegetation (including wheat), the incessant wind, and technological improvements that facilitated the rapid breaking of the native sod.



This massive cloud of dust hit Rolla, Kansas, in April 1935. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

THE STORMS

In 1931, drought struck the southern Great Plains. By late January 1932, dust storms began to sweep across the Texas Panhandle, and wind erosion became a common problem for the region during the spring. During the worst storms of the decade, the dust drifted like snow, halted road and railway travel, and made breathing difficult. Work crews shoveled the railway tracks clear of drifted dust so the trains could pass. Railroad engineers sometimes missed their stations. During the worst dust storms, residents sealed windows with tape or putty and hung wet sheets in front of windows to filter the air. Others spread sheets over their upholstered furniture, wedged rags under doors, and covered keyholes to keep the dirt out of their homes. Mealtime during a storm meant that plates, cups, and glasses were often covered with a thin coat of dust, and the dust made the food and one's teeth gritty. Electric lights dimmed to a faint glow along streets during the middle of the day. Travel on highways was hazardous during a dust storm because of poor visibility and dust drifts across

highways. Static electricity accompanied the storms and caused automobile ignition systems to fail and cars to stall during the storms. Motorists attached drag wires and chains to their automobiles and trucks to ground this static electricity and prevent their vehicles from stalling. Even windmills, pump handles, and cooking pans became so highly charged that a mere touch caused a good shock. Residents often wore masks when they went outside during a storm, because the dust contained silica that irritated the mucus membranes of the respiratory system and made people feel ill. Many residents died from "dust pneumonia." Surgeons and dentists confronted the problems of sterilization. Between 1932 and 1939, dust storms made life miserable and sometimes dangerous for residents of the Dust Bowl.

Throughout the 1930s, continued drought and crop failure caused the soil to blow. The number of dust storms increased across the region from 1934 to 1938. The acreage subject to wind erosion also expanded during the period, despite the increased efforts of farmers and government officials to bring



Many families abandoned their farms during the Dust Bowl and traveled west in search of work. Dorothea Lange photographed this family group from Texas at an overnight roadside camp near Calipatria, California, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

fields under control by various soil and water conservation methods. The dust storms that began in 1932 and peaked in 1935 continued intermittently, primarily during the spring “blow months” of February, March, and April, when the wind velocity is the highest in the region. By spring 1936, the coarse, granular structure of the soil particles had broken down due to drought and the constant blowing and shifting of the soil. Much of the topsoil had become a fine powder that even low-velocity

winds could easily lift into the air and carry for hundreds of miles. During the winter the alternate freezing and thawing of the ground pulverized the soil still further, making it even more susceptible to wind erosion. The dust storms remained severe into 1937, and the prevailing winds carried the soil to the Middle Atlantic and Gulf Coast states. During the worst storms, sand and soil lacerated the wheat and cotton crops, and covered pastures and killed the grass used for grazing and hay.



This dust-covered farm, photographed in 1938 near Dalhart, Texas, remained occupied, but many in the area were abandoned during the Dust Bowl years. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

SOIL CONSERVATION

By 1933 the wind erosion conditions in the southern Great Plains became so serious that farmers looked to the federal government for technical and financial support to help them bring the blowing lands under control. In March the Forest Service became the first federal agency to try to stop the dust storms in the region after President Franklin Delano Roosevelt asked the agency to investigate whether a major tree-planting program could substantially reduce wind erosion on the Great Plains. Working with nearly record speed, in August the Forest Service reported that it could. This plan, known as the Shelterbelt Project, advocated the creation of a zone a hundred miles wide that would

stretch from Canada to northern Texas, with the western edge running along a line from Bismarck North Dakota, to Amarillo, Texas. Within that area, shelterbelts, that is, rows of trees, would be planted across the entire zone to slow the prevailing winds. With the wind controlled, the dust storms would end or become less severe, and the land could be restored to normal agricultural productivity when the drought ended.

In 1935, after nearly two years of studying the climate, soils, native vegetation, and earlier tree plantings on the Great Plains, the Forest Service reaffirmed the practicality of the project but recommended that the western edge of the zone be moved eastward to follow a line from Devil's Lake,

North Dakota, to Mangum, Oklahoma; this new border area received twenty-two inches of precipitation annually, compared to sixteen inches in the border area originally proposed. The Forest Service then began the Prairie States Forestry Project, as it became known in 1937, planting shelterbelts on selected lands leased from farmers. As the trees grew, the shelterbelts shielded wheat fields from the wind and slowed the blowing soil. By the time the project terminated in 1942, the Forest Service had planted nearly 18,600 miles of shelterbelts that had nearly a 60 percent survival rate. Although the return of normal precipitation enabled nature to heal the wounds to the soil from drought and wind, the shelterbelts helped check soil erosion and protected farmsteads, livestock, and fields.

The Soil Erosion Service (SES) in the Department of the Interior and the Department Agriculture also developed plans to end wind erosion in the Dust Bowl. On August 25, 1933, the Public Works Administration provided \$5 million to the Soil Erosion Service to support a conservation program. The SES used these funds to establish demonstration projects on private lands where nearby farmers could observe the best soil conservation practices. The work of the SES, however, duplicated many projects of the Department of Agriculture and, in 1935, the agency was renamed the Soil Conservation Service and moved under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Agriculture.

The Soil Conservation Service also established demonstration projects to persuade farmers to adopt proper conservation techniques. By the late 1930s, the work of the Soil Conservation Service (along with federal dollars and the return of near normal precipitation) helped farmers bring their blowing lands under control. Most farmers who followed the technical advice and procedures of the SCS adopted proper tillage and cropping practices, such as contour plowing, terracing, strip cropping, and planting drought-resistant crops such as grain sorghum. In order to halt dust storms completely, though, the grazing lands had to be restored. Accordingly, the SCS advised farmers to rotate, rest, and reseed pastures and to use contour furrowing and ridging techniques on their grasslands to derive

the maximum benefit from precipitation and prevent runoff. The soil conservation practices promoted by the SCS were designed to restore the land to predrought, pre-Dust Bowl conditions.

The soil conservation projects depended on persuasion and voluntary agreements between the farmers and the agency. Officials in the SCS did not believe the agency had the constitutional authority to impose mandatory land-use regulations. Consequently, the SCS encouraged the state governments to require farmers to practice the best soil conservation techniques. On May 13, 1936, the SCS drafted a model state law, titled *A Standard Soil Conservation District Law*, which provided for the creation of state conservation districts by local petition and referendum. After a district organized under the direction of the state soil conservation authority, committee, or agency, the farmers in the district worked in a common effort to halt soil erosion, particularly from the wind, and to follow the best soil conservation practices. District supervisors provided technical information and financial aid to help farmers conduct various conservation practices and purchase gasoline, oil, and horse feed to meet basic soil conservation expenses. Dust Bowl farmers adopted SCS programs because they were geared to practicality and low cost, and the SCS and other agencies provided funds to help them initiate the recommended soil conservation practices. By 1940, most farmers who participated in SCS conservation programs credited the agency with improving their farm practices, increasing their land values, and boosting their incomes. Most Dust Bowl farmers planned to continue their newly learned soil conservation practices.

The most optimistic attempt to help farmers in the Dust Bowl end the wind erosion menace involved the land-use program of the Resettlement Administration (RA) and Farm Security Administration (FSA). The Resettlement and Farm Security administrations, like the SCS, contended that if severely eroded lands could be removed from cultivation and restored to grass, and the blowing range lands reseeded, then the soil could be stabilized, the dust storms ended, and the land returned to a grazing economy similar to that of the Great Plains before the sod was broken for crops. Accordingly, in

1935 the Resettlement Administration, and later the Farm Security Administration (which assumed this responsibility in 1937), began a land-purchase program to acquire the most severely wind-eroded lands on the Great Plains in order to restore them with grass and the best soil conservation techniques, and to move the farmers from the lands that it acquired to better federally owned lands. By the time the SCS assumed responsibility for this work in 1938, the land-purchase program had become an unprecedented experiment in environmental and social planning. The SCS continued to restore the wind-eroded lands in the purchase areas after normal precipitation returned. Since 1960, many of these land-utilization projects have been known as national grasslands, such as the Cimarron National Grassland in Kansas, the Comanche National Grassland in Colorado, the Rita Blanca National Grassland in Oklahoma, and the Kiowa National Grassland in New Mexico.

FEDERAL RELIEF

As the wheat and cotton crops withered under the sun on the southern Great Plains, farmers looked to the federal government for aid beyond soil conservation. Although the federal government provided many programs for economic relief from drought and depression, the aid from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) became the most significant. Without the financial aid of the AAA, many farmers in the Dust Bowl would have suffered bankruptcy and lost their lands. The AAA paid farmers nationwide to reduce production by withdrawing a specific acreage from production. In the Dust Bowl, the AAA paid them to reduce production of wheat and cotton, mostly. With fewer acres planted in these crops, agency officials believed that the surplus of these commodities nationwide would disappear and agricultural prices would rise, thereby increasing farm income. Economic necessity compelled nearly all Dust Bowl farmers to participate in the AAA program, but the drought, not the AAA, played a greater role in reducing production than did the allotment or acreage reduction program. Until World War II rapidly increased agricultural prices, AAA checks provided the most important income for many of them.

Dust Bowl farmers also received financial aid from the Resettlement Administration. Only those farmers who could not qualify for loans at banks or other lending institutions could apply for RA rehabilitative loans. These loans allowed farmers to purchase necessities such as food, clothing, feed, seed, and fertilizer in order to remain on their land and ultimately return to self-sufficiency when the drought ended. Before making a loan, the RA prepared a farm management plan that budgeted the farmer's income for daily home and operating needs as well as loan and mortgage obligations. Resettlement Administration loans in the Dust Bowl averaged about \$700 per family. In 1937, the Farm Security Administration continued this loan program for the most destitute farmers, on the conditions that the farmers' operations could become profitable and they had adequate credit to obtain equipment, seed, and livestock. The FSA also encouraged Dust Bowl farmers to diversify by raising more cattle and less wheat.

Despite aid from the AAA, RA, FSA, and other federal agencies and programs, Dust Bowl residents often did not have enough income to meet their financial obligations. In some areas drought, dust, and economic depression caused property values to decline as much as 90 percent. As farm valuations shrank, tax revenues decreased and some local governments responded by imposing higher property taxes. As income from wheat and cotton fell and as property tax rates rose, tenancy and nonresident ownership increased more than 40 percent in some areas, and tax delinquencies and bankruptcies increased.

MIGRATION

Although wheat and cotton prices fell because of overproduction and although drought and dust storms ruined crops and caused additional economic hardship, farmers did not emigrate in great numbers from the Dust Bowl. The migrant characters in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* were not from the Dust Bowl, but from the cotton region east of the most drought-stricken areas. Migrants from this area had been tenant farmers or sharecroppers whom landowners evicted in order to keep the total amount of the AAA allotment checks

for reducing cotton production (farmers were required to share the aid with any tenants, but they ignored this provision of its AAA program). These thousands of displaced cotton farmers and field workers were the Okies who headed west to California. Still, between 1930 and 1940, the counties in the Oklahoma Panhandle lost 8,762 people, but they did not create a great Dust Bowl migration. Many Dust Bowl farmers moved to the nearest town, where they sought employment or relief from government agencies such as the Civil Works Administration or Works Progress Administration. Some areas rich in natural gas and oil gained population as the petroleum industry expanded and created job opportunities. Similarly, in the Texas Panhandle twenty-three counties lost fewer than fifteen thousand inhabitants between 1930 and 1940.

In southwestern Kansas, the number of farmers actually increased in a twenty-seven county area between 1930 and 1935 as the children of resident farmers and townspeople returned home from cities, often in other states, seeking refuge from the economic hard times of the Great Depression. Between 1935 and 1940, however, the population of southwestern Kansas dropped dramatically, with losses ranging from 18 percent to 53 percent in many Dust Bowl counties. As the farm population decreased, the number of farms declined and farm sizes increased by 24 percent due to the consolidation of farms. Most residents who left the Kansas portion of the Dust Bowl were single men and women or young married couples who perceived better opportunities elsewhere in the region or beyond. Tenant farmers often left the Dust Bowl but landowners usually stayed because they were unwilling to lose their investments in the land, and the agricultural and work-relief programs of the federal government kept most farmers on the land and the majority of the nonfarm population in the towns. Certainly, a large number of people moved within the Dust Bowl area and from the Great Plains states during the 1930s, but most were not people displaced by drought and wind erosion.

NORMALCY

During the spring of 1938 precipitation increased and the wheat, grass, and cotton grew and

helped hold the soil against the wind. As a result, the black blizzards ended and even the lesser dust storms diminished in number and intensity. By the spring of 1939 only 9.5 million acres were still subject to severe wind erosion, compared to fifty million acres in 1935. Only a few dust storms occurred throughout the year. By December 1939, the Dust Bowl encompassed only southwestern Kansas and southeastern Colorado. During the early 1940s, the return of near-normal amounts of precipitation ended the drought, and weeds, grass, and crops covered much of the land, preventing the wind from lifting and blowing the soil.

A combination of factors, then, created the Dust Bowl in the southern Great Plains—the plowing of too much marginal land for wheat and cotton, the failure to practice soil conservation, the drought, and the relentless wind. The dust storms of the 1930s forced farmers and the federal government to utilize all of the technical expertise and financial resources they could command to bring the wind erosion problem under control. When drought and dust storms returned to the region during the 1950s, the technology and conservation practices that Dust Bowl farmers had been using for twenty years prevented the region from reverting to the severe conditions of the 1930s.

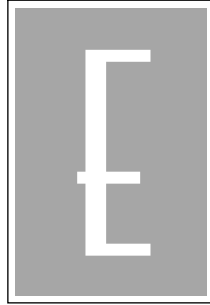
See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT (AAA); *GRAPES OF WRATH, THE*; LAND USE PLANNING; MIGRATION; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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R. DOUGLAS HURT



EARHART, AMELIA

Amelia Earhart (July 24, 1897–July 1937) was an aviator and feminist who symbolized the excitement of early aviation and new roles for women to Depression-era Americans. Always a restless and independent spirit, Earhart (photograph overleap) took her first plane ride in 1921 and earned her license soon after. While working at a Boston settlement house in 1928, she jumped at the chance to be a passenger on a flight from Newfoundland to Wales, thus earning the distinction of being the first woman to cross the Atlantic Ocean by plane. Instantly compared to Charles Lindbergh (to whom she bore an uncanny resemblance), Earhart found herself lionized as a popular heroine even though she had done none of the actual flying.

On May 20, 1932, Earhart claimed her place in aviation history by soloing the Atlantic in her bright red single-engine Lockheed Vega. She was the first woman and only the second person to do so since Lindbergh's 1927 flight. Once again she was front-page news nationwide, enabling her to promote her belief in the viability of commercial aviation and her equally fervid conviction that women could do anything they set their minds to. In 1937 she announced plans for a round-the-world flight in her new Lockheed Electra, accompanied only by navigator Fred Noonan. The first east-to-west attempt

ended prematurely when she damaged her plane in Hawaii. On June 1 she set off in a west-to-east direction. On the hardest leg of the flight, from New Guinea to tiny Howland Island in the mid-Pacific, the plane disappeared. For weeks the country followed the story, but an extensive search turned up no evidence of the aviators' fate and they were presumed lost at sea. Amelia Earhart's last flight remains one of the twentieth century's greatest unsolved mysteries, but it should not deflect attention from her significance as a record-breaking aviator and a compelling symbol of women's emancipation.

See Also: GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LINDBERGH, CHARLES.

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SUSAN WARE



Amelia Earhart, 1930s. ARCHIVE PHOTOS

ECCLES, MARRINER

Marriner Eccles (September 9, 1890–December 18, 1977) was born in Logan Utah. He was a high school graduate of Brigham Young College in 1909

and shortly afterwards left for Scotland, where he worked for just over two years as a Mormon missionary. The Eccles family had extensive business interests and Eccles became fully engaged in them on his return from Scotland. His family responsibilities increased after the death of his father in 1912, but he thrived on challenges and effectively managed the family enterprises through the Eccles Investment Company. In 1913 he married Mary Campbell Young, whom he had met while in Scotland.

During the 1920s Eccles built up a formidable reputation as a banker and achieved considerable personal wealth. During the period from 1930 to 1933 U.S. banks in general, and Utah banks in particular, exhibited high failure rates. During this time, Eccles presided over a number of banks which demonstrated such resilience in the face of adversity that he was invited to testify before the Senate Finance Committee in February 1933.

The shock of the Depression had a profound influence upon Eccles's political philosophy. He believed that the economic crisis had been caused by underconsumption and that this trend should be corrected by a variety of government funded initiatives. Because Eccles's views were unorthodox by bankers' standards, and because he was willing, especially after the recession of 1937 and 1938, to contemplate budget deficits, he has been described as a Keynesian. In fact Eccles developed his views independently and they were the product of commonsense observation not high-level economic theory. Perhaps his lack of formal education enabled Eccles to free himself from old ideas when it was clear that they were not working.

Eccles chose to work in Washington, initially as special assistant on monetary and credit issues to Henry Morgenthau, Jr., who recommended him to Roosevelt as someone who would make a very effective head of the Federal Reserve Board. Eccles agreed to accept this post on condition that legislative changes would move power over money and credit matters away from the Federal Reserve Banks towards a newly constituted Board. Eccles was to the fore in drafting and lobbying for the Banking Act of 1935, which centralized monetary policy and gave formidable powers to the Board. The fact that

he was not a Wall Street banker endeared him to many New Dealers. Although Eccles was a strong supporter of government intervention to ameliorate the effects of depression, the restrictive monetary policies pursued by the Fed played a significant role in causing the serious economic contraction of 1937–1938.

Eccles served as chairman of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System until 1948 and remained a board member until 1951. He died on December 18, 1977.

See Also: FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; MONETARY POLICY.

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PETER FEARON

ECONOMISTS

The Great Depression presented formidable challenges to mainstream economists of the day. The slump following the stock market crash in the autumn of 1929 was not itself that perplexing. Orthodox doctrine then held that downturns in economic activity were part of the business cycle's natural rhythm. The real problem was to account for the economy's failure to right itself. In a well-functioning market system, it was expected that downward adjustments in wages and prices would generate the correctives needed to restore conditions of high production and employment. By late 1931, it was clear that the expectations of the orthodox did not mesh with the observable reality. This observation did not mean that mainstream economists were ready to reject their original "model." For most of them, confidence in its rightness could still be salvaged with the argument that the state of the economy—not the state of economic theory—was out of joint. It could thus be argued that the many impediments to wage-price flexibility—some

generated by the market power of businesses and trade unions, some generated by governments—had kept the normal adjustment mechanisms from functioning properly. This intellectual maneuver may have stiffened the morale of economists in the mainstream, but it did nothing to improve their public image.

In the popular estimation, some critics of mainstream economics were also discredited by the flow of events. In the 1920s, two strands of argument were developed that purported to demonstrate that there was nothing inevitable about "so-called" business cycles and that appropriate policy interventions could effectively stabilize aggregate economic activity at a high level. One variant of this approach maintained that expenditures on public works should be timed to compensate for fluctuations in private spending. This strategy formed an important part of the "new era" economics associated with studies inspired by Herbert C. Hoover as Secretary of Commerce. It is important to note that Hoover expected that the overwhelming bulk of expenditures on public works would be undertaken by state and local governments and that the Federal government's primary role was to signal when to open or close the spending tap. (This strategy was indeed deployed in 1930—but without the anticipated results—when Hoover was in the White House.) A second variant insisted that the alleged "laws" of the business cycle could be repealed through the appropriate conduct of monetary policy. The leading spokesman for this position—Irving Fisher of Yale—maintained that variations in the general price level were at the root of fluctuations in production and employment. Hence, it seemed to follow that stabilizing the general price level—a task that could be performed by the Federal Reserve—would stabilize the economy. These vestiges of "new era" thinking did not fare well in face of the events of 1929 through 1931.

Events did, however, enhance the credibility of economists associated with the heterodox school of institutional economics. Those of this persuasion had long been skeptical of the claims of the mainstream regarding the beneficent properties of unregulated markets. In their view, economists sympathizing with a regime of *laissez-faire* were

hopelessly out of touch with the modern economy. The notion that markets were effectively competitive might have had some validity in an earlier, simpler, and less concentrated economic order. The central truth about the current economy was totally otherwise: It was characterized by a fundamental asymmetry inherent in the economy's structure. In one sector—in which large manufacturing firms were predominant—producers had the capacity to administer prices. It was often in their interest as profit-maximizers to raise prices by restricting outputs, which meant that production and employment were inevitably held below their potential. By contrast, the myriad producers in the agricultural sector were inevitably price-takers, not price-makers, and the prices they faced tended to be notoriously unstable. Depression conditions lent some plausibility to the institutionalist position. (These conditions might also have been read as compatible with a Marxist claim that the Depression foreshadowed the imminent collapse of the capitalist system. This interpretation was indeed articulated, but its impact was never more than marginal in the United States.)

Advocates of the institutionalist heterodoxy got a public hearing in the early 1930s, but they also got more. A number of their most prominent spokespersons were invited to walk in the corridors of power in the early days of the Roosevelt administration. Rexford Guy Tugwell, for example, was a member of Roosevelt's "Brains Trust" during the presidential campaign of 1932 and remained a key adviser in the shaping of policy in the First New Deal. Tugwell was amply on record in holding that *laissez-faire* amounted to "competition and conflict" and that it should be displaced by a regime of "coordination and control"—that is, central planning. This intellectual posture underpinned the supply-restriction programs administered by the newly formed Agricultural Adjustment Administration as well as the "codes of fair competition" that industrial trade associations were expected to prepare (and to submit for governmental approval) in the National Recovery Administration. Tugwell's influence was also noteworthy in the recruitment of economists to staff these emergency agencies, which in turn gave economists a greater presence

in the Washington bureaucracy than they had ever before enjoyed.

While most American economists tended to view the world through familiar analytic lenses, there were some notable instances in which economists fundamentally rethought their original positions. Irving Fisher is a case in point. In the 1920s, he had pronounced that the United States was approaching an era of permanent prosperity—a forecast that was to be disastrous, both professionally and personally. By 1932, he had produced an innovative reformulation to explain what had gone wrong. The root of the difficulties, as he then saw matters, could be traced to two diseases: the "debt disease" and the "dollar disease." The American economy of 1929 was fragile because of overindebtedness (a vulnerability that had gone largely unnoticed at the time). But once the dimensions of this problem had been recognized, alarm spread among some creditors and debtors, sparking an initial round of liquidations. A chain reaction followed, involving distress selling, the contraction of bank deposits as loans were paid off or called in, and a consequent collapse in the general price level. The "dollar disease" had exacerbated this situation: That is to say, as prices fell, the real burden of debts increased. Deflation thus became cumulative. Price reductions in response to shrinking demand should thus no longer be seen as part of a normal readjustment leading to recovery. Instead deflation simply generated more deflation, with no end in sight short of universal bankruptcy. The remedy was implicit in the diagnosis: reflating the price level back to its pre-Depression norm and then stabilizing it at that level. Debt burdens would thereby be relieved and liquidations halted. Debtors, with more discretionary income available for spending on goods and services, would spur resurgence in purchasing power that would reinvigorate production and employment.

Economists in the Washington bureaucracy also displayed some analytic originality, particularly in evidence as they groped to understand a sharp downturn in economic activity in the late summer of 1937 which was, in fact, more precipitous than the drop in production in the months immediately following the crash of 1929. The recession of 1937

and 1938 was especially puzzling because it occurred when the economy was still experiencing excess productive capacity and high levels of unemployment. In the post-mortem on this episode, governmental insiders—most importantly, Lauchlin Currie (then on the staff of the Federal Reserve Board)—detected a significant turnaround in “government contribution to spending” between 1936 and 1937. In 1936, the fiscal impact of government had been decidedly stimulative owing to the payout of a bonus to veterans of World War I, a once-and-for-all transaction for which there would be no counterpart in 1937. Governmental fiscal operations in 1937 turned contractionary when payroll taxes to finance the newly created Social Security system were introduced. It had long been understood that governmental budgetary outcomes were influenced by the state of economy, with revenues rising or falling in response to fluctuations in economic activity. It now appeared that changes in taxing and spending by government could influence the level of economic activity. This basic insight is explored in John Maynard Keynes’s *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, published in 1936. American experience in the recession of 1937 and 1938 appeared to provide empirical validation of that finding.

Analysis of this episode was also a watershed in the thinking of the economist who was to become the leading interpreter of the Keynesian message in the United States. Harvard’s Alvin H. Hansen had reviewed Keynes’s *General Theory* unsympathetically when it first appeared. By late 1937, however, Hansen had undergone a conversion experience. His reading of the course of economic events then meshed with Currie’s: He was convinced by the Keynesian argument that identified deficiency in aggregate demand as the cause of excess capacity and underemployment. He was further persuaded that—in American conditions—full recovery could not be achieved unless the government mounted an aggressive deficit spending program to compensate for inadequacies in private demand.

Hansen and Currie became the point men in delivering the Keynesian message, and they used the platform provided by hearings before the Tem-

porary National Economic Committee in 1939 to present it at some length. In mid-1939, Currie was elevated to the White House staff as the “economic adviser to the president,” a title he was the first to hold. By that time, his commitment to the Keynesian conceptual system was complete. He drew the argumentative threads together in a lengthy memorandum on full employment, which he placed before Roosevelt in March 1940. Though its structure was inspired by the Keynesian framework, the primary remedy he then offered for a deficiency in aggregate demand was not the one that Keynes had emphasized. Unlike Keynes, Currie downplayed deficit spending on public works: Further increases in the national debt were politically sensitive in the American context and should be constrained. The main weight of policy should instead be assigned to government programs in order to shift consumption upward. This objective could be reached, he maintained, by combining a “truly progressive” tax system with redistributive transfer payments and enlarged public outlays for health, education, and welfare. Thus, the “humanitarian and social aims of the New Deal” could be reconciled with “sound economics.”

Pearl Harbor precluded the implementation of this policy strategy, but it did not slow the spread of an Americanized version of a Keynesian-style of thinking in the highest echelons in official Washington. Indeed, within the bureaucracy, it approached the status of an orthodoxy. But this thinking was a long distance removed both from the mainstream orthodoxies of the 1920s and from the heterodoxies that had guided the Roosevelt administration’s initial approaches to Depression-fighting.

See Also: CURRIE, LAUCHLIN; ECONOMY, AMERICAN; HANSEN, ALVIN; KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; TUGWELL, REXFORD G.

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WILLIAM J. BARBER

ECONOMY, AMERICAN

The popular description of the U.S. economy during the 1920s, "Prosperity Decade," was no mere slogan; it was reality. From the depths of the very severe post-war Depression of 1920 and 1921, the economy embarked upon a rapid and sustained recovery. Between 1922 and 1929, real gross national product (GNP) grew by 22 percent, with the most rapid rate of expansion evident during the opening and closing years of the decade. This economic growth was not exceptional by the standards that had been set before 1914, but it was at the least highly satisfactory.

THE PROSPEROUS TWENTIES

During the twenties, high levels of investment and productivity growth, which delivered stable prices and full employment, characterized the economy. The output of durable consumer goods, which include automobiles, radios, electric cookers, and refrigerators, grew at about 6 percent per year. Non-durables, examples of which include clothing, shoes, and foodstuffs, expanded at a more modest 3 percent annually. In fact 80 percent of the growth in GNP was in the flow of consumer goods of which the most important was the automobile.

Factory sales of all autos rose from 1.9 million in 1919 to 4.4 million in 1929, during which period U.S. manufacturers built approximately 85 percent of the world's passenger vehicles. Even more remarkable is the fact that just two companies, Ford and General Motors, accounted for 65 percent of all

U.S. sales. An insignificant industry before 1914, motor vehicle production, together with the manufacture of bodies and parts, employed some 447,000 wage earners in 1929. The nation's largest manufacturing grouping, foundry and machine shop products, had 454,000 wage earners.

Although domestic sales were impressive, the instability that is the hallmark of the durable goods sector was evident. In 1921, in 1924, and in 1927 automobile output actually declined. However, 1928 and the first half of 1929 saw a boom of such magnitude that automotive products accounted for nearly 17 percent of the total value of fully and semi-manufactured goods. This growth was so vigorous that it is difficult to see how it could have been sustained. Although the auto producers were confident, the sector was highly vulnerable to adverse changes in demand at home and abroad.

The contribution of different parts of the economy to National Income is revealing. In 1929 the largest was manufacturing (25.2%), followed by trade (15.5%), finance (14.7%), services (10.1%), and agriculture (9.7%). Although manufacturing represented the largest part, it is clear that other areas of the economy made a great contribution to national wealth. This distribution was also reflected in employment patterns. In 1929 the nation's factories employed 10.7 million workers but large numbers found work outside manufacturing. The wholesale and retail trade employed 6.1 million, transport and public utilities 3.9 million, services 3.4 million, finance 1.5 million, and construction 1.5 million.

In 1929 manufacturing reached a new peak, producing a 38 percent larger physical output than in 1919 even though in 1929 factory employment was 1.8 percent less. The increase in output was the result of a large rise in productivity, which had been achieved by judicious investment in, especially, electric power and specialised machinery funded mainly by high company profits. Within manufacturing some businesses shed labor while others recruited. Employment expanded in the production of electrical machinery (including radios), bakery products, furniture, petroleum refining, and motor vehicle parts. Contraction occurred in railroad repair shops, in leather goods, in chemicals, and in

cotton textile factories located in the northeast region. During the pre-Depression decade, twenty-two states experienced growth in their factory populations. The most vigorous expansion took place in South Carolina followed by Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas, and Arizona. A variety of industries were responsible for the industrial success of these states and among them were cotton goods, knitwear including rayon, lumber, furniture, and cigarette manufacture. In contrast, manufacturing employment declined in the Mid-Atlantic, New England and West North Central regions. For example, traditional manufacturing states, such as Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, lost jobs. However, growth was not entirely confined to the less industrialized states; Indiana and Michigan also experienced gains. Nor had the absolute dominance of the traditional states been broken. In 1929 there were more manufacturing wage earners in either New York or Pennsylvania than in the entire South Atlantic region, though the fastest rates of factory job creation were evident in states where the industrial base was relatively undeveloped

Between 1920 and 1929 an additional four million jobs were created outside agriculture. Since manufacturing as a whole did not generate any additional positions, where did the expanding labor force find work? The biggest increase in employment was in the wholesale and retail trade (2.1 million additional jobs) followed by finance, insurance, and real estate (0.6 million additional jobs). Vigorous construction activity also created many new employment opportunities. From a low point of 0.85 million in 1920, the construction industry expanded to an employment peak of 1.7 million during 1927 and 1928 before declining to 1.5 million in the following year.

The construction industry played a significant role in the twenties expansion. A residential building boom reached its peak in 1926 but was already in decline by 1929. However, aggregate construction activity was still buoyant in 1929 as public construction and non-residential building expanded to fill the slack created by the reduction in home building. Residential building was strongly influenced by national prosperity and by the demands

of a highly mobile population. Migration from rural to urban areas, especially to the major metropolises, combined with the flexibility of location made possible by the automobile helped create a vigorous housing market. Auto owners' demands for new or improved roads encouraged higher levels of public construction. As has been noted, the construction industry was a major employer; it was also notoriously prone to booms and slumps. A sharp fall in general economic activity would inevitably dent private and corporate confidence with serious consequences for the industry.

Major changes had been taking place in the socio-economic composition of the labor force since the beginning of the twentieth century. One of the most significant was an increase in both male and, especially, female clerical workers, a trend that continued into the twenties. This trend reflects a general movement of the native born white workforce away from heavy, unpleasant, and unskilled tasks towards the more professionally rewarding and secure white-collar work.

In 1929, 25.2 percent of the U.S. population lived on 6.5 million farms. The farm sector was the source of 40 percent of U.S. exports, measured by value, and also responsible for the provision of a vast range of foodstuffs, feedstuffs, and raw materials for the domestic market. However, over 2.4 million farms were less than 50 acres, over 700,000 farmers worked for more than one hundred days away from farms that could not support their families, and about half the nation's farms produced no appreciable surplus for market. Over 2.6 million tenants farmed only rented land and tenancy was on the increase. Although some small enterprises were profitable, the vast majority were hopelessly uneconomic, and the families living on them were mired in debt, poverty, poor health, and low levels of education. There was a marked difference between the major commercial operators, who invested in the most up-to-date farm machinery and who belonged to effective farm pressure groups and inefficient operators trying to eke out a miserable existence on infertile soil. Indeed, in 1929 about one million farm families had a net annual income of between \$100 and \$300, far below the sum required to avoid poverty.

Given the sharp disparity that existed between rural and urban incomes it is not surprising that so many Americans migrated to cities. During the twenties there was a net movement of approximately six million people from the countryside to urban centers, in particular to New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Detroit where building activity was stimulated. The states that lost most residents were Georgia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Kentucky. Many African Americans left the racially oppressive, low-income South and headed for Chicago, Cleveland, New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, Washington D.C., and Baltimore. The migration of so many Americans during the twenties was beneficial to the economy, which could no longer depend on a substantial flow of European immigrants as permanent controls on entry were introduced in 1924.

1929–1933: THE GREAT SLUMP

The Depression, which began in the middle of 1929, hit a booming economy with savage intensity. By the time a trough was reached in March 1933, manufacturing output had fallen by almost half, unemployment, estimated at just over 3 percent in 1929, had risen to over 25 percent, business profits were negative, and investment had fallen to a historic low. At the same time wholesale prices fell by 38 percent, bank crises paralysed the financial system and farm income plummeted. This Depression embraced industrial and rural America.

By 1933, some 3.4 million manufacturing jobs disappeared, as had 1.4 million in the wholesale and retail trades, 688,000 in construction, 567,000 in services, and 214,000 in finance insurance and real estate. Within manufacturing, the durable goods sector was most seriously affected and output declined by 70 to 80 percent and employment by 55 percent. Among the industries most seriously hit were machinery manufacture, cement, automobiles, bricks, and locomotives. On the other hand, the manufacture of shoes, tobacco, foodstuffs, textiles, and other non-durables fell by a more modest 10 to 20 percent and employment by 30 percent. Industrial structure accounts for the significant regional variations in unemployment. Factory employment was most Depression resistant in the

South Atlantic states where, unfortunately, there were few wage earners. However, the East North Central region, which includes the highly industrialized states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio, was very badly affected.

The problems facing the consumer durable sector can be illustrated by an examination of automobile manufacture, which had produced a record output of 4.5 million passenger vehicles in 1929. In 1932, production had collapsed to a mere 1.1 million. Employment had fallen by approximately 45 percent, but pay cuts and short time working had decreased the sector's wage bill by 75 percent. With consumer confidence low and the stock of vehicles both high and relatively new, further consolidation took place in the industry. General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler were better able to produce cheap cars than small independent producers, many of which failed. Of the big three, General Motors was by far the most successful, controlling 41 percent of the market by 1933 compared to Chrysler's 25 percent and the ailing Ford Motor Company, 21 percent. Even General Motors suffered a loss in 1932; Ford losses were substantial. The decline in auto production had adverse repercussions on a range of industries including steel, safety glass, nickel, tin, upholstery, and wrought iron. However, the manufacture and sale of petroleum products held up well; Americans bought few new autos, but they continued to drive.

Together with automobile production, construction had been a mainstay of the twenties economy, but the industry now experienced a staggering decline. In 1929 there were 509,000 housing starts; in 1933 there were 93,000. Low company profits and surplus office accommodation led to a contraction in commercial construction. Cutbacks in state and local spending reduced the road building and maintenance program. The collapse in the construction industry had dire consequences for structural steel, plate glass, brick making, and the furniture industry. Railroads responded to the lack of freight business by cutting orders for locomotives and cars and, of course, by firing employees.

When farm prices fell even more steeply than those in manufacturing, farm income collapsed. The average net farm income fell from \$945 in 1929

to a mere \$304 in 1932. In spite of growing farm misery, however, the migratory flow from the countryside to the town was reversed. With jobs scarce, fewer rural people left for the city and at the same time many urban unemployed took part in a "back to the land" movement. Returning to family farms, or even occupying abandoned farms in order to practice subsistence agriculture, was a preferable option for many. Some politicians mistakenly saw the farm as a sensible solution to mounting unemployment. However, the lack of urban job opportunities and a growing rural population ensured that underemployment was a persistent feature of life in the countryside throughout the thirties.

When Franklin Roosevelt delivered his inaugural address in March 1933 the American economy was in deep crisis. Unemployment and farm misery were widespread, the financial system was in a state of paralysis, and business confidence was at an all time low.

1933–1937: THE RECOVERY

From March 1933 to July 1937 real GNP grew at an impressive 8 percent per annum. At the peak of recovery the economy had struggled back to levels of output and employment that had prevailed in 1929. However, this expansion was halted and put into reverse temporarily by a sharp recession in 1937 and 1938, after which GNP resumed its upward trajectory.

During the recovery phase the expansion of non-durable goods was much greater than that of durables. Indeed, by 1937 textiles and cigarettes, the latter an exceptionally Depression-proof industry, had improved upon their pre-Depression output figures. However, the durable sector lagged, sometimes very badly. The output of machinery and of iron and steel had only just failed to reach 1929 levels when the recession struck. The automobile sector had just exceeded its pre-Depression peak in 1937 only to fall spectacularly from it over the next year. Meanwhile, construction and related industries such as lumber, bricks and furniture continued to languish, with late 1920s levels of output a distant dream.

Even by 1937 the manufacturing labor force had not recovered to its pre-Depression position in

New England and in the Mid-Atlantic states. Outside these regions, Illinois and Indiana registered modest gains while Michigan recorded a massive rise of 27 percent, which the recession of 1937 and 1938 totally erased. Indeed, the recession had an adverse effect on employment everywhere, except in the South Atlantic and East South Central regions, which remained surprisingly buoyant.

Between 1929 and 1937 the number of manufacturing wage earners expanded by 17.9 percent in the South Atlantic region; the figure for the East South Central region was 8.4 percent. On average, in Virginia and the Carolinas manufacturing wage earners grew more numerous by just less than 25 percent. North Carolina, with cigarette manufacture and low cost textiles, was the most Depression proof state in the nation. Unfortunately the industries that displayed the fastest rate of output growth during the recovery, that is, after 1933, were not major employers. New jobs were created producing refrigerators, rayon, glass bottles and jars, tin cans, canned fruit, washing machines, and radios, but these were industries in which technical progress often acted as a barrier to maximizing employment. They could not fully compensate for jobs lost since 1929 in transport and public utilities (550,000), construction (385,000), and finance real estate and insurance (100,000). The industries most seriously affected by the economic collapse were among the nation's most dominant employers. By contrast, in 1937 there were 470,000 more jobs in the retail and wholesale trade than in 1929, and an additional 300,000 people worked for the federal government.

Agricultural income revived from its desperately low position during the worst years of the Depression but not to the levels that had prevailed during the late twenties. The problem of small inefficient farms, rural poverty, and a surplus population remained. Migration to urban centers resumed as the "back to the land" movement petered out, but only on a relatively small scale as the job opportunities in cities were so limited. In 1940 virtually the same number of people (30.2 million) lived on farms as in 1929. Agriculture remained a troubled sector.

It is important to remember that many of the structural changes that have been identified as part

of the Depression were evident before 1929. Manufacturing employment as a proportion of national employment had been declining since 1920. The same can be said for mining and agriculture. More people took jobs outside the factory and the farm. Clerical work and employment in the retail and wholesale trades became increasingly attractive. Note too the rise of manufacturing in the South. We can detect in the 1920s the roots of the structural revolution, which led, after 1945, to the rise of the Sun Belt.

However, unemployment remained a persistent problem. Even in 1937 unemployment stood at 14.3 percent of the labor force, significantly above the 1929 level of 3.2 percent. The plight of the jobless was made more acute by a change in the age structure of the population, which in turn led to a substantial increase in the numbers available for work. There was also a rise in the numbers of females who wanted to work. In 1937 there were as many people employed as there had been in 1929, but in the meantime an additional six million Americans had been added to the labor force. The recovery had not created sufficient additional jobs to employ all those who wanted to work. It was not until 1942 that full employment returned.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929); UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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PETER FEARON

ECONOMY ACT OF 1933

The Economy Act was enacted on March 20, 1933, during the so-called First Hundred Days of anti-Depression activism by President Franklin D. Roosevelt's new Democratic administration. It cut \$400 million from federal payments to veterans and \$100 million from the payroll of federal employees. The measure reflected the fiscal conservatism of the early New Deal and Roosevelt's antipathy to deficit spending.

The legislation was drafted by budget director Lewis Douglas, who shared Roosevelt's determination to deliver on his 1932 campaign pledge that a Democratic administration would balance the budget. The president was much impressed by Douglas, whom he described as "the real head of the Roosevelt cabinet." Both found themselves at odds with those Democratic congressmen who worried that the bill would alienate the veterans' lobby and that federal retrenchment would worsen the Depression. To overcome their opposition, Roosevelt delivered a special message to Congress on March 10 that blamed the Hoover administration's deficit budgets for continued economic stagnation and for the banking collapse of early 1933. "For three long years," he warned, "the federal government has been on the road toward bankruptcy."

Although ninety Democrats broke ranks, the measure gained speedy approval in the House on March 11 under the skilled parliamentary leadership of John McDuffie of Alabama. The power of the president during this time of unprecedented economic crisis was convincingly demonstrated. As Representative John Young Brown, a Kentucky Democrat, avowed, "I had as soon start a mutiny in the face of a foreign foe as start a mutiny today against the program of the President of the United States." Routine approval later followed in the upper house. Nevertheless, the measure was instrumental in prompting the share-the-wealth

campaign launched in 1934 by Senator Huey P. Long of Louisiana, who saw the Economy Act as evidence of Roosevelt's capture by big business and banking interests.

The Economy Act did not prevent the growth of the budget deficit during the early New Deal, but it diminished the expansionary effects of new spending programs. The \$500 million in savings that it yielded was precisely the sum that was appropriated for federal unemployment relief in May 1933. The legislation was signal proof of the absence of influence of the new economics soon to be known as Keynesianism on the early New Deal and it reflected Roosevelt's initial belief that deficit spending was harmful to economic recovery because it impaired the restoration of business confidence.

See Also: DEFICIT SPENDING; HUNDRED DAYS.

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IWAN MORGAN

EDUCATION

In the first years of the 1930s, educators failed to recognize the severity of the Great Depression. By 1932, however, it had become apparent to them that the Great Depression was a crisis that would have a dramatic impact on the nation's educational system.

One of the most striking ways the Depression affected schools was by altering enrollment patterns. Elementary school enrollment declined as financial necessity forced people to postpone marriage and children, causing the birth rate to decline. By 1940 there were 2.3 million fewer children in the nation's primary schools than in 1930. Conversely, high school enrollment skyrocketed, jumping from 4.8 million students in 1930 to 7.1 million by the

end of the decade. Many young people extended their school careers because they could not find jobs. Additionally, more stringent child labor and mandatory school attendance laws were enacted, keeping youths off the job market and inside the classroom.

Although the Great Depression brought children to school, there was less money spent on education. As tax revenues declined, government and business leaders argued that schools were too extravagant and deep cuts were made in education. By 1934 the nation's school spending had declined by 34 percent from pre-Depression levels. Administrators stopped school construction, discontinued classes, eliminated teaching positions, and reduced salaries. Some of the worst cuts took place in rural districts, particularly in the South, which spent the least money on education. Arkansas, for example, spent only \$33.56 per student annually, while New York invested \$137.55 on each of its pupils. In many rural districts the shortage of money led to school closures. By 1934 an estimated twenty thousand rural schools were forced to close. Other districts had to shorten the school year. In the 1933 to 1934 period, ten rural states reported school years of less than three months.

These cuts hit African-American students particularly hard. During the 1930s in the South and in most of the rest of the nation, schools were segregated by race. Schools for black children received less money and resources than those attended by white children. A survey of educational conditions in the South, where most black children lived, showed per capita spending on African-American students was only \$12 per child annually. This was a full \$32 less than was spent on southern white children and \$75 less than the national average. Many schools for black children were merely run-down shacks that did not even have desks. The Urban League reported that 230 counties in fifteen states had no high school for black students to attend.

As school budgets shrank, educators fought back. Teachers worked to preserve both their jobs and the quality of education. The National Education Association created the Joint Committee on the Emergency in Education to raise public aware-



A 7:30 a.m. bus carries the children of migratory cotton pickers from a Farm Services Administration camp to the Eloy district school in 1940 in Pinal county, Arizona. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

ness of the problem and to lobby public officials for solutions. Other state and local organizations followed, and by the mid-1930s, thirty-two states had increased aid to education. New cost-saving reforms were also enacted. Schools emphasized guidance programs and grouped students with similar abilities so they could be taught more efficiently. Additionally, pupils were automatically promoted to the next grade level to prevent the added cost of having them repeat courses or entire grades.

Although school leaders remained committed to complete local control of schools, they called on the federal government to provide aid. They wanted federal dollars, but not federal intervention. President Franklin Roosevelt obliged them. His New Deal programs provided aid without taking control by granting assistance directly to students and providing money for capital improvements. The National Youth Administration provided poor high school and college students with part-time



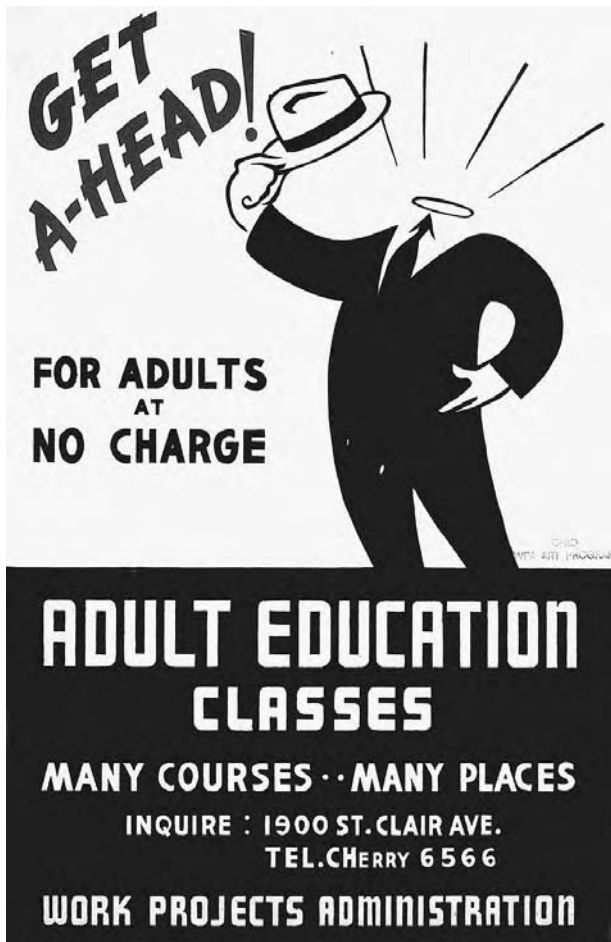
The young children of unemployed miners attend a Works Progress Administration nursery school near Scott's Run, West Virginia, in 1937. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

jobs to help them stay in school. Students did clerical work, served as teacher and library assistants, and worked in school cafeterias. New Deal programs also provided free hot lunches to poor children, funded 70 percent of all new school construction, and helped build playgrounds and athletic fields.

In addition, Roosevelt created federal programs that provided alternatives to schools. These programs were primarily designed to provide work for the unemployed, but also had educational components. The Civilian Conservation Corps, for example, provided unemployed youths with conservation jobs. Participants lived in military style camps, where education programs occupied their free time and helped them develop work skills. The New

Deal, moreover, provided education to people that schools ignored. Over forty thousand preschool children were educated in 1,500 federally operated nursery schools. Adult education courses in everything from vocational training to parenting skills were also available through New Deal programs.

While the New Deal aided schools, it did not offset the dramatic impact the Great Depression had on student life. Pupils had to adjust to packed classrooms, less attention from instructors, crowded extracurricular activities, and reduced course offerings. In some places pupils became so discouraged with the situation that they took action. In Chicago and New York students joined their parents in marches to protest cuts in education. Stu-



Posters like this one publicized the WPA adult education program, which encouraged adults to return to school by offering free classes in many subjects. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA POSTER COLLECTION

dents also went on strike when popular teachers or administrators were laid off.

For poor students the school experience created anxiety. They felt left out by the materialism of school culture. High school students, in particular, felt the need to dress in stylish clothes, buy the school newspaper, and attend dances, proms, and graduations. Poor students felt ashamed when they could not afford these things and sometimes responded by becoming critical of the elitism and snobbery of their classmates.

School, however, also served as a refuge for poor children. They attended classes to get a show-

er and a hot meal and to warm up in the cold winter months. Teachers donated money to provide clothes, meals, and glasses to their needy pupils. Poor students were also aided by their classmates. In Milwaukee, for example, textbook drives were held to provide books to students who could not afford them, and the Washington High School Girls club provided no-interest loans to needy members so they could buy school supplies. These efforts, along with the New Deal programs, helped schools and their students endure one of the most difficult periods of the twentieth century.

See Also: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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DARYL WEBB

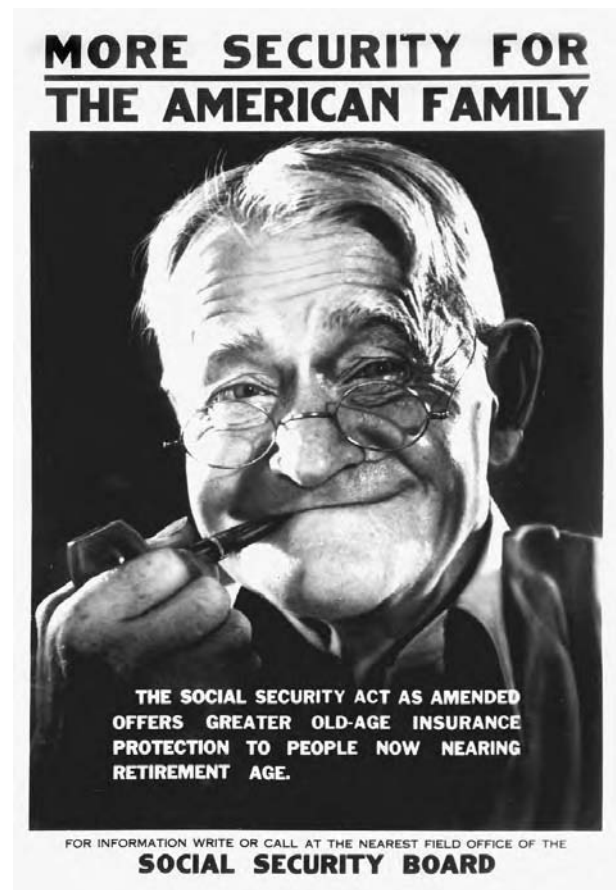
ELDERLY, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON THE

The perception that the elderly constitute a unique group with special needs is a relatively recent his-

torical phenomenon. Widespread concern for the well-being of the elderly became prevalent by the late nineteenth century, as social reformers began to warn that industrialization and urbanization had negatively affected the status and welfare of many older Americans. Although the elderly were, in fact, overrepresented among the population of the era's almshouses and poorhouses, these fears were generally exaggerated. Rather, most older Americans at this time managed to accumulate sufficient resources, often supplemented by the assistance of supportive kin networks, to live their final years relatively comfortably. This was, however, far more the case for white, higher income people than for minorities and the poor. Nor is this to suggest that the elderly as a group were affluent, but that there is little evidence to suggest that their standard of living was deteriorating. The historical record also discloses that despite continued lobbying efforts by reformers and social workers, few programs designed to help the elderly poor were enacted during the early decades of the twentieth century.

This situation changed dramatically during the 1930s. Although the Great Depression had a profound impact on all segments of society, the economic downturn and subsequent social upheaval presented unique problems for elderly Americans. As the economic crisis worsened, many employers were reluctant to rehire or keep on older workers. Widespread bank failures often wiped out savings accumulated over a lifetime of labor. At a time when home ownership was a long and arduous process for working-class families, poor employment prospects and the loss of savings brought the threat of foreclosure. Given the inability of private and public aid organizations to provide adequate relief, those in need were forced to rely on the assistance of friends and relatives. Even those older Americans who managed to avoid the immediate impact of the Depression often had less fortunate kin, resulting in the day-to-day stress of providing economic assistance or sharing living space.

The magnitude of the crisis eventually induced a governmental response. In addition, a huge movement calling for generous old-age pensions arose around an idea put forth by Dr. Francis Townsend. By 1934 a majority of state governments



As this Depression-era poster testified, the Social Security Board promised to help elderly Americans by providing insurance to those reaching retirement age. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

had enacted old-age assistance programs based on economic need. Eventually all states provided for elderly relief, which was subsidized by the federal government under the Social Security Act of 1935. This groundbreaking legislation also established Social Security Old Age Insurance, which provided retirement benefits (based on employee and employer contributions) to eligible workers when they reached the age of sixty-five. Unfortunately, there were no provisions for workers retiring before 1935, and the original program covered less than half of the American labor force, such predominantly minority occupations as farm and domestic work having been excluded in order to secure the backing of southern Democrats. In addition, significant bene-



Many elderly Americans traveled with their families in search of work during the Dust Bowl years. This grandmother was living in California's Kerns County migrant camp in 1936. She cared for her two grandsons while their parents worked in the fields. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

fits would only accrue over a lifetime of work; thus older workers still in the labor force during the 1930s would ultimately receive reduced benefits. Despite these limitations, the Social Security Act of 1935 would have important consequences for subsequent generations of America's elderly.

Retirement was not uncommon prior to Social Security, but it was most prevalent among white-collar workers covered by private pension plans. For the American working class, industrialization generally brought higher standards of living, but retirement funds were largely dependent on personal savings (a significant exception would be Union Army veterans covered by Civil War pensions). Because of concerns about the stability of private savings institutions, many older workers attempted to supplement these funds with income derived from part-time work as they passed what would today be considered retirement age. This practice became less common after World War II, and retirement

became a well-defined life stage characterized by leisure activities. Some researchers argue that the impact of Social Security has been relatively minor, since employee contributions that finance Old Age Insurance would have had a comparable effect if invested in personal savings or private pension plans. Nonetheless, the mandatory aspects of Social Security—compulsory participation with inducements to retire at a specified age—have contributed to the normalization of retirement.

Old Age Insurance benefits also helped bring about significant changes in the living arrangements of older Americans. Prior to the twentieth century, relatively few formerly married elderly maintained independent households—the more common pattern was to live with adult children. Although the trend away from co-residency with adult children was underway before the Great Depression, it was most common among middle- and upper-class elderly, since establishing and maintaining a separate residence is typically more expensive than sharing living space with kin. The establishment in 1939 of survivor's benefits under Social Security had a significant effect on the ability of widows to maintain independent households after the death of their spouses. A luxury at the beginning of the twentieth century, residential autonomy increasingly became the cultural norm in the decades following World War II.

Although the Social Security Act of 1935 did not provide health care insurance for the elderly, it did set a precedent for the establishment of services designed to care for the elderly, which was consistent with the eventual establishment of Medicare in 1965. Universal health insurance for the elderly, in combination with Old Age Insurance and the extension of survivor's benefits, reinforced the long-term trends in retirement and residential autonomy. These social programs also had the secondary effect of fostering an increased political awareness and influence among older Americans. This is partially the result of growing numbers—approximately 13 percent of the American population was over the age of sixty-five in 1990, compared to 4 percent a century earlier—resulting from increased longevity and the post-baby boom fertility decline. But as the magnitude of society's finan-



Thousands of elderly Americans, like this man photographed by Dorothea Lange near Washington, Pennsylvania, in 1935, lived in extreme poverty during the Depression. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

cial commitment to the elderly has grown, older Americans have come to understand that maintaining these benefits requires an active participation in the political process.

The federal government's commitment to provide significant social services represents an important transformation. During the latter half of the twentieth century, issues related to the elderly have moved from the private to the public sphere as government has replaced the family as the institution most responsible for the well-being of older Americans. Today, most of the elderly maintain emotional intimacy with their kin, but these relationships generally lack a significant financial or day-to-day care

component. Although some commentators feel that this has contributed to an increasingly segmented society based on age, the attempt to provide for the welfare of the elderly has been successful as old age in the United States has become characterized by residential autonomy and financial independence.

See Also: FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; OLD-AGE INSURANCE; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; TOWNSEND PLAN.

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RON GOEKEN

ELECTION OF 1928

The election of 1928 was the last of a Republican era extending back to the 1860s. The realignment that broke the Republican Party's hold on the electorate began only after the advent of the Great Depression and was not rooted in the old politics of the 1920s. America's Depression thus established the most significant discontinuity in American political history since the Civil War.

America's two major parties nominated their leading public officials in 1928. President Calvin Coolidge's withdrawal from the presidential contest led to the nomination of Herbert Hoover, who, as secretary of commerce, had become the driving force of domestic policy in the 1920s. The Democrats nominated Al Smith, the four-term governor of New York, who had earned a national reputation as a progressive devoted to social welfare and efficiency in government.

Al Smith's Catholicism and other social issues overshadowed the record and policies of the presidential candidates. Anti-Catholics launched a campaign against Smith's candidacy that ranged from fulminations against papal control of the country to

scholarly debates on the relationship between church and state in Catholic theology. Protestant and Catholic voters split decisively in 1928 as Smith benefited from a pro-Catholic and Hoover from an anti-Catholic vote. Al Smith's opposition to prohibition won him support from "wet" voters, while "dry" voters united behind Hoover. Religion also became tied to race in 1928 as the Republicans cracked the solidly Democratic south by exploiting Smith's Catholicism, his stand on prohibition, and his alleged sympathy for racial equality.

The combination of economic prosperity, tranquility at home, and stability abroad guaranteed Republican success in 1928. Hoover garnered 58 percent of the popular vote, and his party, with victories in both houses of Congress, controlled the national government for a third consecutive term. The bright spot for Democrats was the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt as governor of New York. Roosevelt had tried to avoid running in what looked to be a bleak year for Democrats, insisting on more time for rehabilitation from polio. He succumbed, however, to a personal plea from Al Smith, who thought Roosevelt would help him win votes in upstate New York.

In the aftermath of the Republican landslide, one of Roosevelt's correspondents wrote that no Democrat could again be elected president without a protracted campaign to educate the public in favor of progressive reform. Beginning in 1929, however, the Great Depression reeducated the public far more quickly than Roosevelt would have dreamed possible from the perspective of 1928. Roosevelt, who reluctantly attempted a political comeback that he had thought was premature, ironically found himself ideally situated as governor of New York to exploit Hoover's failed response to the challenges of the Great Depression.

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT; REPUBLICAN PARTY; SMITH, ALFRED E.

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A Chicken for Every Pot

THE Republican Party isn't a "Poor Man's Party." Republican prosperity has erased that degrading phrase from our political vocabulary. The Republican Party is *equality's party*—*opportunity's party*—*democracy's party*, the party of *national* development, not *sectional* interests—the *impartial* servant of every State and condition in the Union.

Under higher tariff and lower taxation, America has stabilized output, employment and dividend rates.

Republican efficiency has filled the workingman's dinner pail—and his gasoline tank *besides*—made telephone, radio and sanitary plumbing *standard* household equipment. And placed the whole nation in the *silk stocking class*.

During eight years of Republican management, we have built more and better homes, erected more skyscrapers, passed more benefactory laws, and more laws to regulate and purify immigration, inaugurated more conservation measures, more measures to standardize and increase production, expand export markets, and reduce industrial and human junk piles, than in any previous quarter century.

Republican prosperity is written on *Juller* wage envelops, written in factory chimney smoke, written on the walls of new construction, written in savings bank books, written in mercantile balances, and written in the peak value of stocks and bonds.

Republican prosperity has *reduced* hours and *increased* earning capacity, silenced *discontent*, put the proverbial "chicken in every pot." And a car in every backyard, to boot.

It has *raised* living standards and *lowered* living costs.

It has restored financial confidence and enthusiasm, changed *credit* from a *rich* man's privilege to a *common*

utility, *generalized* the use of time-saving devices and released women from the thrall of *domestic drudgery*.

It has provided every county in the country with its concrete road and knitted the highways of the nation into a *unified* traffic system.

Thanks to Republican administration, farmer, dairyman and merchant can make deliveries in *less* time and at *less* expense, can borrow *cheap* money to refund exorbitant mortgages, and stock their pastures, ranges and shelves.

Democratic management *impoverished* and *demoralized* the *railroads*, led packing plants and tire factories into *receivership*, squandered billions on *impractical* programs.

Democratic maladministration issued *further* billions on mere "scraps of paper," then encouraged foreign debtors to believe that their loans would never be called, and bequeathed to the Republican Party the job of *mopping up the mess*.

Republican administration has *restored* to the *railroads* solvency, efficiency and par securities.

It has brought rubber trades through panic and *chaos*, *brought down* the prices of crude rubber by *smashing monopolistic rings*, put the tanner's books in the *black* and secured from the European powers formal acknowledgment of their obligations.

The Republican Party rests its case on a record of stewardship and performance.

Its Presidential and Congressional candidates stand for election on a platform of sound practice, Federal vigilance, high tariff, Constitutional integrity, the conservation of natural resources, *honest* and *constructive* measures for agricultural relief, sincere enforcement of the laws, and the right of *all* citizens, regardless of *faith* or *origin*, to share the benefits of opportunity and justice.

Wages, dividends, progress and prosperity say,
"Vote for Hoover"

Paid for by a member of the Republican Business Men, Inc.

Those wishing to see similar advertisements in other New York papers may send cheques to the Republican Business Men, Inc., 4 West 40th Street

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This advertisement ran in newspapers in October 1928 during Hoover's campaign for president. Four years later, during his 1932 campaign for reelection, Hoover's opponents tried to discredit him by recalling his alleged promise of "a chicken for every pot."

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Lichtman, Allan. *Prejudice and the Old Politics: The Presidential Election of 1928*, rev. edition. 2000.

ALLAN J. LICHTMAN

ELECTION OF 1930

The midterm election of 1930 was the first in a four-election cycle (1930, 1932, 1934, and 1936) following the 1929 stock market crash that ended an era of Republican Party domination, forged the New Deal coalition, and established the Democrats as the dominant party in the United States. The election was also pivotal to the careers of such important Depression-era politicians as Floyd B. Olson, elected Farmer-Labor governor of Minnesota; Huey Long, elected democratic Senator from Louisiana while still serving as governor; and Franklin D. Roosevelt, whose election to a second term as governor of New York made him the front-runner for the Democratic presidential nomination of 1932.

On the eve of the elections of 1930, the editors of *Business Week* warned that the economy was "sliding further into the final stages of depression, under the weight of still unbroken financial fatalism, business inertia, and popular fear." Predictably, voters punished the party in power. Republicans lost a net of more than fifty House seats, eight Senate seats, six governor's mansions, and at least one chamber of the legislatures in five states. With stunning ideological precision, voters rebuked the conservative economic consensus of the 1920s by dismissing dozens of conservatives, but not a single progressive Republican from Senate and House seats. Although it appeared after the election that Republicans would narrowly hold both chambers of Congress, special elections gave Democrats a narrow majority in the new House, while Republicans clung to a single vote margin in the Senate.

The 1930 elections marked a new era in American politics as a revived Democratic Party launched the permanent campaign that continued for the four years between presidential elections, with no deference paid to the incumbent president. The Democratic National Committee set up the first enduring national party publicity bureau. Under the

direction of journalist Charles Michelson, it laid down a barrage of anti-Hoover propaganda that staggered an administration unprepared for incessant political war. Still, the Republican Party suffered relatively modest losses for the party holding the White House in a slumping economy. And Republicans still led Democrats by large margins in the party affiliations of registered voters. The most optimistic of Republicans believed that both the Depression and their political fortunes had reached rock bottom and would turn upwards during the next two years. But history was not to vindicate their belief that by 1932 a revived economy would return Americans to their senses and restore the nation's normal Republican majority.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; HOOVER, HERBERT; LONG, HUEY P.; OLSON, FLOYD B.; REPUBLICAN PARTY; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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ALLAN J. LICHTMAN

ELECTION OF 1932

The presidential election of 1932 marked a turning point in United States political and economic history. The Democratic Party, reduced to minority status following the Civil War and particularly after the financial panic of 1893, emerged as the nation's majority party with the ushering in of the New Deal. The transition from the Herbert Hoover administration to the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration also witnessed the appearance of a peacetime activist central government in response to the crisis brought on by the Great Depression.

HOOVER'S VULNERABILITIES

A successful mining engineer, Herbert Hoover had made his reputation as a humanitarian when



Franklin D. Roosevelt (in car, left) and his running mate, John Nance Garner, campaign in Peekskill, New York, in August 1932.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

he served as head of Belgian relief during World War I, and later as food administrator for President Woodrow Wilson after the United States entered the war. At war's end, both major parties considered him a presidential prospect. Hoover identified himself as a Republican and served as secretary of commerce from 1921 to 1929 during the Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge administrations. Hoover turned the Department of Commerce into a force for rationalizing the nation's economy through standardization and the elimination of waste, as well as by the promotion of cooperative activity among corporations, farmers, and trade associations.

Hoover's success as an administrator won him the Republican presidential nomination and victory over Alfred E. Smith in 1928 in a decade that valued business acumen; yet, Hoover's earlier accomplishments condemned him to criticism as president in light of his inability to counter the economic collapse. By the winter of 1932 to 1933, at least 25 percent of the nation's workforce was unemployed. The causes of the Depression were complex. Trade was stifled by a high tariff system and other protectionist mechanisms designed by European powers in order to hoard gold and hard currencies and to foster domestic employment. The Hawley-Smoot tariff, signed by Hoover in 1930, further curbed in-

ternational trade. On the domestic front, expressed in later (Keynesian) terms, the economy was crippled by demand deficiency, indicating the inability of consumers' income to absorb the output of industry. Once the Depression struck, a misguided effort by the Hoover administration and the Federal Reserve System to maintain the dollar based on its gold value led to the final and most devastating stage of the economic collapse—a massive deflation that weakened a fragile banking system.

Revisionist historians and economists since the 1960s have attempted to credit Hoover with paving the way for the interventionist state, but such a view is debatable. Hoover's response to the domestic Depression was circumscribed by his limited view of the presidency, his opposition to intrusion by the federal government in the economy, and his insistence on community responsibility for the relief of distress. As an example, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), legislated early in 1932, limited its activities to loans made for self-liquidating public works; designed to pump liquidity into the banking system, RFC lending absorbed the soundest assets of banks, weakening their capital structures. When public revenues fell and deficits grew during the 1931 to 1932 period, Hoover and his treasury secretary, Ogden L. Mills, sought cuts in expenditures and secured passage of the 1932 Revenue Act, which increased tax levels virtually to wartime rates, a move that had a negative impact on both consumption and investment.

THE NOMINATION OF ROOSEVELT

Reelection to a second term as governor of New York in 1930 put Franklin D. Roosevelt in the position of front-runner for the Democratic Party nomination. He had established himself as a progressive, and there was "magic" in the Roosevelt name. In his quest for the nomination, Roosevelt put together a political team made up of Louis M. Howe, a one-time journalist who devoted much of his life to securing the White House for Roosevelt, and James A. Farley, an affable Catholic who could appeal to the party's Smith faction. Farley's principal task was recruiting delegates for the nomination, especially in the western states, and managing the Roosevelt fortunes at the Chicago nominating convention.

But there were obstacles en route to the nomination. Roosevelt had been crippled by polio, and rumors circulated regarding his physical and mental capacities. Party conservatives, led by the financier Bernard Baruch, viewed Roosevelt as a lightweight, susceptible to control by radicals, a view widely circulated by the newspaper columnist Walter Lippmann. A Roosevelt nomination was opposed as well by the Du Pont family of Delaware, anti-statists who funded and controlled the party machinery through the national chairman, John J. Raskob, and its executive director, Jouett Shouse, and feared federal intrusion into their business empire.

In the early stages of the Chicago convention, dark-horse hopefuls banded together in a stop-Roosevelt coalition managed by Baruch. The Du Pont group looked to Al Smith, who believed he was entitled to a second chance at the White House, and to Newton D. Baker, Woodrow Wilson's secretary of war. In addition, William Gibbs McAdoo, Wilson's son-in-law and wartime administrator of the railroads, enjoyed considerable support in the Bible belt. The coalition's hopes depended on the two-thirds rule, which required that a candidate receive a two-thirds proportion of delegates to secure the nomination; the anti-Roosevelt coalition believed that a stalemate would produce a compromise (conservative) candidate, likely Baker. These aspirations were dashed when McAdoo abandoned the coalition, and John Nance Garner of Texas, speaker of the House of Representatives, relinquished his favorite son status and shifted that state's delegation to Roosevelt. Garner was determined to avoid repetition of the 1924 convention deadlock that nearly destroyed the party. Roosevelt was nominated on the fourth ballot and chose Garner as his running mate.

In his acceptance speech, Roosevelt pledged "a new deal for the American people." The term initially signified a shift away from the party's domination by big businessmen in the 1920s and towards farmers, labor, and small entrepreneurs. The expression, popularized in the press, came to encompass Roosevelt's domestic program.

THE CAMPAIGN

In the spring of 1932, Roosevelt had been persuaded by a long-time political adviser, Judge Samuel I. Rosenman, that his experience as governor had not prepared him or the Albany team for meeting the Depression crisis. The result was recruitment of the Brains Trust, headed by Raymond Moley, a Columbia University political scientist. Gifted at speech drafting, Moley proved capable as well of assimilating memoranda on economic and social issues. During the primary campaign, Roosevelt and Moley collaborated in key addresses beginning with the “forgotten man” speech, in which they pointed to massive urban unemployment and the impoverishment of rural Americans and claimed that no nation could endure half boom, half broke. In Saint Paul, Minnesota, they challenged party conservatives by affirming a “concert of interests,” or the interdependence of society’s components.

Catch-phrases and generalizations, while politically appealing, were no substitute for a substantive program designed to tackle the Depression’s causes and consequences. Thus, the Moley memorandum of May 15, 1932, delineated a program requiring expanded federal functions. Excess corporate profits, a result of improved machinery, management, and labor productivity, needed to be taxed and diverted to labor. A proposed public-works relief package of \$2.6 billion went well beyond Hoover’s estimate of some \$1.1 billion. Public works would be funded in part by an emergency budget, which Roosevelt later used as a fig leaf to claim budget balance for ordinary expenditures. Provision of unemployment and old-age insurance would cushion the economy and individuals against future downturns. Furthermore, the collapse of security values, market manipulation by pools, and the issuance of worthless paper required the divorce of commercial banking from investment banking and the regulation of securities issues and exchanges.

Given the range of expertise involved in these and other problems, Moley recruited two colleagues, Rexford Guy Tugwell and Adolf A. Berle, Jr., to form the original Brains Trust. Tugwell, an expert in agrarian issues, entered the picture on the

basis of Roosevelt’s conviction that the farm depression of the 1920s left farmers unable to meet their debts and thus unable to consume the output of industry. Roosevelt was also aware that a permanent Democratic Party majority required that the depressed Midwest be persuaded to detach itself from its traditional Republican Party moorings. Tugwell urged the candidate to consider acreage controls or the tailoring of farm output to meet market demand. Once farmers voted for acreage allotment, subvention would be provided by a tax levied on processors, superseded later by direct government payments. Berle, author of the classic *Modern Corporation and Private Property* (1932), suggested use of the credit of the United States to salvage farm and urban mortgages, a principle soon applied to the banking system. His main thesis, that of business accountability, found expression in the Commonwealth Club Speech, delivered by Roosevelt in San Francisco during the campaign.

On September 12, 1932, one of history’s most formidable political campaigners boarded the Roosevelt Special for a rail tour of the Midwest and Pacific Coast states. Roosevelt’s love of the hustings and approbation of the crowds aside, the Democratic candidate wanted to demonstrate his physical capacity for the nation’s highest office. In the process, he planned to enunciate a broad outline of his plans for meeting the Depression and to offer hope for the future. At a small Missouri town, a tiny elderly woman wearing a faded black dress, a bouquet of flowers in hand, pressed towards Roosevelt: “Pound Hoover,” she shouted as she presented her gift, “Pound him hard!”

At Topeka, Kansas, based on the input of Tugwell and Milburn L. Wilson, an agrarian economist, Roosevelt proclaimed the need for a better economic balance between rural and industrial incomes, which would require federal planning for control of the farm surplus. At Portland, Oregon, Roosevelt expressed approval of the development of the public power potential of the nation’s great river valleys, a program favored by Republican progressives who had sought federal development of Muscle Shoals, Alabama, a scheme Hoover had rejected because of his opposition to public ownership of generating facilities and the sale of electrici-

ty in competition with private utilities. Roosevelt also proposed the use of Muscle Shoals as a yardstick for measuring rates levied by holding companies, which he regarded as too high, and the regulation of capital issues and interstate rates by the Federal Power Commission. In time, he hoped, the Tennessee Valley model would be applied to the Columbia River Valley and other watershed areas.

Roosevelt's Commonwealth Club Address in San Francisco constituted his most important statement on business-government relations. Just as the Declaration of Independence called for restraint on the excesses of government, Roosevelt argued that the time had arrived to impose similar restraints on business. Private economic power, he asserted, had become a public trust. This development necessitated a new constitutional order consisting of a better economic balance, better distribution of purchasing power, restored wages, and the end of unemployment. He hoped that business would put its house in order; otherwise government would intervene to attain these ends.

On October 19th in Pittsburgh, Ohio, Roosevelt pledged, on the insistence of party conservatives led by Baruch, to restore a balanced federal budget. Fiscal prudence was widely regarded as necessary to sustain business confidence in the pre-Keynesian era. In reality, the Roosevelt peacetime budgets were never balanced as a result of declining revenues and the demands of relief and public works.

The Hoover campaign proved ineffective; the incumbent was unpopular, overworked, and a poor public speaker. The president believed he was engaged in a nonpartisan effort to salvage the American system, which, in his view, was embodied in limited government, voluntarism, and freedom from federal economic interference in the marketplace. In his August 11 speech accepting the nomination in Washington, D.C., Hoover expressed his view that the Depression originated in Europe and was beyond his control. He did not gloss over his fundamental conviction that the powers of the federal government should be limited even during times of Depression. He opposed "haphazard experimentation" or reliance on a state-directed social and economic system, which he equated with tyranny.

At New York's Madison Square Garden on October 31, with defeat at the polls imminent, Hoover claimed that his opponent's program would undermine the nation's basic institutions because it proposed the enlargement of the federal bureaucracy, which would extend its reach into every corner of American society. Roosevelt, he believed, promised a radical departure from the nation's foundations, threatening suffocation of free speech and free enterprise. Short-term, Hoover underestimated the depth and persistence of the Depression; long-term, he warned of the potential excesses of a bureaucratic welfare state.

THE ELECTION

Voters had a clear choice between two approaches for resolving the economic crisis. Hoover preferred reliance on individual effort, buttressed by private charities and local and state government. Roosevelt pledged that the federal government would assume responsibility for recovery and social sustenance. On election day, November 8, 1932, voters chose the latter option, expressing their acceptance of the interventionist state. Roosevelt won 472 electoral votes (42 states); Hoover won 59 electoral votes (6 states). The popular vote for Roosevelt was 22,809,638 (57.4%), for Hoover 15,758,901 (39.7%).

Roosevelt's sizable victory represented a sea change in American politics, for Hoover had won 60.4 percent of the popular vote only four years earlier. While Democratic candidates for the presidency could usually rely on the South, Alfred E. Smith's unsuccessful effort in 1928 nevertheless brought first-time immigrant, Catholic, and urban workers into the fold. As a result, Roosevelt bested Hoover in all but one of the nation's major urban centers, establishing the basis for a long-term New Deal majority. The farm depression cut into traditional Republican majorities in the western states. Roosevelt's buoyant personality also determined the final outcome. Hoover's voting strength was concentrated in the New England states, a Republican bastion, where he won 48.4 percent of the vote, and in the middle Atlantic region, where he won 45.4 percent of the vote. The Democratic Party won 310 seats in the House of Representatives, as opposed to 117 for

the Republicans and 5 for minority parties. The Senate vote gave the Democrats a clear majority—sixty Democratic seats to thirty-five Republican and one Farmer-Laborite.

Third party hopefuls offered no effective challenge to the major party candidates, winning only 1,163,181 votes, or 3 percent of the total cast. The largest proportion by far, 872,840 ballots, went to Norman Thomas, the Socialist Party candidate. Thomas was a minister and one-time settlement house worker who exemplified the party's departure from its radical working-class origins. By 1932, the Socialists depended for their support on intellectuals, reform-minded ministers, well-educated middle-class liberals, the Jewish leadership of the major garment workers' unions, and a sprinkling of auto workers. While vague on the issue of public ownership of basic industries, Thomas ran on a platform of massive federal funding for relief and public works, old-age pensions and unemployment insurance, government aid to farmers and homeowners, and minimum wage legislation, a program that was soon subsumed by the New Deal.

The Communist Party candidate, William Z. Foster, secured only 103,000 votes, hardly more than the Prohibition Party candidate. Riven by factionalism, unwilling to compromise with "social fascists" (meaning democratic socialists and those who held that capitalism was susceptible of reform), the Communist Party's chief support came from foreign-born workers in New York City and Chicago and exploited southern textile workers seeking unionization of the mills. Foster's campaign, based on the overthrow of capitalism as an exploitative system, pictured Hoover and Roosevelt as Tweedledum and Tweedledee. A centrist society opted for capitalism's reform.

See Also: BRAIN(S) TRUST; GARNER, JOHN NANCE; HOOVER, HERBERT; NEW DEAL; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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ELLIOT A. ROSEN

ELECTION OF 1934

The election of 1934 took place during the early stages of the electoral realignment of the 1930s. This basic change in national voting behavior brought about the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 for the first of four times, Democratic control of the United States Congress, and the creation of a Democratic majority or plurality in the electorate. The "Roosevelt Revolution," to use Samuel Lubell's term, ended a Republican-dominated era that dated back to the 1890s.

The realignment process probably began in the mid-term election of 1930, when the impact of the Great Depression first began to influence the political process. In that election Democrats gained control of the House of Representatives for the first time since the election of 1916. In the Senate, where only one-third of the membership was up for election, Republicans maintained the thinnest of margins for one more Congress despite the election of eight new Democrats. It was the first of a series of

Democratic victories that established Democratic control of both houses of the United States Congress with only a few exceptions until the final decades of the twentieth century. In his first election, in 1932, Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated the incumbent President Herbert Hoover with 57.4 percent of the popular vote, and the Democrats won substantial majorities in the House of Representatives and the Senate. Probably any one of the leading Democratic candidates for the nomination in 1932 could have defeated Hoover, given the severity of the economic collapse, so it is not clear that a Democratic realignment had in fact occurred at that point. As the authors of *The American Voter* have suggested, if Roosevelt and the New Deal program had failed to win the support of a substantial portion of the electorate by the mid-1930s, voter behavior could have reverted to the voting patterns of the 1920s (Campbell et al. 1960). In other words, a permanent realignment of the electorate depended upon the success of Roosevelt's administration and a series of Democratic victories to persuade voters to repeatedly vote Democratic and begin to think of themselves as Democrats.

Much depended, then, upon the success of Roosevelt's New Deal. Beginning immediately upon his inauguration, Roosevelt led the Congress in the enactment of an unprecedented flood of legislation to deal with the Depression. This list included the Emergency Banking Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Civilian Conservation Corps Reforestation Act, the act that created the Tennessee Valley Authority, the National Industrial Recovery Act, and the Federal Emergency Relief Act. At its close, precisely one hundred days after it first met, the first Roosevelt Congress had enacted more important legislation in a shorter time period than any Congress in U. S. history.

The election of 1934 was the first national election held after the passage of the legislation of the hundred days. It was and still is a rule of U. S. politics that the party that won the previous presidential election should expect to lose congressional seats in the following mid-term election, but in 1934 the Democratic Party substantially increased its majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. In the Congress elected in 1934,

Democrats added to their already overwhelming majority in the Senate with a net increase of nine seats. Republicans actually lost ten seats—nine to the Democrats and one to Wisconsin Senator Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., who, along with his brother Philip LaFollette, broke with the Republican organization to form the Progressive Party. Thus the party distribution in the Senate when the 75th Congress met in 1935 was sixty-nine Democrats, twenty-five Republicans and one Progressive.

Democratic victories in the Senate were focused in the Northeast (Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island), the Midwest (Indiana and Ohio) and the border states (Maryland, Missouri, and West Virginia). Many of the new Senate Democrats elected in 1934 were northern liberals eager to add their support to Roosevelt and the New Deal, including Joseph F. Guffey, the first Democrat from Pennsylvania to serve in the Senate since 1881. Guffey would become a loyal New Dealer and the cosponsor of the Guffey-Snyder Bituminous Coal Conservation Act of 1935, one of several New Deal laws struck down by the Supreme Court in 1936. The group also included Missouri Senator Harry S. Truman, who would become vice president in 1944 and president upon the death of Roosevelt in 1945.

Results of the election of 1934 in the House of Representatives were similar. In the 75th House, Democrats had a majority of 319 seats. The Republicans controlled 103 seats, and there were three members of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and seven Wisconsin Progressives. This total represented a net Democratic increase of eight seats. The primary source of new seats was Pennsylvania, where the number of Democratic seats increased by twelve. Excluding changes resulting from vacant seats, Democrats also gained two seats in California, Connecticut, Illinois, and Massachusetts, and one in Wyoming. Again excluding vacancies, Republicans picked up five seats in Michigan and one seat in Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oregon. The Republicans also won two seats in 1934 from the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota, but in Wisconsin the Progressive Party captured House seats from both major parties—five from the Republicans and two from the Democrats.

With a few exceptions, Democratic gains in 1934 were concentrated in the states with large urban populations, and most losses (except those in Michigan) were in more rural, less populated states.

In the gubernatorial elections Democratic candidates won elections from Republicans in four states (Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, and Pennsylvania), but lost three states to the Republicans (Maryland, Michigan and New Jersey). In Wisconsin the Democratic incumbent lost to Philip LaFollette, who, having lost a bid for re-election in the 1932 Republican primary, won on the Progressive ticket. The only other successful third-party candidate for governor in 1934 was incumbent governor Floyd B. Olson, the Farmer-Labor candidate, who was re-elected in Minnesota. In California, Upton Sinclair, the author of *The Jungle* and a lifelong socialist, also attracted much attention by winning the 1934 Democratic gubernatorial primary on a program he called End Poverty in California. Sinclair's views were far to the left of those of both President Roosevelt and the California Democratic organization; failing to get their support, Sinclair lost decisively to a Republican. Even though the gubernatorial election returns in 1934 could be described as a draw, after the election Democratic governors controlled the state houses of thirty-eight of the forty-eight states and the Republicans controlled only eight.

Many New Deal Democrats concluded from the election results that the voting public had resoundingly endorsed the leadership of President Roosevelt and the legislation of early New Deal. Harry Hopkins, one of the leading figures in the Roosevelt administration, summed up the reaction of many New Dealers with his often quoted observation: "Boys—this is our hour. We've got to get everything we want—a works program, social security, wages and hours, everything—now or never" (Leuchtenburg 1963, p. 117). Most of Hopkins's expectations were realized as the 75th Congress in 1935 enacted some of the New Deal's most significant laws, including the Social Security Act, the National Labor Relations Act, and the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act.

The election of 1934 was a milestone in the voter realignment of the 1930s. Those who voted

Democratic in 1934 and in the other elections of the decade were predominantly new voters concentrated in urban, industrial areas. These new Democrats were largely working-class, low-income voters—many of them first- or second-generation immigrants, in many cases Catholics and Jews from southern and eastern Europe. They were among those who suffered most from the unemployment of the 1930s, and they constituted a major source of support that made the Roosevelt Revolution possible.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA (EPIC); LA FOLLETTE, PHILIP; LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.; MINNESOTA FARMER-LABOR PARTY; OLSON, FLOYD B.; REPUBLICAN PARTY; SINCLAIR, UPTON; WISCONSIN PROGRESSIVE PARTY.

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HOWARD W. ALLEN

ELECTION OF 1936

The crushing defeat by Democratic President Franklin D. Roosevelt of his Republican challenger



Banners flew in support of Roosevelt and Garner in Hardwick, Vermont, in September 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Alfred M. Landon in the presidential election of 1936 was a watershed in American politics. In political terms, it brought together northern wageworkers and southern racial conservatives in an uneasy coalition that was to provide a relatively stable electoral base for the Democratic Party until the 1960s, when disagreements over civil rights, social welfare, and the control of organized labor could no longer be kept off the national agenda. In ideological terms, the election amounted to a referendum on whether the new interventionist welfare state should replace the laissez-faire state that had dominated politics since the early twentieth century. In class terms, the Democratic and Republican parties were more sharply divided on economic and social issues than ever before (with the possible exception of 1896) and the struggle between the parties was often couched in the rhetoric of class conflict, a struggle between the wealthier classes and those

seeking a more just and equitable share of American economic wealth and power.

ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW DEAL COALITION

By November 1936, the New Deal had reached its high point. Important reform measures had been enacted into law, including such landmark legislation as the Agricultural Adjustment Act (1933), the National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), the Securities Exchange Act (1934), the Banking Act (1935), the Social Security Act (1935), and the National Labor Relations Act (1935). While economic recovery would prove elusive until the early 1940s, by the fall of 1936 Roosevelt could point to the fact that nearly six million jobs had been created, industrial output had doubled, corporate profitability had risen from a \$2 billion deficit in 1933 to a \$5 billion surplus in 1936, and New Deal agencies were well

on the way to providing relief and assistance to the forty-five million people (35 percent of the population) they were to aid by the end of the decade.

While scholarly debate has raged about the purposes and achievements of the New Deal, the American people perceived it as having alleviated the worst effects of the Depression. Roosevelt's popularity soared and people saw him as a strong and compassionate leader, one who genuinely cared about their welfare and one who had attempted to democratize government by employing racial, ethnic, and religious minorities in unprecedented numbers. Most importantly, Roosevelt was seen as the defender of the common person against the selfish and atavistic business community that seemed intent on destroying the New Deal's attempts to help the poor and marginalized.

Though Roosevelt had come to power in March 1933 with broad popular support and had attempted to forge an alliance that transcended class boundaries, by mid-1936 the administration had abandoned its conciliatory approach to business and adopted a more anti-business, pro-labor orientation intended to redistribute wealth and power to those outside the mainstream of the American power structure. The disaffection of business leaders with the president began with unease over their lack of power within the National Recovery Administration (NRA) early in Roosevelt's first term, and it continued to escalate as Roosevelt rhetorically pushed "soak-the-rich" taxation, public utilities reform, and social security legislation. The split between Roosevelt and business became an unbridgeable chasm after the labor unrest of 1935 and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (also known as the Wagner Act). The Wagner Act was particularly odious to business because it provided workers with the means of compelling employers to recognize unions that had won representative elections and it outlawed company unions and a number of other unfair labor practices.

By the 1936 election, therefore, most business leaders were firmly committed to a Republican victory and provided up to 80 percent of the \$8.8 million that Republicans spent on the campaign. Prominent business people also supported a variety of anti-New Deal organizations, with the du Pont,

Pitcairn, Morgan, Rockefeller, and Hutton groups providing 90 percent of their funding. The du Pont family alone provided 25 percent of the funding for the most prominent anti-Roosevelt organization, the American Liberty League. Business also funded the attempts of dissident conservative Democrats, who formed the National Jefferson Democrats in August 1936, to unseat Roosevelt.

Roosevelt wished to take full electoral advantage of these class antagonisms, and his campaign staff was directed to focus attention on symbols of corporate wealth and privilege rather than the Republican Party itself. Roosevelt mentioned the Democratic Party by name no more than three times throughout the campaign, and he supported progressive candidates such as Senator George Norris of Nebraska even when it meant supporting Republicans over Democrats. In campaign speeches across the nation, Roosevelt trumpeted the achievements of the New Deal and denounced the shortsighted and self-seeking "economic royalists" in big business, banking, and Republican-owned newspapers, who had changed the American economy into "privileged enterprise not free enterprise." Roosevelt's rhetoric indicated that he was willing to use the power of the federal government to protect ordinary Americans against the "economic tyranny" of wealthy business leaders.

As part of his winning electoral strategy, Roosevelt institutionalized the "New Deal coalition" that had begun to emerge as early as 1928. By the presidential election of 1936, the Democratic Party's electoral base rested largely upon the support of the "Solid" South, northern cities, immigrants, African Americans, ethnic and non-Protestant religious groups, women, working people, and organized labor. The shift in African-American allegiance from the Republicans to the Democrats was particularly significant because their migration from the South had increased their political power in northern cities. The move of organized labor into the Democratic camp was also momentous. Previously constrained by a hostile state and conservative craft leadership, the dynamic and militant leaders of the new industrial unions had presided over dramatic increases in union membership. They were eager to protect their hard

won gains (particularly the Wagner Act) and thus became a crucial source of votes, campaign workers, and finance. Given the hostility of business, union campaign contributions were decisive and it has been estimated that organized labor provided more than \$800,000 to Roosevelt's reelection, nearly 16 percent of total Democratic campaign expenditures. Indeed, in 1936 the Democrats received most of their campaign contributions from the same place as their votes, namely, the emerging New Deal coalition.

ALF LANDON AND THE REPUBLICAN CHALLENGE

The man given the unenviable task of trying to unseat President Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936 was Alfred Mossman Landon, the forty-eight year old Republican governor of Kansas. Having narrowly won the gubernatorial election in 1932, he was the only Republican governor in the nation to win reelection in 1934, a fact that immediately propelled him into the race for the Republican nomination for the presidency. With the newspapers of publisher William Randolph Hearst giving him national exposure, Landon had little difficulty in securing the nomination at the Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, in June 1936, and he immediately named conservative Chicago publisher Frank Knox as his running mate.

Landon's political and economic views were less conservative than the majority in his own party. As governor, he had attempted to maintain balanced budgets while also recognizing the importance to his state of the federal money pouring in through various New Deal programs, and he had spoken in favorable terms about the general purposes of the New Deal. But Landon's strategic dilemma was how to avoid alienating supporters of the New Deal while also projecting a sharply focused identity that distinguished him from Roosevelt in the eyes of the electorate. Republicans thought he would win votes in the farm states of the Midwest and hoped that his unpretentious down-home style would appeal to voters disillusioned with the urbane sophistication of Roosevelt.

At the outset of the campaign, Landon emphasized his more liberal qualities despite the ferocious

attack launched by the Republican right on the New Deal. But as the campaign progressed, Landon showed that there were limits to his liberalism. His campaign speeches raised the terrifying specter of government intrusion into private life and attacked the "communistic" drift of the Roosevelt administration. By October 1936, as opinion polls showed Roosevelt gaining a significant lead (with the exception of the infamous *Literary Digest* poll that predicted a Landon landslide), Landon's attacks on the New Deal became increasingly extreme. However, by then it had become clear that Landon's only hope of victory was if third parties could attract votes away from the president.

POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES TO ROOSEVELT ON THE LEFT AND RIGHT

The success of the New Deal in ameliorating the worst effects of the capitalist system without destroying it had undermined support for parties of the left and right who might have expected a political windfall given the economic and social crisis generated by the Depression. The Communist Party, whose membership grew from seven thousand in 1930 to nearly 100,000 in 1939, developed strong grassroots support during its principled struggles for southern textile workers, Appalachian mineworkers, and civil rights, as well as through the party's involvement in union organizing. But its electoral impact was minimal due to internal doctrinal disputes, high membership turnover, and the Popular Front strategy adopted in 1936, which urged support for liberal and social democratic parties against the menace of fascism. The Socialist Party fared even worse, with membership collapsing to only 6,500 in 1937 from a high of around twenty thousand in 1931, and the party's appeal was muted by ideological disputes, lack of a working-class base, and its electoral opposition to Roosevelt. Both parties found that leftist political convictions merged easily with the policies and programs of the New Deal, and radicals discovered by 1936 that some of their ideological commitments could be represented in the new Democratic Party coalition.

Opposition from new domestic demagogues was a far more potent electoral force than were the traditional parties of the left in 1936, and the Roose-

velt campaign was deeply concerned about the populist appeal of demagogues, such as radio priest Father Charles Coughlin, pension movement leader Francis Townsend, and "Share the Wealth" leader Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith, who had assumed leadership of the organization following the assassination of Senator Huey Long of Louisiana in September 1935. In June 1936, these forces came together to form the Union Party, which nominated Representative William E. Lemke of North Dakota for the presidency. Despite the Union Party's ostensibly progressive and populist leanings, liberals sensed its conservative proclivities and many voters were repelled by the party's growing anti-Semitism and its vitriolic personal attacks on Roosevelt. Ultimately, the demagogues were unable to counteract the enormous loyalty Roosevelt engendered among ordinary voters who had benefited from the New Deal.

ELECTION RESULTS

Roosevelt's campaign manager Jim Farley had predicted that Roosevelt would win every state on November 3 except for Maine and Vermont. What initially appeared a wildly optimistic prediction turned out to be uncannily accurate. Turnout was high as 83 percent of eligible voters (around forty-six million Americans) cast a ballot, with Roosevelt receiving 27,751,841 votes compared to Landon's 16,679,491. Roosevelt received 60.8 percent of the popular vote and the plurality (11,072,350) was the largest in presidential election history. This gave Roosevelt the largest victory in the electoral college (523 to 8) since James Monroe's unopposed reelection in 1820. The results were equally convincing in the congressional elections, where Democrats won large majorities in the Senate (75–16) and the House of Representatives (331–88). The third-party threat failed to materialize as Union Party candidate William Lemke received only 892,763 votes (2 percent of the vote), Socialist candidate Norman Thomas won 187,342 votes (0.4 percent of the vote, down from the 2.2 percent he received in 1932), and Communist Party candidate Earl Browder won only 80,000 votes.

Furthermore, Roosevelt won 76 percent of lower income voters (but only 42 percent of upper

income voters), 81 percent of unskilled laborers, 80 percent of union members, 84 percent of relief recipients, 76 percent of northern African Americans, between 70 and 81 percent of Catholics, and 86 percent of the Jewish vote. Roosevelt ran well in the South and West, but for the first time the northern cities emerged as the real power brokers in the Democratic Party. Roosevelt won 104 of America's cities with populations of 100,000 or more; Landon won two. The results have been heralded as one of the most striking examples of critical realignment in the twentieth century, a seismic shift in voting patterns that redefined the basis of political loyalties for a generation. Debate has raged, however, about whether the results signify that the Democrats were able to convert large numbers of voters from the Republican Party or rather that the Democrats were able to mobilize many first-time voters, particularly in immigrant communities. Whatever the outcome of such debates, there can be little doubt that the 1936 presidential election was a pivotal moment in American political history, marking one of the few occasions when a coalition of minorities normally outside the American power structure was able to exert a significant influence on the political process.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; GARNER, JOHN NANCE; LANDON, ALFRED M.; NEW DEAL; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; SOCIALIST PARTY; UNION PARTY.

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MICHAEL J. WEBBER

ELECTION OF 1938

In the 1938 congressional primaries, President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought party realignment along ideological lines by advocating the defeat of selected conservative Democratic senators and representatives. His efforts largely failed, as conservatives gained strength in Congress in the 1938 election.

In 1936 President Roosevelt had won a second presidential term by a landslide and had helped the Democrats widen their overwhelming congressional majorities. He interpreted the outcome as a mandate to complete his New Deal reform package. In his January 1937 inaugural address, he had urged Congress to adopt more comprehensive New Deal programs for "ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished" Americans.

The Roosevelt administration entered the 1938 election campaign on the defensive. During the 75th Congress, conservative Democrats had aligned with Republicans to prevent Roosevelt from attaining his New Deal reform programs. The con-

servative coalition, which protested the expansion of federal power and especially executive authority, had rejected Roosevelt's U. S. Supreme Court and executive reorganization plans and had stalled other New Deal reform measures. The economic recession of 1937 and 1938 had weakened Roosevelt's position further and made his New Deal programs more vulnerable to attack. Democrats were expected to lose congressional seats as presidential parties had done in every off-year election since the Civil War except 1902 and 1934.

ROOSEVELT ANNOUNCES PARTY REALIGNMENT PLANS

President Roosevelt denounced the conservative coalition tactics as undemocratic and intolerable. He considered the 1938 primaries an opportune time to remove anti-New Deal Democrats from the party and bring conservatives in line with the party's national platform. In a June 1938 fireside chat, Roosevelt publicly announced his intentions to campaign for liberals in selected Democratic congressional primaries and inform Americans about which candidates supported his New Deal programs. He backed twenty-one of the thirty-one Democratic senators seeking reelection. The president, who complained that the 75th Congress had not fulfilled his party's "uncompromisingly liberal" 1936 platform, pictured the primaries and elections as ideological contests between New Deal liberals and anti-New Deal conservatives. As Democratic party leader, he declared, "I feel that I have every right to speak in those few instances where there may be a clear issue between candidates for a Democratic nomination involving those principles, or involving a clear misuse of my name." Roosevelt's realignment strategy encountered several problems. Besides belatedly launching his party realignment effort, Roosevelt did not define what he meant by a conservative or indicate what specific strategy he would utilize. White House assistants Tom Corcoran, Harold Ickes, and Harry Hopkins supported the president's tactics, but other advisors dissented. Newspapers accused Roosevelt of attempting to purge conservative Democrats. The president did not organize his strategy well, adopting various tactics as he zigzagged across the nation by train.

Roosevelt targeted for defeat ten conservative Democratic senators: Alva Adams of Colorado, George Berry of Tennessee, Bennett Champ Clark of Missouri, Walter George of Georgia, Guy Gillette of Iowa, Augustus Lonergan of Connecticut, Pat McCarran of Nevada, Ellison Smith of South Carolina, Millard Tydings of Maryland, and Frederick Van Nuys of Indiana. Political leaders quickly convinced Roosevelt that four of the targeted candidates could not be removed. The president did not, therefore, intervene in the primaries involving Adams, Clark, Lonergan, or McCarran, all of whom won party renomination. Several New Deal Democrats endorsed by President Roosevelt triumphed in primaries. Congressman Lister Hill defeated segregationist J. Thomas Heflin in Alabama, while Senator Claude Pepper withstood conservative challenger J. Mark Wilcox in Florida. Senate majority leader Alben Barkley outpolled conservative governor Happy Chandler in Kentucky. Senators Hattie Caraway of Arkansas, Robert Bulkley of Ohio, and Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma and Representative Lyndon Johnson of Texas also won their primaries. The president campaigned against New York representative John O'Connor, helping James Fay oust the conservative House Rules Committee chairman.

THE 1938 PRIMARIES AND ELECTION

Roosevelt's party realignment efforts, however, suffered setbacks in key midwestern and western Senate primaries. The Roosevelt administration campaigned in Iowa for liberal congressman Otha Wearin against incumbent Guy Gillette, who had opposed the president's court plan. Gillette, solidly backed by the state party organization, easily withstood Wearin's challenge. The Indiana Democratic party organization could not find a New Dealer to unseat the moderate Van Nuys. Conservative congressman D. Worth Clark benefited from Republican crossover votes to upset Senator James Pope in the Idaho primary.

The most critical setbacks for Roosevelt came in southern Senate primaries, where Roosevelt had intervened most directly, speaking on behalf of lesser known liberal Democrats against conservative incumbents George of Georgia, Smith of South

Carolina, and Tydings of Maryland. At a Democratic meeting in Barnesville, Georgia, Roosevelt backed youthful attorney Lawrence Camp against George. George, however, nearly doubled Camp's vote total in a three-way primary. In Greenville, South Carolina, the president endorsed Governor Olin Johnston against agriculture committee chairman Smith. Smith, a states' rights segregationist and senator since 1909, won his primary, in part because of reaction against Roosevelt's intervention. Roosevelt stumped Maryland for two days in support of Representative David Lewis, who was running against Tydings. Tydings, nonetheless, easily prevailed in the primary. In the House, liberal Maury Maverick of Texas was unseated and House rules committee conservative Howard Smith of Virginia handily won renomination.

Roosevelt launched his party realignment strategy too late for it to be effective and he damaged his prestige with his impulsive effort. Ten of the twenty-five Democratic Senate candidates with prior voting records on national legislation were conservatives, showing Roosevelt's vulnerability. The president did not plan his strategy well, varied his tactics too much from state to state, and relied too heavily on often divided state party organizations. The American electorate disapproved of interference by federal officials in state politics and prevented the personally popular Roosevelt from realigning the political parties ideologically. The primaries stiffened conservative resistance and intensified the liberal-conservative split within his party. Roosevelt did not attempt again to develop a strong liberal party.

That November the Democrats retained sixty-nine seats and controlled over two-thirds of the Senate. Lonergan was the lone conservative Democrat to lose. The Republicans kept all their Senate incumbents and gained eight Senate seats, six of them replacing New Deal Democrats. Robert Taft unseated Bulkley in Ohio and quickly emerged as a Republican leader. The president thus faced a Senate that included twenty-three Republicans and twenty to thirty anti-New Deal Democrats. Although the Democrats maintained a comfortable majority in the House, holding 260 seats, the New Deal coalition was crippled, as public opinion shift-

ed in a more conservative direction. The seventy defeated House Democrats were mostly liberals from industrial northeastern and midwestern states. Most anti-New Deal Democrats won reelection. Around eighty Democrats held at least strong reservations about New Deal reform programs. The Republicans gained eighty House seats, nearly doubling their strength from eighty-nine to 169, with thirteen governorships. Liberal governors Philip LaFollette of Wisconsin, Frank Murphy of Michigan, Elmer Benson of Minnesota, and George Earle of Pennsylvania lost reelection bids, while Republicans John Bricker of Ohio, Leverett Saltonstall of Massachusetts, and Harold Stassen of Minnesota won governorships. In Roosevelt's home state of New York, Thomas Dewey attracted national attention by nearly defeating incumbent Governor Herbert Lehman.

THE DRIVE FOR POLITICAL REFORM

Irregularities in three 1938 senatorial campaigns provoked the Hatch Act of 1939, regulating the political involvement of federal employees in primaries and elections. Several New Deal liberals who were either seeking renomination or attempting to unseat conservative incumbents were accused of manipulating the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to enhance their electoral prospects. In the Kentucky primary, WPA authorities had solicited \$24,000 in contributions from WPA employees to help Barkley defeat Chandler. Party officials had raised these funds directly, with WPA personnel being canvassed to ascertain their political affiliations. In neighboring Tennessee, WPA administrators had requested numerous donations from WPA workers to help insure the triumph of New Dealer Thomas Stewart over Berry in the primary. Democratic senatorial aspirants had benefited from political malpractices in the November election against Republican candidates. The Pennsylvania WPA director had manipulated WPA finances in an unsuccessful attempt to help Governor Earle unseat incumbent James Davis. Besides selling tickets to WPA workers at party gatherings, WPA administrators had ordered many Republican employees to change their registration to Democratic.

Disclosures from the Senate campaign expenditures committee in January 1939 intensified the drive for reform. The committee, led by Democrat Morris Sheppard of Texas, upheld accusations that WPA officials diverted relief funds for political purposes in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania. They spiked similar allegations concerning congressional races in Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio. The Committee recommended legislation prohibiting government officials from either soliciting or receiving contributions from WPA workers and other federal employees. The Hatch Act of 1939 banned the assessment or solicitation of funds from WPA employees or removal of any personnel because of refusal to change political affiliation. Federal officials and workers were prevented from using their positions to interfere in presidential or congressional primaries or elections.

Following the 1938 election, the conservative coalition controlled both the Senate and the House. Conservative Democrats aligned with Republicans to stymie any Roosevelt initiatives and to search for ways to reduce New Deal programs. In 1939, Congress slashed WPA appropriations, authorized an investigation of the National Labor Relations Board, and rejected self-liquidating projects and housing bills. The failure of party realignment diminished Roosevelt's personal power because he was serving the final two years of what most Americans expected to be his last presidential term. Roosevelt denied that the election was a rejection of his domestic reform program, but the New Deal remained on the defensive in Congress.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; FIRESIDE CHATS; PEPPER, CLAUDE; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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DAVID L. PORTER

ELECTION OF 1940

In the election of 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated Republican nominee Wendell L. Willkie to win an unprecedented third term in the White House. Carrying 54.8 percent of the popular vote to Willkie's 44.8 percent (27.3 million votes to 22.3 million), Roosevelt won thirty-eight of the forty-eight states and 449 of the 531 votes in the Electoral College. Democrats retained substantial majorities in both houses of Congress.

The election of 1940 came at the juncture of the Great Depression and World War II. Unemployment remained at 17 percent in the United States early in 1940, but after Europe went to war in Sep-

tember 1939, and especially after the Nazi *blitzkrieg* overran Western Europe in the spring of 1940, the American defense program began to galvanize the economy. At the same time, national attention turned increasingly to defense and foreign policy. The election thus provided the first major test of the new Democratic majority, forged in the much different context of the hard times and domestic concerns of the Depression decade.

The war affected American politics throughout 1940, perhaps most importantly in determining the presidential nominees. Early in the year, Roosevelt seemed uncertain about his intentions, but the international situation evidently convinced him to run again and made the public willing to support a third term. Among Republican candidates, the war in Europe made Ohio Senator Robert A. Taft seem too isolationist and New York district attorney Thomas E. Dewey too young; utilities magnate Willkie, a dynamic dark-horse candidate, won the nomination. Democrats nominated Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace for vice president, while Republicans chose Oregon Senator Charles McNary.

Willkie and the Republicans tried without much success to capitalize on the third term issue, and they had little more success with charges that Roosevelt's anti-Axis policies were leading the United States to war. Responding to Republican accusations that he intended to enter the war, Roosevelt memorably declared that "I have said this before, but I shall say it again and again and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars." For his part, Roosevelt stressed the improving economic situation and the New Deal's emphasis on employment, economic security, and rising living standards—issues that opinion surveys indicated remained central to public concerns and voting decisions.

The outcome of the election reflected not only the impact of the war but also powerful continuities from the politics of the Depression decade. Roosevelt's margin fell below that of 1936 when he had won 60.8 percent of the vote, partly because of diminished support among isolationists, especially in the Midwest, and among Irish Americans, German Americans, and Italian Americans unhappy about

American foreign policy. The president also lost ground among wealthy voters opposed to the New Deal. Roosevelt gained some strength among supporters of his internationalist, anti-Axis policies, and his experience as president was reassuring given the global situation, but his victory came above all from the millions of working-class and lower-middle-class voters who continued to see him as the architect of the New Deal and the guarantor of security. Voting patterns, like party images, thus remained substantially like those of the 1930s, and the New Deal coalition of urban, working-class, lower-middle-class, ethnic, black, and white southern voters remained mostly intact; indeed it was solidified by the politics of 1940.

See Also: ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; WALLACE, HENRY A.; WILLKIE, WENDELL; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION.

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JOHN W. JEFFRIES

ELLINGTON, DUKE

Bandleader and composer Edward Kennedy Ellington (April 29, 1899–May 24, 1974) was born in Washington, D.C., of middle-class parents. Young Ellington's dignified bearing earned him the nickname "Duke." Drawn in his teens to ragtime piano, he began to play for money and to compose. At nineteen, married with an infant son, Ellington organized a band that included the drummer Sonny

Greer, saxophonist Toby Hardwick, and trumpeter Arthur Whetsol. In 1923 they moved to New York City and worked in Harlem nightclubs. Assuming leadership, Ellington added the trumpeter Bubber Miley and studied with the veteran composers Will Vodery and Will Marion Cook. He also gained an able white manager, Irving Mills. The orchestra made its first recordings in 1926, and the following year began its residence at Harlem's exclusive Cotton Club.

Ellington continued to build his band, hiring the clarinetist Barney Bigard, trombonist Sam Nanton, and saxophonist Johnny Hodges. Their work in the Cotton Club's famed "jungle revues" helped to publicize Ellington's increasingly innovative recorded compositions. These numbers cannily exploited his soloists' distinctive sounds and blended them in harmonically striking ensemble passages. Hodges, Greer, Nanton, and some later recruits remained with Ellington for decades, allowing him to mold his band into a unique "instrument." The orchestra was a Harlem institution, performing at fundraisers for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and at other community functions, and Ellington became Harlem's self-styled musical chronicler and spokesman. His band soon gained a national radio audience, and in 1931 he joined an African-American delegation that met with President Herbert Hoover.

Ellington left the Cotton Club that year. After classical musicians compared his compositions favorably to those of the French Impressionists, he began to create extended concert works, including *Creole Rhapsody* and *Reminiscing in Tempo*. Wildly successful European tours also stimulated this work, but his success continued to lie with popular dance numbers and ballads. Some of them, such as "Concerto for Cootie" (written for the trumpeter Cootie Williams), showcased his soloists, while others (such as "Take the A Train") were written by Billy Strayhorn, a young arranger who quickly became indispensable to Ellington. Despite Ellington's popularity as a leader, composer, and pianist, he had to contend with society's racism and with discrimination in the music business. He valued Mills's assistance, but the latter also demanded a share of writing credit and royalties from Elling-

ton's songs, and in 1939 the two parted ways. At great expense Ellington used a private railroad car for his constant touring (to avoid segregated accommodations) and established his own music publishing company. He was outspoken in interviews and occasional written pieces about the burdens of prejudice, and he remained dedicated to celebrating the black experience in music.

The saxophonist Ben Webster and the bassist Jimmy Blanton augmented the great band of the late 1930s, resulting in what are generally regarded as its finest recordings (1939–1941). Ellington's personnel choices and extraordinary compositions of the 1930s were the foundation for the rest of his career, which, despite uneven commercial fortunes, produced an astonishing body of concert and popular works and achieved worldwide fame and respect.

See Also: ANDERSON, MARIAN; BIG BAND MUSIC; HOLIDAY, BILLIE; JAZZ; MUSIC.

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BURTON W. PERETTI

EMERGENCY RELIEF AND CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1932

The Emergency Relief and Construction Act (ERCA) of 1932, signed by President Hoover on July 27, 1932, appropriated funds for federal relief loans to the states and new public works construction. While the public works provisions of the law proved to be a disappointment, the \$300 million relief appropriation financed the first large-scale federal public welfare program in American history.

Two forces combined to produce the congressional majorities that approved the law: mounting



Duke Ellington, performing with his band in New York City in 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

political pressure for new public works construction and the collapse of state and local relief programs then assisting the unemployed. Numerous congressional proposals for expanded public works spending had surfaced in 1930 and 1931. Even Hoover's own relief officials had initially supported a large public employment program. At the same time, supporters of direct federal relief to the unemployed through local welfare agencies garnered considerable support for a measure that would have provided \$375 million in relief grants to the states (the so-called LaFollette-Costigan Bill introduced in Congress in December 1931). Hoover and moderates in Congress had opposed both these measures, instead advocating voluntarist alternatives such as the private fund drive organized by the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief.

By the spring of 1932, however, it was clear that the large emergency relief organizations in cities

such as Chicago and Philadelphia would collapse without federal aid. On May 12, Hoover announced that he would enlarge the coffers of the newly created Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) to provide funds for public works and relief loans to the states. There followed a politically charged debate over the scope of the public works program and the policies of the RFC, but there now existed a consensus about the need for direct relief aid. In late July, with relief having been discontinued in Philadelphia and on the verge of collapse in Chicago, Hoover signed the ERCA.

The ERCA allocated \$322 million for federal public works and authorized the RFC to provide funds for “self-liquidating” state, local, and private public works. The law also allocated \$300 million in direct relief loans to local welfare agencies through states. These loans were to be repaid through deductions from future federal highway funds. The implementation of the public works provisions of the law proved to be a disappointment to the public works lobby. States and municipalities hesitated to apply for the funds, which would place them further in debt, and the administration was also slow to allocate the \$322 million for federal public works.

The impact of the provisions for direct relief, however, was significant. Federal aid financed the bulk of relief during the winter of 1932–1933. RFC aid not only bailed out large urban relief organizations on the verge of collapse, it also financed a significant expansion of relief in smaller industrial communities and rural regions that had supplied relatively little relief prior to 1932. The RFC was forced to play a more active role in policymaking and administration than had been intended when the law was passed. Federal funds helped finance new state-level relief organizations and federal officials played key roles in lobbying for new state welfare appropriations.

By the time Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated, the federal government was financing over 60 percent of all relief nationally. In the end, the \$300 million in relief loans to the states was never repaid, and the federal government had permanently entered the field of public assistance.

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT; RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION (RFC).

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EMERGENCY RELIEF APPROPRIATION ACT OF 1935

The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 was the New Deal’s effort to end the “dole” and replace it with public employment. The act appropriated approximately \$4.8 billion to finance the last months of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and initiate what became the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

The administration’s decision to replace relief with the WPA reflected the values of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his relief administrator, Harry Hopkins. Both believed that relief demoralized the unemployed and produced a condition of dependency. Furthermore, most unemployed workers preferred work relief to the direct “dole.” The end of the Civil Works Administration (CWA) in the spring of 1934 had produced a mass protest movement that demanded work instead of a return to direct relief, and protest organizations proliferated under the “work program” of the FERA, which replaced the CWA. But work relief was enormously expensive and was opposed by influential New Dealers who feared that it would unbalance the federal budget. Roosevelt, despite his clear preference for public employment, shared this concern and terminated the CWA. The end of civil works produced a debate within the administration between “spenders,” who favored public employment, and fiscal conservatives who opposed it.

In the end, Roosevelt came to support public employment because he feared that the high feder-

al relief caseload, which by the end of 1934 approached five million, would create a permanent federal “dole.” In October he began meeting with key advisers to plan a new work program to replace relief. By the end of December the administration had determined to ask Congress for \$4.8 billion, approximately two-thirds of which to finance work relief and the rest to draw down the FERA. The program would not be administratively linked to the Social Security Act, the administration’s proposed “permanent program” to deal with “economic insecurity.” Public employment would be a temporary policy to deal with the Depression crisis, not a permanent public employment program.

The administration’s proposal to Congress at first appeared to be adequately funded and have broad-based political support. Eight hundred million dollars would be sufficient to phase out the relief program during the summer of 1935, leaving \$4 billion to employ approximately 3.5 million former relief recipients (70 percent of the FERA caseload). The remaining relief recipients, termed “unemployables,” would be returned to the states, which would receive some federal relief aid under the Social Security Act.

But the transition from relief to public employment in 1935 encountered political and administrative obstacles that seriously undermined the policy. First, the appropriation bill was delayed in Congress by demands from organized labor that the program pay prevailing wage rates. Then congressional leaders insisted on allocating the portions of the appropriation to specific employment categories and federal agencies, making it much more difficult to implement a smooth transition from the existing relief program. When the bill finally passed in the late spring, a battle erupted between the FERA’s Harry Hopkins and Harold Ickes, the interior secretary and director of the PWA, over control of the program. The conflict between Hopkins and Ickes was not only a power struggle; it was a debate over whether the new program should resemble public works, with capital intensive projects employing relatively little relief labor, or work relief, which employed more recipients but often seemed to be “made work.”

By September 1935 the administration’s new program appeared on the verge of collapse. Less

than one-quarter of the projected 3.5 million workers had been employed and barely \$1 billion of the original appropriation remained unallocated. To meet the crisis, Roosevelt handed the remaining funds to Harry Hopkins, who quickly began to transfer work relief projects to the program that came to be known as the WPA. By the end of December, nearly three million workers were on the WPA payrolls and the administration declared its program “99 7/8% successful.” But the smaller than expected WPA employment levels left a large relief burden for the states, generating an on-going crisis in the emerging state public welfare system of the late 1930s. The WPA, by contrast, proved enormously popular and contributed to Roosevelt’s resounding victory in the 1936 election.

See Also: FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA); HOPKINS, HARRY; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA (EPIC)

End Poverty in California (EPIC) was a series of proposals defining the platform upon which Upton Sinclair hoped to win the governorship of California in 1934. A prominent socialist and writer, Sinclair won acclaim early in the century with *The Jun-*

gle (1906), an exposé of the putrid conditions of meatpacking facilities and the exploitation of workers in American industry. In 1914 Sinclair left New Jersey and took up residence in California, where he threw his energies into politics, campaigning on the Socialist Party ticket. By 1933, however, with California mired in the throes of depression and possessed of an anemic Democratic Party, Sinclair realized the immediacy of the problem facing the unemployed as well as an opportunity to implement his ideas. Switching to the Democratic Party, Sinclair announced his candidacy in a sixty-page book, *I, Governor of California, and How I Ended Poverty*. Declaring that there was “no excuse for poverty in a state as rich as California,” Sinclair proposed a program to end unemployment and poverty based upon the principle of production-for-use. Such a principle was believed conducive to a possibility of full employment, something that capitalism with its profit motive could not accomplish. The centerpieces of the EPIC plan were a full employment program that would turn over idle land and factories to the unemployed and a pension plan that would provide those sixty years and older with fifty dollars a month, financed by higher income and inheritance taxes. Sinclair overwhelmed his rivals in the Democratic primary and, with support from hundreds of EPIC clubs—citizens groups that had sprung up to advocate the cooperative principles of his program—appeared to be the favorite in the general election against Republican incumbent Frank Merriam. Alarmed that Sinclair would prevail, powerful economic interests in southern California organized the first modern electoral campaign in U. S. history. Financed and directed by the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer film studio, the Southern California Citrus Growers (Sunkist), and the *Los Angeles Times*, the anti-Sinclair forces used misleading cartoons and editorials to inflame voters with allegations that Sinclair was anti-marriage, anti-religion, pro-Soviet, and a free-love radical. The most controversial component of the attack on EPIC was a series of ostensibly factual newsreels screened to moviegoers that portrayed pro-Sinclair voters as poorly informed and lazy, while Merriam supporters appeared articulate and industrious. Particularly notorious were the newsreels that presented as fact an incipient flood of hoboes and un-

employed transients preparing to come to California should Sinclair be elected.

The outcome of the election hinged on the level of support provided by Democratic regulars, many of whom remained deeply suspicious of Sinclair’s ideas, especially his call for the use of scrip as a medium of exchange among producers. Scrip was to be used as a token between producers and cooperatives in addition to money. Hoping to palliate the regulars and lead a united party, Sinclair dropped the more controversial of his proposals while appealing to Democratic leaders for full support. The linchpin of EPIC’s fate would be an endorsement from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Early in the campaign, Sinclair traveled east and conversed at length with Roosevelt. In the end, however, Roosevelt refused his support, and the party leadership attempted to persuade Sinclair to step down in favor of a candidate deemed more favorable by the national leadership. When Sinclair refused, the Democratic leadership negotiated an agreement with the Merriam camp to support the Republican in exchange for a bipartisan administration that would support the middle road of New Deal reform. Democratic support proved crucial to Republican victory on election day.

The legacy of the EPIC challenge was its role in pulling the New Deal leftward as Roosevelt, responding to Sinclair (among others), embraced a broader series of social and economic reforms after 1934. The response of the Democratic leadership, however, illuminated the ideological fissures within its brokerage politics, and firmly indicated that it would not support a social democratic insurgency at the grassroots level that managed to nominate candidates unsuitable to the party elite.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1934; SINCLAIR, UPTON.

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EPIC. See END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA.

ETHIOPIAN WAR

The Italian government of Benito Mussolini invaded the African nation of Ethiopia on October 3, 1935, in order to provide Italy with additional colonial territory, to stimulate Italy's economic growth and lower unemployment, and to create an outlet for Italy's excess population. Historians have speculated that with the rise of Adolf Hitler in Germany, Mussolini was also driven by a desire to maintain equal standing with Europe's other fascist dictator, and he saw the conquest as a means to do so. Ethiopia, which had been one of the last independent African countries, was conquered by Mussolini's forces by May 1936. The Ethiopian monarch, Haile Selassie I, and his family were driven into exile in Great Britain.

The brutality of the Italian military, particularly its use of low-flying bombing raids and poison gas against both civilians and soldiers, brought it condemnation from the international community. The League of Nations issued economic sanctions against Italy, but the sanctions were applied haphazardly because France and Great Britain wanted to avoid harming their long-standing alliance with Italy. The sanctions also allowed the continued shipment of oil to Italy and did not restrict Italy's use of the Suez Canal. Once victory was assured, the League lifted the minor sanctions against Italy in July 1936, almost indicating that they endorsed the action.

The general response of the United States government to the war was disinterest. The United States maintained its isolationist stance and concentrated its energies on the Great Depression. It had no colonies in Africa and so did not fear Italian encroachment into its overseas holdings. Economically, the area represented a tiny fraction of the nation's overseas trade, and few Americans had investments in the region that needed to be protected. Lastly, 1936 was an election year, and neither Franklin Roosevelt nor Alfred Landon wanted to make U.S. involvement in the war a central political concern.



Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, posed with his foot on an unexploded bomb after an Italian air bombardment in January 1936. HULTON-DEUTSCH COLLECTION/CORBIS

Although the war engendered little interest among the white population of the United States, many African Americans followed the conflict closely and lobbied their government to take a stronger stand. They were motivated by several factors, including the historical importance that Africa's longest-lasting black nation represented to the continued struggle of African Americans for equality. The civil rights activism of the 1930s increasingly emphasized social and economic equality as African Americans struggled to cope with the Great Depression. They clearly empathized with Ethiopia's attempt to remain free and equal among the world's nations.

Major urban areas, such as New York and Cleveland, became centers of political agitation, prayer meetings, and demonstrations. Organizations such as the Ethiopian Research Council, founded in Washington, D.C., in 1934, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored

People kept news of the conflict prominent in African-American communities. The interest of African Americans in this conflict was matched by people of African ancestry across the globe, and the war provoked anti-Italian protests in Jamaica, Barbados, and Trinidad, as well as inquiries regarding the possibility of volunteer soldiers from southern Africa, the United States, and Great Britain.

In contrast, the Italian-American community and its organizations repeatedly urged the U.S. government not to intervene. They held fundraising drives and mass demonstrations to show their support for Mussolini's actions, and they contributed food, clothing, and money to assist Italy in its conquest. In addition, Italian Americans volunteered to serve with Mussolini's forces. This staunch support for Italy's actions brought about conflict between Italian Americans and African Americans, most notably a large riot that occurred in March 1935 in New York City.

Italian occupation of Ethiopia ended in 1941, as Italian forces were expelled by British and Commonwealth troops working in concert with Ethiopian exiles and guerilla forces, and Haile Selassie returned to power.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ISOLATIONISM; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

World War I exacerbated old problems and created new challenges. The struggle to overcome these

difficulties played an important role in determining the character and duration of the Great Depression in Europe.

THE LEGACY OF THE WAR

The first challenge was to overcome the loss and suffering of war. Somewhere between nine and eleven million Europeans had died, with even greater numbers seriously injured. The slaughter cost France and Germany around 10 percent of their male workforce, Austria-Hungary and Italy more than 6 percent, and Britain 5 percent. If this unprecedented slaughter was not bad enough, widespread famine and a voracious influenza epidemic brought yet more death in the aftermath of the war. The conflict also damaged industry, transport networks, and homes, with France, western Russia, Poland, and Belgium the worst affected. But, however deeply the pain of this destruction was felt by Europe's population, it did not take long for the workforce and infrastructure to recover. By the mid-1920s population levels had begun to rise, and factories, farms, and railways had been rebuilt.

Of greater consequence to Europe's long-term prospects were many of the economic and financial changes induced by the war. While Europe's leading industrial powers had been preoccupied with producing war supplies, American and Japanese businessmen had grown rich thanks to both increased demand and the absence of European competition. The disruption to established patterns of trade was damaging to the European economy and made it hard to recover the financial costs of the war. It proved difficult for Europe to recapture these markets, especially as American economic supremacy was underlined by its enthusiasm for new technologies and innovative ways of managing labor, with the average American factory worker producing twice as much per hour as his or her counterpart in Europe. Europe's nineteenth-century strength in heavy industry, by contrast, was now a source of weakness, and the war exacerbated an overcapacity in industries like coalmining and shipbuilding that was already evident in 1913.

Not only were American manufactured goods usually superior to and less expensive than those made in Europe, so too were many American agri-

cultural and primary products. This disadvantage hit central and eastern Europe especially hard, inasmuch as around 70 percent of its workforce relied on the land to earn a living. The peace treaties negotiated between 1919 and 1923 added to the challenge of effecting economic stability in this part of Europe. Such new countries as Yugoslavia had to build the trappings of a modern national economy almost from scratch, while the defeated Central Powers were banned from working together to overcome their economic problems (the consequences of this prohibition were especially difficult for Austria and Hungary), and they were forced to pay heavy reparations to the European Allied Powers, although not to America.

Reparations were payments of money and goods levied against Germany and its Central Power allies at the peace conference in 1919. Britain and France demanded an indemnity to cover not just the physical damage wrought by the war, but the cost of waging the entire conflict. It took until 1921 for a reparations commission to fix a precise amount; Germany, for example was to pay 132 billion gold *reichsmarks*. The findings of the commission's report were, and remain, highly controversial. In *American "Reparations" to Germany, 1919–1933* (1988) Stephen Schuker argued that although Germany was plagued by temporary difficulties, the long-term prospects for Germany's capacity to pay were excellent given the economic record of the German Empire before 1913. But this view was challenged by Gerald Feldman in *The Great Disorder* (1993), which underlined the profound harm done by reparations to the Weimar Republic.

Anglo-French demands for reparations were also fuelled by the need to pay back their war debts to the United States. Although President Woodrow Wilson declined to demand reparations from the Central Powers, successive U.S. administrations insisted that Britain, France and Italy, among others, pay back some \$12 billion worth of loans. As President Calvin Coolidge put it, "They hired the money, didn't they?" After 1919, the victorious European powers hoped to trade concessions they might make on reparations for a reduction in their war debts. Although many European countries were

able to negotiate some kind of reduction in the amounts owed, the United States consistently denied any link between the ability of the Central Powers to pay their reparations to the Allied ability to meet its war debts.

World War I also generated political change that affected how economic policy was made and what it was expected to achieve. After the sacrifices demanded of them in war, voters now expected politicians to deliver improved social provisions and work opportunities, and when governments failed to manage national economies to benefit the majority of voters, they were increasingly likely to be voted out of office. This tendency was all the more pronounced in Europe because many countries, like Germany and Austria, became democracies for the first time, while established democracies extended the franchise. Britain, for example, gave women and young men the vote for the first time in 1921. The need to manage the home economy to the satisfaction of the electorate also complicated relations between countries. In the 1920s, there were a rising number of trade wars both within and beyond Europe's frontiers as governments tried to meet the expectations of farmers and businessmen to protect home markets. These economic conflicts damaged diplomatic relations, the operation of the gold standard, and prospects for long-term stability of the international economy.

The first big test for the ability of Europeans to deal with new economic problems came early in the 1920s as the demands of reconstruction and reparations unleashed inflation in many European countries, notably in Germany, Austria, and Hungary. At first the German government was unwilling to take decisive action to calm the rising currency crisis, but after the French invaded Germany's industrial heartland, the Ruhr, in January 1923, inflation spiraled to over 2,000 percent, and decisive action to save the most important economy in Europe became imperative. It came in the shape of a plan devised by the American general Charles G. Dawes, who proposed a revised schedule for reparation payments and a German return to the gold standard. Announced in 1924, the plan also encouraged foreign investors to purchase German bonds. But the scheme quickly snowballed beyond the expect-

tations of its inventors. By 1928, almost eight billion dollars had been sunk into Europe, with four billion dollars invested in Germany alone.

The impact of the postwar inflation that spiraled into hyperinflation in much of central and eastern Europe played a crucial role in shaping government economic policy after 1924. The dominant preoccupation of government policy became currency stabilization centered on the gold standard. But the determination to avoid inflation or any significant shift in monetary policy, both of which were seen as a gateway to currency chaos, was to make little sense in the world after 1929, with falling prices, diminishing demand, and rising levels of unemployment. The reconstructed gold standard helped to tie the fate of the European economy to that of the United States. So, too, did the messy tangle of war debts, reparations, and Dawes Plan loans. Although each type of debt was notionally separate, in practice one type of payment was seen as dependent on the other. When American commercial loans began to dry up, as they did after 1928, the European economy was in very big trouble.

THE EUROPEAN BANKING CRISES

By 1928 it was clear that the Dawes Plan was failing. The once mighty stream of American investment into Europe had slowed to a trickle. Negotiations for a new scheme, dubbed the Young Plan, were underway when Wall Street crashed and the Great Depression set in. The American Federal Reserve's decision to increase interest rates in 1929 and 1930, coupled with the economic downturn in the United States, meant that the American loans that had helped to smooth over the cracks in the European economy were no longer available. By 1931, the level of U.S. investment in Europe dropped to zero. In response, European countries tried to be as "good as gold"; they raised interest rates and tried hard to prevent the national budget from sliding into deficit, with the aspiration of attracting back some of the foreign investment they had lost. But the strategy had painful consequences. Political developments also played a role. Any disputes about taxation increases or government spending, like those that gripped Germany in the

summer of 1931, had serious financial implications, as well as political consequences.

By June and July 1931 British banks were struggling to fill the breach in central European finances left by the United States. But as much as politicians from the left and right of the political spectrum blamed "greedy, foreign capitalists" for their woes, many of the problems facing banks in central Europe in the summer of 1931 were homegrown. Not only had much of the foreign investment on which the region had become so dependent been spent on unproductive projects designed to generate prestige rather than profits (in Romania over 30 percent of international loans had been spent this way), banks in central Europe also had a close relationship with local industry that made them especially vulnerable. Austrian industry, for example, was very dependent on bank loans, while the banks, in turn, owned a large number of shares in Austrian industry. When industry failed, so did the banks. Until the summer of 1931, Austrian banks worked hard to cover up industrial losses, in part by merging with other banks. But the wheels came off this strategy in spectacular fashion on May 8, 1931, when it was revealed that Austria's largest bank, the Creditanstalt, had incurred losses of 140 million schillings. Investors rushed to the bank to withdraw their savings; over a period of twelve days the bank lost more than 300 million schillings in domestic withdrawals, and a further 120 million schillings were removed by foreign investors. No private institution had sufficient funds to bale out the Creditanstalt, so the Austrian government reluctantly stepped in to end the crisis by effectively taking control of the bank. As a consequence, the Austrian state became the owner of sixty-four different Austrian companies and 65 percent of the nominal capital in Austrian businesses.

The collapse of Austria's banks also triggered a wave of selling in the Austrian schilling that the Austrian government was powerless to stop. It was only by breaking the "rules of the gold standard game" in October 1931, through the introduction of exchange controls designed to restrict the amount and destination of gold and foreign currency leaving Austria, that the crisis came to an end. These controls became an elaborate network of bilateral

payment agreements that controlled the movement of money and goods between Austria and other countries.

Banking crises similar to that which had taken place in Austria soon engulfed other countries, including Italy, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia. But Germany, once again, experienced the most dramatic collapse. The biggest commercial banks—the Darmstädter und Nationalbank (DANAT Bank), the Dresdener, and the Deutsche bank—began to sustain enormous losses as industry failed and nervous investors withdrew their cash. In an effort to hang on to their reserves, the banks put up interest rates and cut back on loans to business, so that even companies that had remained relatively healthy found their working credit withdrawn and faced the prospect of bankruptcy.

Chaos reigned in the German banking system for over two months until 13 July 1931, when all German financial institutions closed down. They reopened after a few days, but the financial, economic, and political landscape in which they now operated had changed dramatically. Political and social changes were immediately visible. Confidence in the future had evaporated, which meant that companies and individuals spent even less. Unemployment rocketed to over six million people, around one-fifth of the German working population, and the extremist political parties, the Communists and the National Socialist Party of Germany (NSDAP, or Nazis), experienced a huge surge in political support. There were also economic and financial changes that were less visible to contemporary observers. The German state, like Austria, had taken on important new powers that enabled it to control the amount of gold and foreign exchange leaving the country. Not only did this mean that American and British investors now found their investments frozen inside Germany, giving Germany important bargaining leverage in diplomatic negotiations with those two countries, it also meant that bilateral payment schemes were set up giving the state power to control German trade. Together, these developments changed the nature of Germany's relationship with the international economy and helped make it much easier for the Nazis to manage the economy after they took power in 1933.

A very different banking crisis took place in Britain in September 1931. Here it was not the commercial banks that came under pressure, but the central bank, the Bank of England. The widespread collapse of confidence in Europe in the summer of 1931 had taken its toll on the British economy: The pound was sold heavily on the international exchange, interest rates rose, and the financial problems for companies, banks, and households multiplied at a frightening rate. As the British government argued over whether, and how best, to cut the rising budget deficit, the political and financial pressure rose. On August 24, 1931, Britain resorted to a new national government comprised of representatives from the Conservative, Labour, and Liberal parties to underline national unity in the face of the crisis. But the step was not enough to keep the pound on the gold standard, nor were the efforts of the world's most powerful central banks. On September 20, 1931, Britain, along with its imperial and commonwealth partners, left the gold standard. It was a move that enabled these countries to take the first tentative steps on the road to economic recovery.

POPULAR AND POLITICAL REACTIONS

The decision of Britain's leading political parties to work together to present a unified political front was followed by France, Belgium, and the Netherlands in the mid-1930s. The step was triggered, in part, by political developments in central and eastern Europe, where traditionally dominant political parties—the Conservatives (including Nationalists), the Liberals, and the Social Democrats—were discredited by the economic collapse and their failure to develop any new policies. They increasingly lost out to those on the far left and far right, typified by revolutionary Communist and Fascist parties that appeared to offer radical answers to the suffering of an increasingly desperate electorate. But it is important not to oversimplify the relationship between economic misery and political radicalism. Many countries around the world experienced intense economic hardship yet did not succumb to political extremism; the United States was the most notable example.

On a human level the most visible measure that politicians had failed to staunch the crisis by 1931

was the tremendous surge in unemployment. By 1932 the official figures were impressive, with 6 million unemployed in Germany and 2.7 million jobless in Britain, but it is very likely the real figures were much higher. This is especially true in agricultural Europe, where unemployment was disguised as underemployment and characterized by a silent slide into abject poverty.

Some groups in society were hit disproportionately hard. Young men were especially affected by the social and psychological effects of unemployment. Theirs was a strong contributory voice to the rising intolerance of groups or individuals who were perceived to be economic rivals or outsiders. The crisis triggered a rising culture of blame as people began to point accusatory fingers at other social groups, including bankers and industrialists, or at those who appeared to be different from themselves, such as Jews and gypsies. Women workers were also vulnerable in this climate. In Britain and Germany, for example, married women teachers were sacked as part of a campaign against what were called "double-earners" (because their husbands also brought home a wage packet). However, in industries beyond the state's control it was often male employees who lost out to the women because women were cheaper to employ and more prepared to work part-time.

GOVERNMENT RECOVERY POLICY

Relations between European countries became increasingly bitter as the Depression deepened. Diplomatic cooperation proved difficult in the atmosphere of intense economic competition, even between countries like Britain and France that shared a common interest in defending democracy and capitalism. Desperate to respond to the clamor of French farmers who demanded protection from cheap imports, by 1932 France had introduced strict quotas on over three thousand different imports, German tariffs had risen by over 50 percent, and most dramatically of all, Britain retreated into protection in the autumn of 1931, ending a commitment to the ethos of free trade that had lasted eighty-five years. Europe was now divided into competing economic blocs.

Freed from gold, the British government dropped interest rates, increased spending, and be-

came the first country in Europe to show signs of recovery. The British government's first priority became fostering domestic recovery; internationalism, characterized by its unwavering support for the gold standard in the 1920s, was at an end. Belgium, the Netherlands, and France, by contrast, clung to gold until the 1935 to 1936 period, which helps explain why they experienced the worst of their economic and political crises during the mid-1930s—terrible timing when it came to facing German expansionism and civil war in Spain.

In Germany, as in a number of other countries in central and eastern Europe, the break with economic internationalism was much more overt than in Britain. Under the Nazis, emergency measures taken by previous governments, notably during the banking crisis in 1931, evolved into a complex system of trade and monetary restrictions. The regime stepped in to manage trade, the movement of foreign exchange, prices, wages, private investment banks, and all other aspects of investment in its drive to achieve national self-sufficiency (autarky).

In common with other countries, the states in central and eastern Europe also became heavily involved in trying to stimulate demand in the economy. But as the international climate deteriorated, it became difficult to distinguish industrial recovery from preparations for national defense. In Poland in 1936, the government introduced a six-year investment plan under which, by 1939, the state controlled about one hundred industrial enterprises and all of Poland's transportation networks. Unfortunately, the strategies adopted to fight the Depression by the smaller countries of central and eastern Europe neither assisted the development of their economies in the long-run, nor helped to secure them from the expansionist ambitions of their neighbors, Germany and the Soviet Union.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; DICTATORSHIP; GOLD STANDARD; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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PATRICIA CLAVIN



This small country church in Georgia was one of many photographs Walker Evans shot of churches, shops, and other buildings during the 1930s while on assignment in the South for the Farm Security Administration. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS,

PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

EVANS, WALKER

Walker Evans (1903–1975) was one of the great photographers of the twentieth century, a pivotal figure in establishing the documentary arts movement in the United States, and among the signal artists responsible for fixing the exact look of the Depression for subsequent generations.

He was born Walker Evans III on November 3, 1903, in St. Louis, and moved to Kenilworth, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, in 1908, and to Toledo, Ohio, in 1915. A sensitive but indifferent student, Evans suffered his education in a series of mostly private boarding schools, including the Loomis Institute in Connecticut, Mercersbury Academy in Pennsylvania, and briefly, Philips Andover Acade-

my in Massachusetts. Following a rejection from Yale University, he began and ended his university career with a single semester at Williams College in Massachusetts in December 1923.

After a number of clerical jobs in New York City and a renovative thirteen-month stay in Paris, Evans returned to New York City in 1927 and began the study and practice of the camera in earnest. For the next decade and a half, he engaged in a remarkable string of publications, exhibitions, and field trips that constitute not only the most fecund period of his creative life, but also one of the indelible landmarks in the history of American photography. Starting in 1931 and for the next several years, Evans conducted a photographic study of the vanishing Late-Victorian architecture, mostly in New England. In 1933, the Museum of Modern Art presented "Walker Evans: Photographs of 19th Century Homes," which according to biographer James R. Mellow was "the first one man photographic exhibition mounted by a major museum in the United States" (Mellow 1999, p. 624). In Havana, Cuba (1933), Evans documented the social terrain under the dictatorship of Gerardo Machado in thirty-one illustrations for the radical journalist Carleton Beal's text *The Crime of Cuba*. Beginning in 1935 and for the next two years, Evans produced a sweeping catalog of the American scene in a series of field trips, mostly in the southern and central regions, as an information specialist for the photographic unit of the historical section of the Resettlement Administration (later the Farm Security Administration), a unit which ultimately produced some 270,000 photographs, including the work of photographers like Dorothea Lange, Ben Shahn, Carl Mydans, and Arthur Rothstein. On loan to *Fortune* magazine in the summer of 1936, he made an excursion to Hale County, Alabama, with the writer James Agee; Evans's photographs and Agee's text would become the classic study of three tenant families, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941). In 1938, before embarking on a three-year project of subway portraits with a hidden camera (eventually published in 1966 as *Many Are Called*) he attained national prominence with the Museum of Modern Art's exhibition "Walker Evans: American Photographs," a summary statement of more than a decade's work, and his single most famous collection.

An Evans composition was the result of both a contrarian spirit and a deliberated aesthetic that planted itself in opposition to the dominant photographic trends in the first quarter of the century; specifically, the mystical aestheticism of Alfred Stieglitz, the commercial gloss and celebrity portraiture of Edward Steichen, the staged theatrics of Margaret Bourke-White, and even the machine-age formalism of Laszlo Mholy Nagy (of which precocious examples can be found in Evans's early experiments). Against these, his taste ran to the immediacy of raw fact, the unadorned directness of non- or even anti-art: newsreels, tabloid journalism, and the home snapshot. An Evans photo can disarm the casual eye in its avoidance of romance or prettification, frippery or melodrama, its freedom from overt forms of camera rhetoric and embellishment. Actually the restraint of the shot belies a fierce distillate of mental energy, an astringent appreciation of form, and a personal preference for the poetics of entropy and depletion, the harmonics of disarray and adventitious moments. Evans's characteristic subjects were torn posters and billboards cropped with a surrealist wit; shop fronts scabbled with a patchwork of graffiti and rusty slogans; gas stations, junk yards, and railway depots; dusty vistas of replicated housing and stretch landscapes of smoking factory and clapboard shanty; aging Victorian homes, peeling Greek Revival buildings, and the chipped framewood of Black Baptist churches; and the faces and figures of the anonymous caught unguarded in the nick of an interior event. Evans's treatment of the forms of neglect and the scourings of time coincided almost exactly, whether by accident or design, with the look and fact of the ongoing social crisis of the Great Depression, and become its representative expression.

Starting in 1945, Evans spent twenty years as a full-time staff photographer for *Fortune* magazine, and another eight years (1964-1972) as professor of graphic design at the Yale School of Art and Architecture. Throughout the last phase of his career, he never stopped collecting penny postcards or roadside bric-a-brac, or working obsessively with a Polaroid color camera, with which he produced more than two thousand photographs before his death on April 10, 1975, in New Haven, Connecticut.

See Also: AGEE, JAMES; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION; PHOTOGRAPHY; RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA).

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ALAN SPIEGEL

EZEKIEL, MORDECAI

Mordecai Joseph Brill Ezekiel (May 10, 1899–October 31, 1974) was economic adviser to Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace from 1933 to 1944. Ezekiel helped draft the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 and other New Deal farm legislation, and he was an active participant in the debates of the 1930s over planning, fiscal policies, and recovery strategies.

Ezekiel earned his doctorate from the Brookings Institution in 1927 while working for the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Economics. During the 1920s, he gained an international reputation for his brilliant applications of statistics to economic analysis. In 1930 Ezekiel took a position as assistant chief economist for the Federal Farm Board, and the experience of the Farm Board's ill-fated attempts to stabilize cotton and wheat prices convinced him that farmers needed a bolder form of government intervention to rescue them from the price collapse of the Great Depression. Consequently, he collaborated with the economist M. L. Wilson of Montana State College to propose a government-backed system of emergency production controls and benefit payments known as the Voluntary Domestic Allotment Plan. Major elements of their proposal were incorporated in the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), Ezekiel argued, might assist farmers in the Depression crisis, but it could not restore farm prosperity because of agriculture's dependence on urban and industrial demand and on international trade. Consequently, he argued throughout the 1930s that agricultural recovery demanded reducing tariffs and trade barriers and creating systems of economic planning to achieve full employment. Ezekiel criticized the National Recovery Administration and other New Deal measures for embracing economic restriction in place of a broad-based recovery strategy. He proposed instead a program of "industrial expansion" that he popularized in two books, *\$2,500 a Year: From Scarcity to Abundance* (1936) and *Jobs for All through Industrial Expansion* (1939). Building in part on the "administered price" thesis developed by the economist Gardiner Means, Ezekiel argued for a cooperative planning system that would use tax incentives and production quotas to initiate an expansion of the non-farm economy. He also joined with the so-called spenders in the New Deal to advocate Keynesian policies of fiscal expansion to counter the recession of 1937 to 1938.

Ezekiel's advocacy of economic planning and his status as one of the New Deal's highest ranking and most visible Jewish figures made him a favorite target of New Deal critics. Anti-Semitic diatribes often warned of his influence in the "Jew Deal." But although he was a respected economist, his planning proposals never gained a serious hearing from Franklin Roosevelt, and among economists Ezekiel's proposals were far less influential than the fiscal policies advocated by the economist Alvin Hansen.

During World War II, Ezekiel worked briefly with the War Production Board and also helped organize the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). He joined the FAO staff in 1946 after being forced to resign from the Department of Agriculture under pressure from conservative congressmen. Ezekiel stayed with the FAO until 1961 and worked to develop its economic research division and its policies for economic development.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT
ADMINISTRATION (AAA); FARM POLICY;
WALLACE, HENRY A.

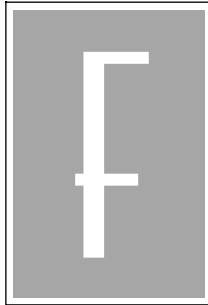
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DAVID HAMILTON



FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

The Fair Labor Standards Act, also known as the Wages and Hours bill, was signed into law by President Franklin Roosevelt on June 25, 1938. The Fair Labor Standards Act mandated minimum wage, maximum weekly hours, and child labor standards for workers engaged in interstate commerce. The law represented a departure from the policy of strict voluntarism that organized labor had supported prior to the Great Depression. However, continuing concerns on the part of American Federation of Labor (AFL) leaders about the state determining wage standards helped to shape a law that fell short of the aim of those New Dealers who wanted to require employers to pay a “living wage.”

The Progressive era had witnessed various attempts by individual states to regulate working conditions for women, children, and those involved in hazardous jobs. Judicial hostility to any interference with “liberty of contract” and union fears of government intervention becoming a substitute for workers’ self-organization severely limited the scope and effectiveness of such efforts prior to the Great Depression. The federal government did not become directly involved in trying to enforce minimum wage and maximum hours standards throughout the economy until the National Recovery Administration (NRA) was established in 1933.

When the Supreme Court ruled in 1935 that the National Industrial Recovery Act was unconstitutional, Roosevelt considered offering a labor standards bill to salvage the wages and hours provisions of the industry codes set up under the NRA, but he waited until after his reelection to begin pressing Congress to pass such legislation.

New Deal lawyers Benjamin Cohen and Thomas Corcoran prepared the original version of the Fair Labor Standards Act, which in May 1937 was introduced by Hugo Black in the Senate and by William Connery in the House. The Black-Connery bill called for fixing an unstated minimum wage (widely assumed to be forty cents an hour) and a maximum hours standard (assumed to be forty hours per week) for workers involved in interstate commerce. Workers involved in agriculture or holding administrative or supervisory positions were deemed “exempt” from coverage under the law, as were workers in firms with fewer than six employees. Overtime work was to be paid at a rate of time and a half. In addition, the bill provided for the establishment of a five-person Labor Standards Board with discretionary power to set higher wage and lower hours requirements for individual industries in which there was a demonstrated “inadequacy or ineffectiveness of facilities for collective bargaining.” Implicit in such a provision was the hope that the law would contribute to the establish-

ment of “living wage” standards. New Deal proponents of the law saw the forty-four standard itself as a means of raising the wage level and boosting the level of employment, and thereby contributing to efforts to end the Depression. The proposal also included a ban on child labor.

In spite of Roosevelt’s backing, the Black-Connery bill faced tough going in Congress. The proposal encountered stiff opposition from the nation’s business leaders and also failed to win the support of the AFL, whose leaders feared allowing a government board to exercise such wide authority over wages. The congressional battle over the Fair Labor Standards Act lasted fourteen months, and the law that finally emerged was significantly different from Cohen and Corcoran’s original draft. In response to the concerns of the AFL and the secretary of labor, the independent and potentially powerful Labor Standards Board was eliminated. Administration of the law was given to the Department of Labor. The Fair Labor Standards Act set an initial minimum wage of only twenty-five cents, while providing for the rate to go to forty cents in seven years. The law set an initial weekly hours standard of forty-four, but called for a reduction to forty over three years. Although the law allowed individual industries to reach the forty-four standard before the end of the phase-in period, the limited flexibility in the final bill was intended primarily to make it possible for southern employers to maintain regional differentials for several more years.

The Fair Labor Standards Act was path-breaking legislation that immediately improved wages for approximately 300,000 workers while reducing hours for more than one million employees. Yet, the standards established by the law were so low that full-time workers receiving the law’s protection could still have incomes that would leave them in poverty. Subsequent increases in the minimum wage have only marginally improved this situation. Moreover, by excluding agricultural labor and domestic workers, who were not considered to be engaged in interstate commerce, the law failed to provide any benefits to large numbers of African-American and women workers.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; GUFFEY-SNYDER ACT OF 1935; GUFFEY-VINSON ACT OF 1937.

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LARRY G. GERBER

FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression challenged American families in major ways, placing great economic, social, and psychological strains and demands upon families and their members. Families of various class, ethnic, racial, and regional backgrounds, exhibiting various styles of marital and familial relationships, responded in different manners to the stresses and demands placed upon them. In 1933, the average family income had dropped to \$1,500, 40 percent less than the 1929 average family income of \$2,300. Millions of families lost their savings as numerous banks collapsed in the early 1930s. Unable to make mortgage or rent payments, many were deprived of their homes or were evicted from their apartments. Both working-class and middle-class families were drastically affected by the Depression.

FAMILY DISORGANIZATION AND DEPRIVATION

From one perspective, the story emerging from the Great Depression can be described as one of family “disorganization” and deprivation. Marriage rates declined, although they started to rise in 1934,

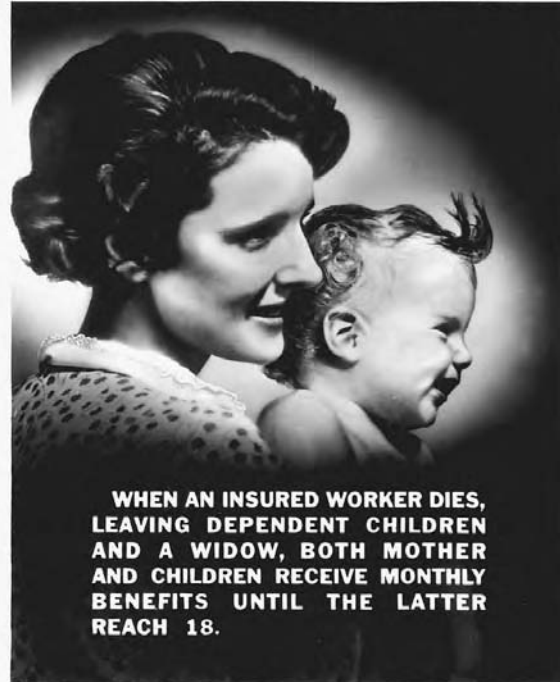
and the trend toward decreasing birthrates, already underway, accelerated during the 1930s. Although divorce rates also declined, this seems to have been largely the consequence of the inability to pay lawyers' fees; desertion rates increased during the decade. In some cases, two or more families crowded together in apartments or homes designed as single-family residences. Some 250,000 youths were on the road, travelling by freight train or hitchhiking in order to find work or more favorable circumstances. From 1929 to 1931, the number of children entering custodial institutions increased by 50 percent. In many economically deprived families, children suffered from malnutrition and inadequate clothing.

Things seemed to be especially difficult for unemployed and underemployed male heads of families. Traditional conceptions of gender roles prevailed during the 1930s; accordingly, men were expected to be the breadwinners of their families. Unemployed men felt like failures as a result of their inability to provide for their families. Such feelings of inadequacy were accentuated when, often after having used up their life savings, these men were forced to endure the humiliating experience of applying for relief. Unemployed men often found themselves hanging around their homes, irritating their wives; quarrels became more frequent between husbands and wives. At times, men withdrew emotionally and even physically from their families and friends. Children of impoverished families, recalling memories of family life during the 1930s, often remembered their fathers as emotionally distant and indifferent. Some unemployed men took up drinking. Others went off on long trips, looking for employment in other cities. Some deserted their wives and families altogether.

ADAPTING TO THE DEPRESSION

From a different perspective, another story of the family emerges—one that emphasizes the resilience and ability of the family to adapt in the face of adverse economic circumstances. Some families, of course, were not affected by major economic deprivation during the 1930s, but even among those that were, many were able to maintain relatively "normal" patterns of family life—with the father

MORE SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN FAMILY



FOR INFORMATION WRITE OR CALL AT THE NEAREST FIELD OFFICE OF THE
SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD

The Social Security Board promised to provide greater security to American families, as this Depression-era poster testified.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

securely positioned as the head of the family and relatively harmonious relationships prevailing within the home. In the years after the Depression, many recalled the era, perhaps with an exaggerated sense of nostalgia, as a period of family togetherness and solidarity. Family members listened to the radio together (by the 1930s, millions of urban families owned at least one radio) or engaged in such activities as playing Monopoly, a popular game that appeared in the mid-1930s.

Features that could be considered symptoms of family disorganization, especially the employment of women and children outside the home, can perhaps best be regarded as ways in which families actively adapted to and coped with economic deprivation. In order to help provide economic support for their families, married women increasingly



A Texas family of migrant agricultural laborers lived in this trailer south of Chandler, Arizona, in 1940 during the cotton picking season. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

came to work outside the home during the 1930s, generally in low-status, low-paying jobs, often in the service and light manufacturing sectors. In spite of widespread condemnation of the employment of married women and the refusal of many government agencies, schools, libraries, and so on to employ them, the percentage of married women in the workforce continued to rise during the Depression years. Married women also contributed to the livelihood of their families by intensifying their household labor—by, for example, maintaining vegetable gardens and preserving the resulting produce, or patching and remaking old clothes. Children contributed to their families as well. Boys worked, usually on a part-time basis, in activities such as deliv-

ering newspapers, doing janitorial tasks, and assisting as store clerks. Girls, on the other hand, tended to stay home and help with domestic tasks, especially when their mothers worked outside the home.

Another example of how family life was actively adapted to the social and economic circumstances that Americans encountered during the Depression era was the creation of a family-oriented union culture by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in late 1930s. As historian Lizabeth Cohen has demonstrated, CIO unions came to emphasize family life, especially family-oriented social and recreational activities, as a means of enhancing soli-

parity among the diverse ethnic and racial groups involved in the CIO. Recognizing that working-class women played a key role as decision-makers in their families, unions attempted to enlist them in such activities as campaigns to buy union-made products and social events aimed at breaking down racial and ethnic barriers between working-class families. Indeed, women were conceived of as playing a guiding role in the elaboration of a family union culture.

Efforts to adapt the family to economic adversity during the 1930s did not result in a challenge to conventional gender roles. Many married women worked for wages outside their homes during the Depression years, but their children, often coming of age during the post-World War II era, did not come to see the employment of married women as

in itself a positive good. Accustomed at an early age to assuming conventional gender roles—as boys worked at part-time jobs outside their homes, while girls worked at domestic chores within the home—the children of the 1930s saw their mothers' employment as perhaps necessary under the circumstances, but not as an indication that married women should pursue careers rather than devote themselves to being housewives. Similarly, although the CIO encouraged women to join unions in industries such as meat-packing, demanded equal pay for women, and enlisted working-class wives as guides of family union culture, CIO unionists persisted in seeing men as the primary family breadwinners. Women were not encouraged to assume leadership roles in CIO unions, and little effort was made to organize workers in the clerical



Like many families during the Depression, this unemployed miner from Zeigler, Illinois, depended on government relief to support his wife and nine children in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

and service sectors, which tended to be dominated by women.

With the advent of the New Deal in March 1933, the federal government came to assume a new role in fostering the economic security and welfare of American families. As critics have suggested, however, New Deal programs tended to assume the primacy of the male breadwinner within the family, thus shoring up traditional gender roles. Work relief programs, such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA), discriminated against women, and women workers were generally not adequately covered by the retirement pension and unemployment insurance programs established by the Social Security Act of 1935. Although the New Deal welfare state owed much of its inspiration to

the idea of the “maternal commonwealth” formulated by female reformers during the late nineteenth century and the Progressive era, and despite the major role that female administrators and social workers played in implementing the New Deal welfare state, there was little concern for advancing the specific interests and rights of women during the 1930s.

African-American families were especially hard hit by the Depression. Unemployment rates were significantly higher for blacks than for whites in Northern cities, and in the South, where most of the African-American population continued to live during the 1930s, economic conditions were especially bad. Black sharecroppers in the South were forced to subsist on a minimal level, and increasing-

ly they were evicted from their farms as the result of Agricultural Adjustment Administration policies. In urban areas, there was an especially high percentage of female-headed families due to high mortality rates among black males and their inability to provide for their families as breadwinners. Moreover, the eligibility requirements of the Aid to Dependent Children program, established by the Social Security Act of 1935, apparently contributed to the problem by driving black fathers from households. Again, however, the issue of female dominance in many black families is more than simply a story of the “disorganization” of the black family. In fact, in both Northern cities and the rural South, black women tended to be the centers of networks of kin, friends, and neighbors—networks by means of which scarce resources were shared, thus enabling families to survive under conditions of extreme economic adversity. In general, New Deal measures benefitted blacks less (and sometimes not at all) in comparison to whites, though New Deal work relief and welfare programs did provide significant assistance for black families, especially in Northern cities.

THE LEGACY OF THE DEPRESSION

The Depression era bequeathed a mixed legacy to American families and households. Perhaps the major positive aspect of this legacy was the idea that the economic security and welfare of the family should be a fundamental national goal. To be sure, this idea was imperfectly realized in the New Deal welfare state, which often discriminated against women wage-earners and relegated the families of blacks and other nonwhites to second-class status. Nevertheless, during the 1930s and subsequent decades, the federal government did come to play a major role in providing for the health, welfare, education, and housing of American families.

See Also: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; EDUCATION; ELDERLY, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOMELESSNESS; MEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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DENNIS BRYSON

FAP. *See* FEDERAL ART PROJECT.

FARLEY, JAMES A.

James Aloysius Farley (May 30, 1888–June 9, 1976), postmaster general of the United States and chair of the Democratic National Committee from 1933 to 1940, was a shrewd political organizer and one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s closest political advisers during the Great Depression. Ideologically, Farley registered opposition to much of the New Deal program, but until he and Roosevelt parted company in 1940, they made a formidable team that benefited both men and the nation.

A preeminent New York politician who helped orchestrate Roosevelt’s presidential landslides in 1932 and 1936, Farley was born in Grassy Point, New York. After graduating from Stony Point High



James Farley (right) with Franklin D. Roosevelt in Warm Springs, Georgia, in December 1931. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

School in 1905, he held various Democratic party offices, including town clerk. He later formed a business and served one term in the state legislature before becoming secretary of the New York State Democratic Committee, in which capacity he organized Roosevelt's successful gubernatorial campaigns in 1928 and 1930. In 1932 Farley arranged the deal that made John Nance Garner of Texas the Democratic vice presidential nominee.

The postmaster generalship provided Farley with immense patronage potentialities, making his position crucial for constructing the foundations of support for the New Deal. Farley knew personally most party leaders throughout the country, corresponding with them regularly and signing his name in green ink. These acquaintances and friendships

enabled Farley to fortify and invigorate loyalty to the Democratic party and the administration. His outgoing personality, persuasive techniques, and political skills proved effective in securing congressional and state endorsements for Roosevelt's New Deal. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, with whom Farley enjoyed a constructive relationship, encouraged him to recommend appointments for women, who constituted 7,560 of the 28,092 postmasters commissioned between 1933 and 1938.

Although at first a moderate liberal, Farley, unversed with the economic ramifications that resulted in the Great Depression, exhorted the president in his second term to balance the budget and reduce public works programs. Farley's disillusionment deepened steadily. His presidential aspira-

tions and strong opposition to Roosevelt's third-term nomination strained the relations between the two by 1940, when Farley submitted his resignation as postmaster general and head of the national committee. This ideological rift led the increasingly conservative Farley to assail New Deal policies. After his unsuccessful efforts to block Roosevelt's nomination in 1940 (when Farley sought the nomination himself) and 1944, Farley devoted attention to business concerns while maintaining interests in local, state, and national politics. He died in New York City, leaving a legacy as an astute campaign manager and political operative during the Great Depression.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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LEONARD SCHLUP

FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION (FCA)

To combat the deepening debt crisis that was vanquishing farm owners nationwide, Franklin D. Roosevelt issued an executive order on March 27, 1933, establishing the Farm Credit Administration (FCA). The agency extended vital relief to debt-ridden farmers throughout the country by refinancing farm mortgages and offering credit under favorable terms. The FCA was an important part of the Roosevelt administration's broad program of federal assistance to agriculture. During its first two years alone, the FCA refinanced one-fifth of all farm mortgages and saved tens of thousands of farmers from foreclosure.

By 1933 farmers urgently needed mortgage relief and loans to cover their annual crop-production

costs. The vast network of locally owned banks that had served as the primary source of farm finance in rural areas could no longer support loans to farmers. As farm income and commodity prices plummeted, the system of farm credit collapsed. In 1930 and 1931, more than 3,600 banks failed. Among the hardest hit ones were undercapitalized rural banks serving small farming communities.

In creating the FCA, the Roosevelt administration set out to alleviate the indebtedness of farmers and to overhaul the government's large but ineffectual system of farm credit. Nine existing farm agencies fell under the control of the FCA, including the Federal Farm Board, the Federal Farm Loan Board, the federal land banks, the federal intermediate credit banks, and the loaning activities of the secretary of agriculture and the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. William I. Myers, a Cornell University economics professor, conceived this consolidation and reorganization of disparate farm agencies into the FCA. As David E. Hamilton argues in *From New Day to New Deal* (1991), Myers was committed to cooperative public-private partnerships and associative principles. Although the farm debt crisis required that the government take the lead in making credit available to farmers, the ultimate goal of the FCA was to create a cooperative credit system run by farmers themselves, financed privately and administered through local credit associations. Roosevelt appointed Henry Morgenthau, who had served as Roosevelt's commissioner of agriculture when he was governor of New York, to the position of governor of the FCA, and he named Myers the deputy governor. When Morgenthau became secretary of the treasury in 1934, Myers took his place as head of the FCA and retained the post until 1938.

The FCA included four divisions. The Land Bank Division controlled the twelve federal land banks and fifty joint-stock land banks. The Intermediate Credit Division supervised the twelve intermediate credit banks that made direct loans to cooperatives and helped private banks become active lenders. The Production Credit Division directed the twelve regional production credit corporations, and the Cooperative Bank Division supervised the Central Bank for Cooperatives, which made short- and long-term loans to the agricultural cooperatives.

In addition to refinancing one-fifth of all farm mortgages, the FCA reduced the interest rates on federal loans to 3.5 percent and, between 1933 and 1936, extended about \$800 million in long-term loans. By 1939, the federal land banks held nearly 40 percent of the farm mortgage debt. That same year, the FCA fell under the control of the department of agriculture, then regained its status as an independent agency in 1953. Since 1971, the FCA has continued to provide credit to farmers, and has assumed the additional responsibility of regulating the farm credit system.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION (FHA); FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION (FMHA); FARM FORECLOSURES; FARM POLICY.

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ADRIENNE M. PETTY

FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION (FHA)

The national Farmers' Holiday Association, or FHA, was an organization born of the downturn in farm and crop prices brought about by the Great Depression. FHA members took part in some of the most intense agrarian protests of the early years of the Depression. In February 1932, Glen Miller, a writer for the publication *Iowa Union Farmer*, argued that Iowa farmers should declare a "holiday" in which farm products would be kept at the farms where

they were produced until politicians and the general public began to appreciate the importance of farmers. This idea resonated with the three thousand farmers who gathered in Des Moines, Iowa, in May 1932 to found the national Farmers' Holiday Association. The group consisted primarily of farmers from Iowa, but also included farmers from Minnesota, Nebraska, Illinois, and Wisconsin, as well as many other states. Milo Reno, a popular agricultural activist and leader of the Iowa Farmers' Union, was elected president of the organization.

Reno's constant campaign theme as leader of the Iowa Farmers' Union was that farmers deserved the right to be compensated for the costs of farm production and to make a reasonable profit on the sale of their goods. Reno continued this theme as he assumed control of the FHA, and one of the first resolutions adopted by the organization called for withholding agricultural products from the marketplace until farmers received fair compensation for the cost of production.

In August 1932, members of the FHA launched the first withholding protests in Sioux City, Iowa, picketing along highways and threatening farmers who refused to cooperate and were attempting to bring their goods to market. The farm strikes quickly spread to other midwestern states as members of the local Farmers' Holiday Associations in those states began to stage their own protests. Violent encounters continued between protesters and noncooperative farmers in other midwestern states until Reno called for an end to the strikes on September 1, 1932.

Following Franklin D. Roosevelt's election as president in November 1932, Reno and leaders of local holiday organizations in several midwestern states met in Omaha, Nebraska, to discuss the potential effect of Roosevelt's presidency on the plight of the farmer. The convention crafted a resolution that called for the suspension of strikes and blockades of farm commodities to give the new president sufficient time to act on the concerns of farmers.

In the meantime, the FHA focused its attention on preventing farm foreclosures through so-called penny auctions. During January and February of 1933, fifteen penny auctions took place in which a farm undergoing foreclosure would be auctioned

off at an extremely low price, sometimes through physical intimidation of potential bidders, to a bidder who would sell the property back to its original owner. While never condoning the illegal methods used by some participants during penny auctions, the FHA did actively support the practice in order to prevent farm foreclosures.

In May 1933, Reno and the FHA once again called for farm strikes following the U.S. Senate's rejection of the Norris-Simpson amendment, which would have provided cost of production prices for farmers. Reno, however, called off the strike after receiving a letter from Minnesota governor Floyd Olson expressing his belief that the Roosevelt administration would address FHA concerns and after hearing an encouraging statement on the matter from the president.

During the summer months of 1933 Reno began to lose confidence in Roosevelt's New Deal farm program, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. The FHA saw the program as an extension of the American Farm Bureau Federation, which the FHA viewed as a tool of large commercial farmers. In September 1933 Reno again called for farm strikes until the administration and the Congress passed measures to address cost of production and currency inflation. This time, however, the strike movement received a tepid response from many midwestern farmers and collapsed within a few days.

Following the collapse of the farm strikes in the fall of 1933, the power of the FHA began to decrease rapidly and Reno went from popular national figure to relative obscurity. Over the next several years, the FHA turned its attention away from cost of production issues to other causes of interest to farmers. The organization also backed the potential third-party candidacies of such political figures as Father Charles Coughlin and Senator Huey Long. Milo Reno's death on May 5, 1936, effectively spelled the end of the FHA, which was absorbed back into the Iowa Farmers' Union in 1937.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; FARM FORECLOSURES.

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MARK LOVE

FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION (FMHA)

In 1946 Congress replaced the Farm Security Administration (FSA) with the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA). Congress's action grew out of its wartime investigations of the FSA, in which the agency was criticized for deliberately disregarding congressional intent and misusing funds to establish and maintain resettlement projects, cooperative farms, and land purchase associations. Congressional disillusionment with these unconventional programs reflected legislators' broader retreat from New Deal reforms and their more traditional approach to domestic issues during and after the war. In creating the FmHA, Congress authorized it to insure loans, as well to lend money directly. Although some FSA programs, including loans to low-income individuals who lacked other sources of credit for farm purchase, farm operating and rehabilitation loans to individuals, and loans for rural water systems, were continued by the new agency, the FSA's more controversial rural rehabilitation and resettlement projects, migratory labor camps, and loans to cooperative associations for land purchase were discontinued. The FmHA also continued the emergency crop and feed loan program formerly administered by the Farm Credit Association.

In the ensuing decades the scope of the FmHA's programs expanded. The Federal Housing Act of 1949 broadened the agency's role in issuing and guaranteeing loans to farmers for housing. In 1961 Congress authorized the agency to finance housing for nonfarm rural residents and general water projects for rural municipalities. Soon thereafter the FmHA extended credit for construction of low-cost rural apartments and certain types of rural recreational facilities. Increasingly during the 1960s

the agency shifted away from direct loans for housing and toward insuring loans from private sources. During the 1970s, concerns about revitalizing rural regions led to additional changes. In 1972, the agency began loaning funds for health facilities and public buildings such as fire stations and community centers in rural areas. Two years later the agency became involved in guaranteeing private loans to businesses in an effort to encourage business and industrial development in the countryside. By 1983 the agency had invested \$52.9 billion in programs for farmers, such as farm operating, ownership, and emergency loans; \$42.1 billion for rural housing; \$13.3 billion for development of community facilities, most notably water and sewage systems; and nearly \$5.5 billion in guaranteed loans to rural businesses. In 1994, in an attempt to streamline rural services, the Rural Development Mission Area within the Department of Agriculture was created to replace agencies including the FmHA.

See Also: FARM POLICY; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); HOUSING.

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BRIAN Q. CANNON

FARM FORECLOSURES

During the Great Depression, farm foreclosures became a disturbingly routine feature of rural life. Between 1929 and 1933, a third of all American farmers lost their farms in the worst disaster to hit American agriculture. Hundreds of thousands of farm-owning families had their hard-earned land seized from under them. The record number of foreclosures during the late 1920s and 1930s disillusioned farmers and contributed to an unprecedented degree of federal intervention to improve the farm economy.

What contributed to the large number of foreclosures was a farm debt problem that began during the agricultural depression of the 1920s and grew more severe by 1929. Farmers were knee-deep in debt, with about two-fifths of all farmers holding a mortgage and nearly three-fourths requiring credit to produce a crop from year to year. With crop prices declining, farmers were not able to pay off their mortgage loans. For instance, farm prices for cash crops, such as wheat, cotton, tobacco, and corn, fell steadily beginning in 1920. The price of corn dropped 78 percent, from 1.85 per bushel in June 1920 to 41 cents per bushel in December 1921. Prices rebounded somewhat during the mid-1920s, but plunged once again after the stock market crash in 1929. Between 1929 and 1932, crop and livestock prices plummeted by almost 75 percent. The impact on farm earnings was staggering. Farm income declined by 60 percent, from \$13.8 billion to \$6.5 billion, and the cash proceeds from marketing farm products in 1932 were about one-third lower than they had been in 1919.

As farmers defaulted on loans and made fewer deposits, many small country banks were forced to go out of business. In 1930 and 1931, more than 3,600 banks failed. Those banks, life insurance companies, and farm mortgage lenders that managed to survive had little choice but to drastically reduce the amount of credit they made available to farmers.

Consequently, farm foreclosures became more prevalent throughout the 1920s, and grew to sobering proportions by the 1930s. While the average foreclosure rate between 1913 and 1920 was 3.2 per 1,000 farms, it jumped to 17.4 per 1,000 farms in 1926, and by 1933 had reached 38.8 per 1,000 farms. During 1933, at the height of the Great Depression, more than 200,000 farms underwent foreclosure. Foreclosure rates were higher in the Great Plains states and some southern states than elsewhere. As Lee J. Alston argues in his article "Farm Foreclosures in the United States During the Interwar Period" (1983), farm distress also was more severe in rural areas that were far from urban areas because farm families had fewer opportunities to supplement their earnings with off-farm employment.

The devastating scale of foreclosures prompted many farmers to challenge the workings of capital-



This farm foreclosure sale, held in Iowa in 1933, was one of many such sales that occurred throughout the Midwest during the Depression. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

ism. Throughout the country, farmers vented their anger at public auctions that banks held to sell foreclosed property. In a phenomenon that came to be known as “penny auctions,” farmers attending the auctions placed ridiculously low bids on the available land. Anyone who attempted to significantly outbid these farmers faced jeers from the crowd and often risked violent reprisals. In many cases, disgruntled farmers managed to block foreclosure sales.

As farmers decried the increase in farm foreclosures and bank failures, the Herbert Hoover administration attempted to tackle the farm debt problem by establishing for the first time a government bureaucracy dedicated to helping farmers maintain

prices. With a budget of \$500 million, the Federal Farm Board was charged with making loans to farm marketing cooperatives and establishing corporations that would raise farm prices by buying surpluses. However, Hoover did not commit enough money to the Farm Board to make it work.

It was left to the Franklin Roosevelt administration to address the farm debt crisis through its New Deal programs. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 grappled with the underlying problem of falling farm prices through its crop production control program. The Farm Credit Administration provided much-needed mortgage relief to farmers. The Federal Farm Bankruptcy Act of 1934, also known as the Frazier-Lemke Farm Bankruptcy Act, enabled

some dispossessed farmers to regain their land even after foreclosure on their mortgages. However, the Supreme Court ruled this law unconstitutional in 1935. A number of states passed laws that attacked farm foreclosures directly. Between 1933 and 1935, twenty-five states passed farm foreclosure moratorium laws that temporarily prevented banks and other creditors from foreclosing on farmers who could not afford to make their mortgage payments. Despite these measures, there was no significant decline in the average rate of farm foreclosures until after 1940.

See Also: FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION (FCA); FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION (FHA).

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ADRIENNE M. PETTY

FARM POLICY

Farmers were among those hardest hit by the Great Depression. Their problems, however, had been around for nearly a decade. During World War I, European agriculture had been largely destroyed, and the U.S. government had been purchasing farm products. The result was inflated prices for many crops. From 1916 to 1919, for example, net farm income rose from \$4 billion to \$10 billion. In 1920, however, a combination of agricultural recovery in Europe and an end to government purchases of wheat created a situation in which the market was flooded with surplus crops. A bushel of wheat quickly fell from \$2.50 to less than a dollar. As prices tumbled, a decline exacerbated by the stock market crash of 1929, American farmers went from producing 16 percent to 9 percent of the national income.

When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933, he promised in his inaugural speech on March 4, 1933, to restore the health of agriculture. If the purchasing power of farmers was restored, he believed, farmers would in turn help boost the demand for manufactured goods. This could be accomplished, Roosevelt and many others believed, by decreasing production. Throughout the 1920s, agriculture had been characterized by overproduction as more crops were produced than the market could handle, thereby effectively driving down the prices. Farmers, then, were seen by Roosevelt as the key to bringing the nation out of the Depression.

Under the direction of Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace, the Roosevelt administration drew up the Agricultural Adjustment Act. The theory was that if production could be limited, then prices would rise, demand for farm commodities would more nearly match supply, and agriculture would recover. With these aims, the Act was pushed through Congress in May 1933. The Agricultural Adjustment Act gave subsidies to farmers based on the acreage of farmland that landowners either allowed to lie fallow or used for the production of non-surplus crops. For every bushel of corn, for example, that corn farmers did not raise, the government would pay them thirty cents. Over the next two years, while many Americans were starving, over thirty million acres of cotton, corn, and wheat fields were taken out of production, with farmers receiving over \$1.1 billion in government subsidies.

The goals of the Agricultural Adjustment Act were largely attained; from 1932 to 1936, the price of a bushel of wheat almost tripled. And hogs, which had been selling at \$3.34 per hundred pounds, rose to \$9.37. In terms of overall income, farmers witnessed a rise of \$1.8 billion to \$5 billion. If landowners benefited from the Agricultural Adjustment Act, those who worked their lands, such as tenant farmers and sharecroppers, did not. Although landowners were supposed to share the government payments with their tenants, they often failed to do so. Landowners, particularly in the South, pocketed the cash while evicting their tenants or sharecroppers, or cutting their acreage and simply not allowing them to grow cash crops.



A Farm Security Administration representative tries to convince three brothers in Box Elder county, Utah, in 1940 to form a cooperative to buy a tractor to replace their horses. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

In addition to the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Roosevelt administration launched the Tennessee Valley Authority, which was designed, in part, to aid the farmers of the rural South. In short, this public corporation held as central goals the generation of electricity along the Tennessee River and the making and distributing of nitrogen-based fertilizer. Thus, while attempts were made to limit the production of cash crops through the Agricultural Adjustment Act, other attempts were simultaneously made to increase the productivity of the farmers of the rural South.

While the droughts, floods, and dust storms (such as the 1935 to 1940 dust storms that caused the Dust Bowl in the states of Oklahoma, Texas, Kansas, and Colorado) helped to reduce harvests

and push up prices, new technologies counteracted the effects of such natural disasters, increasing productivity and driving small farmers from the land. In the 1930s, hybrid corn was developed and became increasingly popular among farmers in the Midwest. This new type of corn proved more resistant to disease and insects. In addition, the stalks grew straight and strong, the crop ripened all at once, and the ears were all at the same height, which meant that by using another new technology—the gasoline tractor—productivity would be increased. Even with other crops, such as cotton and new mechanical cotton-pickers, technology was used to increase production while the Roosevelt administration was simultaneously attempting to limit production.

In *Butler v. U.S.* (1936) the U.S. Supreme Court ruled the Agricultural Adjustment Act to be unconstitutional. To replace it, Congress passed the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act in 1936. This law aimed at eliminating soil-depleting crops and subsidizing farmers with general revenues rather than a special tax. In 1938, however, production quotas returned with a second Agricultural Adjustment Act. This farm bill, much like the original 1933 Act, gave the federal government the authority both to pay farmers not to plant crops and to set market prices for agricultural goods. Until World War II pulled the nation out of the Depression, subsidization served to reduce price inflation for agricultural goods and to increase net farm income.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT; AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); AGRICULTURE; LAND USE PLANNING.

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KIM RICHARDSON

FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA)

Through such novels as Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* (1932) and John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), the American public became aware of the extent of farm poverty in the United States, which was not merely a product of the Depression

but of long-term structural forces in the economy. The growth of tenancy, the impoverishment of soils, chronically low income, high levels of debt, and poor social services had produced a rural population that was "ill-housed, ill-clad, and ill-nourished," in the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's second inaugural address.

Initially, the New Deal's agricultural programs actually contributed to rural misery. The Agricultural Adjustment Administration's (AAA) crop subsidization programs often did not reach the tenants and sharecroppers who were in most need of federal support, and these programs also encouraged landowners to displace tenants and mechanize their holdings. The Farm Security Administration (FSA), however, followed a different trajectory than the AAA, giving priority to welfare and social reform goals and targeting poor, marginal farmers.

The FSA succeeded the Resettlement Administration (RA), which had been created by executive order in May 1935. Various existing federal programs relating to land conservation, resettlement, subsistence homesteads, greenbelt communities, and rural rehabilitation were consolidated under the RA. Rexford G. Tugwell, the RA's first administrator, had ambitions for a technocratic program of land reform, reclamation, and relocation as the administration's primary initiatives against rural poverty.

THE FSA'S DEPRESSION-ERA PROGRAMS

The FSA was created by the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act of July 1937 and was established as a division within the Department of Agriculture. Its first administrator was Will Alexander, who resigned in 1940 and was succeeded by Calvin B. Baldwin. The FSA developed a more focused agenda and a more practical range of measures to help small farmers stay on the land and to improve the farmer's lot within agriculture. Rural rehabilitation grants or loans constituted the most important aspect of the agency's work. The bulk of the FSA's expenditures were used for rehabilitation loans of between \$240 and \$600, which were intended to finance farm improvements. Some 700,000 families, about one-ninth of the total number of farm families in the United States, received FSA loans. The



An FSA county supervisor examines a sheep belonging to a rehabilitation client in Gage county, Nebraska, in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

FSA also inherited from the RA some 195 community resettlement projects, which were designed to provide small farmers with productive land and modern facilities, the economic benefits of group marketing and purchasing arrangements, the social benefits of cooperative community services, and the expertise of the FSA's agricultural and home management supervisors. Although these "instant communities" were criticized by FSA opponents for their flouting of the "American way," the resettlement projects never accounted for more than 10 percent of the FSA's expenditures and they were downgraded in importance after 1937.

Central to the political defense of the FSA's work was its role in helping tenants to become landowners. It is ironic that, while historians have

come to regard the AAA as the New Deal's most revolutionary agency because of its influence in driving small farmers off the land, the FSA, conventionally described as one of the New Deal's most progressive agencies, was trying to retain them there. However, the FSA's performance never matched its Jeffersonian rhetoric. The administration helped only 44,300 tenants to purchase land, with applications exceeding awards by a ratio of about twenty to one. Tenant purchase allocations accounted for only 13 percent of the aid dispensed by the Administration. The FSA also established camps for migratory laborers, and group medical services for small farmers, as well as various cooperative projects and debt adjustment programs.



A rural couple in Weld County, Colorado, discuss their farm plan with an FSA supervisor in October 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Such an ambitious agenda required a large and decentralized bureaucracy; thus the FSA was divided into twelve administrative regions. Each regional headquarters was supplemented by offices at state, district, and county levels, with project managers directing operations at the grass roots. By 1941 the FSA was organized in every state. Approximately three thousand county offices employed more than four thousand rural rehabilitation supervisors and more than four thousand home management supervisors around the country. However, the southern United States was the FSA's primary focus. More than 50 percent of county offices were located in the South, as were more than 60 percent of the rehabilitation and home management supervisors employed by the administration. Some eight thousand group projects were established in the South,

and southern farmers accounted for 60 percent of all rehabilitation loans issued, 47 percent of the rehabilitation credit advanced, and 70 percent of all tenant purchase loans. Furthermore, over 20 percent of the FSA's resettlement projects were located in FSA region 4, which comprised the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

Southern blacks accounted for approximately 22 to 25 percent of the FSA's rehabilitation clients, tenant purchase borrowers, and resettled farmers. Although this percentage did not equal the need among black farmers, the administration sought to ensure that its programs would benefit black Americans. Will Alexander, who was also director of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, was supported by administrators within the FSA, including

Constance Daniel and Joseph H. B. Evans, who were given specific responsibility for racial matters. To promote the agency to African Americans, the FSA purposefully channelled information about its programs through the black press and sought to expand the number of African-Americans in the FSA's own workforce. However, localism often undermined these efforts, despite the fact that each of the three southern regional directors had a black advisor; by 1941 there were only eighteen African-American employees among the 1,500 total employees of FSA's region 4.

Although the FSA's programs and leaders were not radical, the agency was regarded with suspicion and hostility in some quarters. In the South, especially, the FSA was underappreciated by the region's leadership groups, in part because the administration challenged the central aspects of the plantation system: landlords' control of labor, merchants' monopoly of credit, and white control of race relations. The agency also worked outside those institutions, including the Extension Service, land grant colleges, county agricultural agents, and the American Farm Bureau Federation, that maintained close relationships with the Department of Agriculture and through which federal aid to agriculture was traditionally channelled. In addition, the FSA attracted criticism from representatives of the constituencies that it intended to serve. The Southern Tenant Farmers' Union and the Socialist Party derided the administration's maintenance of the small farmer as "subsidized peasantry" and called for the establishment of agricultural cooperatives to make farming efficient by achieving economies of scale. Furthermore, the FSA often encountered the opposition of local communities, particularly when it attempted to establish camps for migratory laborers nearby.

The FSA's own clients provided no significant political counterweight to these powerful and well-connected adversaries. Invariably poor, disfranchised, and unorganized, the FSA's constituency was politically marginal. It was, therefore, vital to the future of federal aid for small farmers to cultivate a public and congressional mood of sympathy for their plight. This entailed overcoming reservations about the "un-American" nature of assistance

programs, reassuring individualist Americans who were apprehensive about the social and economic expansion of the federal government's role, and convincing the economy-minded that the cost was justified.

To this end, the FSA maintained an Information Division, which was responsible for promoting the agency to the media and to politicians, as well as for disseminating policy and good practice in the regions. The Information Division's Historical Section, headed by Roy E. Stryker, compiled a visual documentary record of America in Depression and wartime. Over an eight-year period, FSA photographers took more than 145,000 negatives, of which 77,000 were developed into prints. Although initially intended to provide instructional material to regional offices, the Historical Section organized exhibitions, developed filmstrips, and supplied photographic copy to the media in order to generate support for the FSA's programs and raise awareness of the issues that they addressed. Many of the photographs produced by the project are regarded as exemplary works of cultural significance, and the photographers who produced them, including Walker Evans, Dorothea Lange, and Ben Shahn, are celebrated as leading exponents of documentary photography.

THE FSA DURING WARTIME

After Roosevelt's announcement of a program of national defense in May 1940, the FSA adjusted its role to support preparedness. It initiated a "Food for Defense" program that sought to increase production of premium foodstuffs, such as hogs, chickens, and dairy products. The agency also became responsible for farm families displaced by the acquisition of land for defense purposes, and the FSA was assigned to provide accommodation for defense workers. Under the Lanham Defense Housing Act of October 1940, the FSA embarked on a number of prefabricated housing programs, such as those at Radford and Pulaski in western Virginia. After Congress appropriated funds for the Temporary Shelter Program for defense workers in March 1941, the FSA established trailer parks in the principal industrial centers. There were strong elements of continuity in the agency's wartime preparedness

work, which grew out of the FSA's well-established organizational and policy objectives of stimulation of productivity, diversification of small farms, and provision of aid to displaced persons and homeless workers.

Although the FSA sought to adapt to the nation's wartime needs, its political position eroded as agriculture became crucial to lend-lease and to the war effort. The Farm Bureau, which represented the nation's larger farmers, was determined to terminate the FSA, and the bureau found allies in conservatives of both parties, including Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee, Representative Clarence Cannon of Missouri, and Representative Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois. In December 1941 there was a serious move by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia to abolish the agency; although Byrd's effort was unsuccessful, the FSA's funding was cut by 30 percent for the 1942 to 1943 fiscal year. In April 1943, the House passed an appropriations bill that effectively terminated the FSA, although the agency was not officially disbanded until 1946 and some of its credit functions were subsequently adopted by the Farmers Home Administration. The FSA was unable to survive the prospering of the agricultural community during wartime and the burgeoning power of the Farm Bureau, whose administrators were able to use the wartime emergency to dismantle much of the apparatus by which the federal government managed the agricultural economy, as well as eliminate competition and ensure an adequate labor supply for its members. The Farm Bureau and its political allies were united by an underlying ideological objection to the FSA that related not only to the social class and race of the FSA's constituents, but to the association of welfare and state intervention with alien and radical ideas.

See Also: EVANS, WALKER; FARM POLICY; LANGE, DORTHEA; RESETTLEMENT ASSOCIATION (RA); SHAHN, BEN.

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STUART KIDD

FASCISM

The Communist International in 1933 defined *fascism* in power as "the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic, most imperialist elements of finance capital." Others have interpreted fascism as a middle-class radical movement, a cultural revolution, a state power independent of classes, and as a reaction to or a force for modernization.

Fascism is an ultra-right movement that emerged in a period of crisis in European society. Like other right-wing parties and movements before World War II, fascism opposed democracy, liberalism, socialism, and communism and emphasized support for hierarchy, nationalism, militarism, aggressive imperialism, and women's subordination. In seeking power, fascist movements were organized around a charismatic leader, used the techniques of mass politics to win support from the middle strata of war veterans, shop owners, artisans, and white-collar workers, and sought to con-

trol the streets with the use of paramilitary bands. When they came to power, fascists ended parliamentary systems and terrorized their opponents. The Nazi variant claimed a race-based superiority for “Aryans” and embraced a virulent anti-Semitism both to designate a scapegoat for Germany’s problems and to be able to bribe supporters with property and positions taken from German Jews.

The first fascist movement was that of Italy’s Benito Mussolini, who came to power with the aid of conservative elites seeking to put down the revolutionary workers’ movement arising after World War I. The international influence of fascism greatly increased when the Nazis assumed power in Germany in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression. Significant fascist movements arose in Hungary, Austria, and Romania, and smaller fascist movements, such as the Falange in Spain, became important with support from Germany and Italy. Germany’s power led many authoritarian leaders in Europe to ally with the Nazis. Support for the fascist example existed in Latin America, but only Argentina favored the Axis in World War II. The third Axis power, Japan, was authoritarian, militaristic, nationalist, anticommunist, and aggressive, but its attempt at a fascist mass politics, the Imperial Rule Assistance Association, had limited impact.

Fascism had limited appeal in the United States in the 1930s, but, given its growth internationally, liberals and leftists were worried about the potential for it. Important cultural manifestations of this fear were Sinclair Lewis’s play *It Can’t Happen Here*, performed simultaneously by seventeen Federal Theatre Project troupes in 1935, and such films as Anatole Litvak’s *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939) and Frank Capra’s *Meet John Doe* (1941).

Small, distinctly fascist organizations in the United States included the Silver Shirt Legion and the Defenders of the Christian Faith, but more important were ethnic-based groups. Mussolini received favorable press coverage in the United States before his alliance with Adolf Hitler, and there was majority support for his government in Italian-American communities on nationalist grounds. Most Italian-American newspapers supported Mussolini, and fascist organizations were influen-



Fascist leaders Benito Mussolini (left) of Italy and Adolf Hitler of Germany during a parade ceremony, 1939. MUZEJ REVOLUCIJE NARODNOSTI JUGOSLAVIJE, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

tial in the community. However, Italian Americans opposed the anti-Semitic decrees issued by Mussolini in 1938. The German-American Bund, which emphasized anti-Semitism, anti-communism, and alleged unfair treatment in the United States of German Americans, gained a degree of control over some German-American community groups. Recalling the negative attacks on everything German in the World War I period, German-American organizations were slow to criticize the Nazis. In 1938, with increased criticism of Nazi anti-Semitism and fears rising that Nazism was an external and internal danger to the United States, German Americans spoke out against Nazism.

Important movements that may be regarded as semi-fascist include the National Union for Social

Justice led by Father Charles Coughlin. Emerging as an important radio personality in the early Depression years, Coughlin's organization was anti-communist and organized around devotion to him personally. Coughlin was stridently anti-Semitic and hostile to the Allied cause in World War II. Whether the movement led by Huey Long can also be characterized as fascist or semi-fascist is in dispute. Long was authoritarian in his conduct of the government of Louisiana, anti-communist, and demagogic in his calls to make "Every Man a King" and "Share Our Wealth." On the other hand, Long opposed the oligarchy in Louisiana, called for taxing the rich, and did not appeal to racism in a region in which movements of the political right usually emphasized racism.

Important Americans who lent support to fascism included Henry Ford, who disseminated the *Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion* forgery in the 1920s, employed the leader of the Bund, and accepted a medal from Nazi Germany in 1938. Famed aviator and isolationist Charles Lindbergh likewise accepted a medal, as did IBM president Thomas J. Watson, although Watson returned his in 1940.

See Also: COUGHLIN, CHARLES; DICTATORSHIP; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; HITLER, ADOLF; MUSSOLINI, BENITO; SPANISH CIVIL WAR.

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MARTIN HALPERN

FATHER DIVINE

Father Divine (May 1879–September 10, 1965), the noted and controversial founder of the Peace Mission movement, gained national prominence during the Great Depression for his ability to feed and provide jobs for the poor, as well as for his followers' claims that he was God.

Born George Baker in Rockville, Maryland, in 1879, Divine grew up in poverty and segregation, the son of ex-slaves who were menial laborers. Although he had limited educational opportunities, he became an avid reader of religious literature. In 1899, he moved to Baltimore, where he worked as a gardener and taught Sunday school in a storefront church. During these years, Baker formulated a unique theology that blended New Thought (the mind power philosophy that encouraged believers to channel God's inner presence for happiness, prosperity, and health), African-American Christianity, Pentecostalism, and other religious ideologies. In 1912, convinced that he had achieved oneness with God, he set out as an itinerant preacher and attracted a small following who recognized his divinity.

In 1919, Baker, now known as Father Divine, settled with his flock and lived peacefully in Sayville, Long Island. But with the onset of the Depression, Divine's congregation expanded and his white neighbors turned hostile and complained, which led to his conviction in 1932 for maintaining a public nuisance. Only four days after handing down the maximum sentence, the presiding judge died suddenly. The incident propelled Father Divine into the national limelight.

After his conviction was overturned, Divine relocated his headquarters to Harlem, where interest in his teachings boomed. Thousands attended Peace Mission banquets and rallies. Nationwide disciples followed his example by pooling their resources to open up Peace Missions and collective business endeavors. Additionally, Divine campaigned vigorously for civil rights, sponsoring voter registration drives and various challenges to segregation. Divine emerged as a critic of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Charging that Roosevelt's New Deal perpetuated dependency, Divine preached

self-reliance and collective capitalism. He also attacked Roosevelt's refusal to address racial issues and endorse anti-lynching legislation.

The Peace Mission movement was one of the few genuinely integrated organizations of the 1930s and offered hope to a variety of Americans. Certainly, many were drawn to Father Divine for their basic needs. But his social agenda, as well as his conviction that everyone could achieve success through positive thinking, was particularly empowering for both blacks, whose community had historically languished economically in depression, and whites who were also confronting economic chaos.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; CHARITY; RELIGION.

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JILL WATTS

FAULKNER, WILLIAM

William Cuthbert Faulkner (September 25, 1897–July 6, 1962) is one of America's most important and highly regarded writers of fiction. Although his literary career spanned four decades, almost all of his most important work dates from between 1929 and 1942, a period beginning with the appearance of his novels *Sartoris* (1929) and *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), and closing with *Go Down, Moses* (1942). Faulkner's work is perhaps most noted for its complex narrative structure and its dazzling use of language and voice.

Born in New Albany, Mississippi, into a prominent (though somewhat declining) north Mississippi family, Faulkner spent most of his childhood down the road in Oxford, where his family moved in 1902. In 1915, Faulkner dropped out of high school to pursue a career in writing, first as poet and later as fiction writer. Encouraged and sup-

ported by Oxford lawyer Phil Stone, Faulkner began a series of travels that took him to the Northeast, Canada, Europe, and New Orleans, with occasional stops back in Oxford. Strongly influenced by Sherwood Anderson, whom he first met in 1924 while living in New Orleans, Faulkner published his first two novels, *Soldier's Pay* (1926) and *Mosquitoes* (1927), to limited critical success.

In the late 1920s, Faulkner returned to Oxford and turned his literary efforts almost exclusively to works exploring life in north Mississippi. In a number of his best novels and stories, including *Sartoris* (1929), *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), *As I Lay Dying* (1930), *Sanctuary* (1931), *Light in August* (1932), *Absalom! Absalom!* (1936), *The Unvanquished* (1938), *The Hamlet* (1940), and *Go Down, Moses* (1942), Faulkner portrayed with often dizzying complexity the life and history of his fictional Mississippi county, Yoknapatawpha. Something close to tragic doom cloaks almost all of Faulkner's work, particularly in his portrayal of the South's massive cultural transformations wrought by forces of intolerance, modernization, and greed.

Faulkner's critical reputation—and financial solvency—floundered precariously until the late 1940s, when publication of Malcolm Cowley's *The Portable Faulkner* initiated a resurgence of interest. Capping this stunning critical reappraisal was Faulkner's receiving of the 1954 Nobel Prize for Literature. Although he continued to write until his death in 1962, little of Faulkner's later fiction matches the power, intensity, and complexity of his work from the late 1920s through the early 1940s.

Faulkner is now regarded as one of America's and the world's greatest writers. His writing style, dense and packed at times to the bursting point, embodies his belief that every moment of existence is pressured almost to suffocation by all that has come before—the past, as he said, is never past. His experiments with narrative form and structure mark Faulkner as one of the greats of high modernism, and profoundly influenced the shape of the twentieth-century novel. Nowhere was his influence more dominant than in the development of twentieth-century Southern literature, where not only his narrative fireworks but also his thematic concerns—particularly the grinding conflict between

the traditional and the modern—became for several generations touchstones of Southern expression.

See Also: LITERATURE.

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ROBERT H. BRINKMEYER, JR.

FAUSET, CRYSTAL BIRD

Elected as a Democrat from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Crystal Bird Fauset (June 27, 1894–March 28, 1965) was the first African-American woman state legislator in the United States. She was born in Princess Anne, Maryland, and grew up in Boston. From 1918 to 1926, she worked for the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) as field secretary and adviser for the Program for Younger Girls. In 1931, Bird graduated with a bachelor’s degree from the Teachers College of Columbia University in New York. She was married to Arthur Huff Fauset from 1935 to 1944.

During the early years of the Great Depression, Oscar DePriest was the lone black congressman and thus blacks sought political change primarily at the state and local level. Here Bird was effective. From 1933 to 1935 she worked for Swarthmore College’s Institute of Race Relations in Pennsylvania. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt became president, Crystal Bird became a member of the Democratic Party; as director of Negro women’s activities in Philadelphia, she encouraged black women to participate in politics. After this, she was appointed director of the Women and Professional Project in the Works Progress Administration (WPA) program in Philadelphia, where she succeeded in getting more black women employed.

In 1935, while serving on the Federal Housing Advisory Board, Fauset advocated better urban housing for the poor. In 1938 she won election to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, where she sponsored legislation protecting women in the workplace. In 1939, however, Fauset resigned her house seat, and through the influence of her friend, first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, she became assistant director of education and recreation programs for the Pennsylvania WPA. Two years later, Fauset became a member of the so-called Roosevelt black cabinet in Washington, D.C., which included Mary McLeod Bethune and Arthur W. Mitchell, among others. As head of the race relations division of the Office of Civilian Affairs (OCA), Fauset promoted civil defense planning in the black community, recruited blacks for the military, and monitored complaints about race discrimination. Disappointed with the Roosevelt administration’s record on civil rights, she bolted the Democratic Party in 1944 to support Republican presidential candidate Thomas E. Dewey, who rewarded Fauset’s switch to the GOP by appointing her to the Republican National Committee’s division on Negro affairs. During the postwar period Fauset was a strong supporter of African independence and she was active in local politics in Philadelphia. She died in Philadelphia in 1965.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; DE PRIEST, OSCAR; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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ERIC LEDELL SMITH

FCA. *See* FARM CREDIT ADMINISTRATION.

FCC. *See* FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION.

FCIC. *See* FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION.

FDIC. *See* FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION.

FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP)

The Federal Art Project (FAP) was created in August 1935 as one of several cultural programs within the Works Progress Administration (WPA) of the New Deal. Other agencies were established simultaneously to support American theater, writing, and music. The FAP, under the direction of Holger Cahill from its inception until its closing in 1943, marked an important symbolic change in federal governmental subvention for the visual arts. Before its creation, state art patronage had been funded entirely by the U. S. Treasury and had been governed by the principle of commissioning great art that celebrated the United States and its history since the American Revolution. Murals were commissioned and painted in federal buildings such as courts, customs houses, and post offices. Works of the highest quality, based on European history-painting conventions and values, were placed in all the federal buildings in Washington, D.C., essentially as propagandistic adornments. In contrast, the purpose of the FAP, as part of the WPA, was not to commission the best artists to celebrate the nation-state, but to provide work relief for the thousands of painters, sculptors, and graphic designers who had been thrown out of work by the Depression in the early 1930s.

Holger Cahill, who had been a museum director and specialist in American crafts history before leading the FAP, had a utopian sense of the possible future of his organization and its role in creating a cultural democracy in the United States. Although this vision chimed with the idealism of some radical

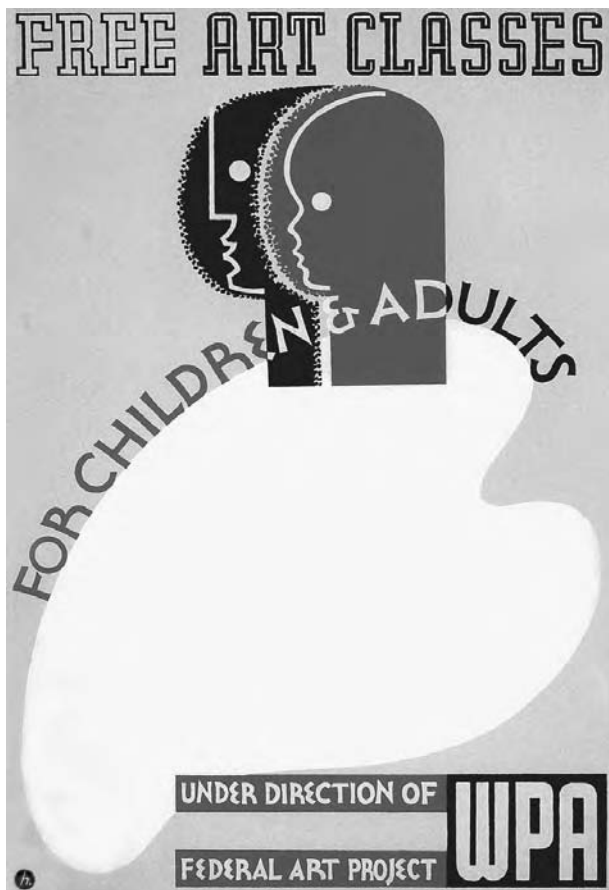


Crystal Bird Fauset, 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

(left-wing) New Dealers in government, the actual history of the FAP demonstrates the pragmatism of New Deal agencies and the contingent turns and twists in Roosevelt's statecraft during the 1930s.

The FAP operated a number of programs that utilized artists and artworks in different and sometimes contradictory ways. Cahill had overall control but considerable power was held by the managers of specific sections that dealt with recruitment of artists, organization of their work patterns, and determination of their art tasks. The FAP operated nationally, in every state, and was fairly decentralized in management. The majority of artists, however, were based in New York City, and it was their work that attracted the most attention, both from the mass media and from other parts of government disturbed by the leftist profile the arts program began to develop by 1936.

The FAP Easel Division paid artists to paint and sculpt in return for a weekly wage. This employ-



Among its many initiatives, the Federal Art Project (FAP) organized free art classes, as announced by this poster during the late 1930s. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA POSTER COLLECTION

ment of artists as wage laborers in some ways was the most radical aspect of the program because it ostensibly treated painters and sculptors as no different from any other kind of worker in American society. Controversies recurred over how and whom to select for the program, and how to assess their work alongside all the other forms of manual labor supported by New Deal agencies. Many well-known artists found work on this scheme in New York, including Stuart Davis and Willem de Kooning. Unfortunately, many of the thousands of paintings and sculptures produced were destroyed either directly by the government (who retained control of them) on a variety of grounds—some local officials had reasoned, for instance, that the art

works were created only for the duration of the Federal Art Project and therefore should be destroyed when the project ended—or inadvertently, through its lack of care in their storage or maintenance *in situ*.

The FAP also operated a mural division that commissioned artists to design and install large-scale paintings in a range of federal buildings, including hospitals, prisons, and airports. Some of these artists who produced work as part of this scheme became well known in the 1950s as abstract expressionists, including Arshile Gorky, who painted a mural called *Aviation: Evolution of Forms under Aerodynamic Limitations* (1936) at Newark Airport, and Philip Guston, who worked on a mural called *Maintaining America's Skills* (1939–1940) at the New York World's Fair WPA pavilion. Many hundreds of murals were placed in buildings across the country in a process that involved the local representatives of prospective host institutions. Relatively few cases of dissatisfaction are recorded. FAP art, on the whole, was subject to relatively few charges of propaganda.

By the late 1930s, however, anticommunist forces in government and in the press attacked the FAP as a left-wing organization, saw that its funding was reduced or suspended, and attempted to intimidate its administrators, who, for the most part, continued to believe that the program was an instrument for radical social change in the country. By that time, however, the radicalism of the New Deal had evaporated, a casualty of the decline in popular support for peacetime Roosevelt, the re-emergence of a conservative coalition in Congress, and the end of already heavily strained alliances between the administration and antifascist organizations in the United States.

By the end of 1943 the FAP had been wrapped up, reorganized, and renamed, shorn entirely of the idealism and populism that had motivated its leaders and many of its artists for nearly eight years. Artists who had painted easel pictures, or murals in federal buildings, or organized art education in the FAP's community art center scheme, or contributed drawings to its *Index of American Design*, had either been sacked or set to work for the military, producing camouflage patterns or illustrations for guide-



The Federal Art Project sponsored the painting of murals in public buildings across the country, including these by Reginald Marsh on the dome of the New York City Customs House in Manhattan. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

books for U. S. soldiers about to invade the country's enemies. Only about \$35 million was ever spent on FAP activities—less than one percent of federal works funding in the New Deal. In symbolic terms, however, as an intervention into the nation's culture motivated by a history of democratic idealism that long preceded Roosevelt's presidency, the FAP was important, and it continues to figure in debates about the role of artists and the place of art in contemporary American society.

See Also: AMERICAN SCENE, THE; ART; CAHILL, HOLGER; FEDERAL ONE; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JONATHAN HARRIS

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC)

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC), an independent governmental agency, has the responsibility of regulating both wired and wireless communication in the United States. Created in 1934, the FCC took over responsibilities that had been divided between the Interstate Commerce Commission, the U.S. Post Office and the Department of Commerce. Its broad mandate gave it jurisdiction over radio, telegraph, wire, and cable operations and, by extension, made it responsible for television and other forms of new communication as they appeared on the scene in ensuing decades. It replaced the Federal Radio Commission, set up by the Radio Act of 1927, and was charged with the orderly development of broadcasting—but not censorship of content—as well as with ensuring telephone and telegraph services at reasonable rates. It also was given supervision of the National Emergency Broadcast system, a coordinated effort to use licensed communications services for national defense purposes.

The importance of radio during the Depression helped lead to quick passage of the legislation establishing the FCC. There was widespread agree-

ment that the Radio Commission had failed to solve technical, economic, and political questions involved in broadcasting and that unified regulation of communications was needed. President Herbert Hoover, who had been behind passage of the 1927 legislation, however, blocked a more comprehensive act with a pocket veto in 1933. Soon after taking office, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established a committee to study communication issues. It recommended in January 1934 that a federal agency be set up to ensure competition, regulate charges, extend services, and oversee mergers in the communications field. In a message to Congress on February 26, 1934, Roosevelt proposed transferring existing regulatory functions to a new federal commission.

The president's position was in line with New Deal policies on regulation in general. Under his leadership Congress established three other regulatory bodies, the National Labor Relations Board, the Civil Aeronautics Authority, and the Securities and Exchange Commission. Including the FCC, these bodies were vested with wide-ranging discretionary power limited only by narrow judicial review. Their aim was to provide a forum in which the clash of business and governmental interests could be resolved peacefully in the depths of the Depression. The establishment of these agencies showed New Deal interest in regulating combinations of businesses rather than protecting individual small businesses. In the case of the FCC, Congress acted, in effect, to permit a concentrated radio system, which became increasingly dominated by commercial networks, as radio grew in political, economic, and social importance during the 1930s.

The FCC came into existence when Congress passed the Communications Act on May 31, 1934, and Roosevelt signed it into law on June 19. Passage came after David Sarnoff, president of the Radio Corporation of America (RCA), and other industry leaders testified at congressional hearings that consolidated regulation was essential for establishment of effective national communication policy. Under the act, the Congress vested almost unlimited discretion in the FCC, giving it authority to allocate the airwaves by issuing licenses to broadcasters for a period of three years. The com-

mission was directed to take into account public convenience, interest, and necessity.

The legislation called for a bipartisan commission of seven members appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate to serve for seven years each, with one member to be named chair. The commission held its first meeting in Washington on July 11, 1934, and voted unanimously to continue the status quo in broadcast regulation put in place by the Federal Radio Commission. Herbert L. Pettey, who had been named secretary of the radio commission after serving as radio director of Roosevelt's 1932 presidential campaign, was appointed FCC secretary, and other employees of the radio commission also moved over to the FCC.

The agency was organized into four main operating divisions. The common carrier bureau regulated communications services; the broadcast bureau licensed radio stations; the safety and special radio service bureau supervised aviation, emergency, taxi, and amateur communications; and the engineering bureau conducted licensing examinations. Established with a budget of \$1,146,885 and a staff of 442, the FCC initially oversaw about eight hundred commercial and educational radio stations.

In following years, a multitude of technical and political issues confronted the FCC as television, computers, and satellite communication emerged. Critics contended the FCC was too responsive to business and not attuned to educational interests. Nevertheless, the wide-ranging and vaguely defined powers given the commission in 1934 allowed it to deal with enormous changes in communication in the twentieth century.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934;
COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; RADIO.

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MAURINE H. BEASLEY

FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE CORPORATION (FCIC)

The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) was established by Congress under the Federal Crop Insurance Act, or Title V of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. Thereby, the United States became the first nation to extend crop insurance to farmers. Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace championed crop insurance not only as a means of reducing farmers' economic risk but as a way to stabilize grain supplies and promote what Wallace called an ever-normal granary.

Wallace chaired a presidential Committee on Crop Insurance from 1936 to 1937. Acting upon the committee's recommendation, Congress created the FCIC within the Department of Agriculture. Congress authorized the FCIC to insure 50 to 75 percent of a farmer's average wheat harvest against losses from "unavoidable" calamities, including "drought, flood, hail, wind, winterkill, lightning, tornado, insect infestation, [or] plant disease." County committees for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration calculated premiums for the program. Premiums and claims could be paid in wheat or cash, but the FCIC maintained its reserves in grain in order to be able to compensate for changes in wheat prices. Planners hoped the program would even out the grain supply, with the government stockpiling wheat in abundant years when few claims were payable, and selling wheat from its storehouses in years of low harvests and numerous claims.



A farmer posts an ever-normal granary sign to his corn crib. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

In 1939, its first year of operation, the FCIC insured 165,775 farms and disbursed 2.6 million more bushels in indemnities than it collected in premiums. In 1940 the agency began insuring cotton as well as wheat. From 1939 to 1943, the U.S. Treasury heavily subsidized the FCIC. As a result of the FCIC's poor financial performance, Congress eliminated the program in mid-1943, only to reinstitute and expand it while doubling the FCIC's budget in 1944. Beginning in 1945, Congress also permitted the FCIC to experiment with insuring any crop if adequate data existed for determining premiums. As a result of continued losses, Congress scaled back the FCIC's operations in 1947. In 1948, the agency insured farmers in only 375 counties, down from 2,500 counties in the preceding year. The changes helped to place the FCIC on a firmer finan-

cial footing, and during the 1950s and 1960s the agency gradually extended its activities as it experimented with insuring many crops on a piecemeal basis. Despite the modest expansion, by 1974 the agency insured only 7.5 percent of the nation's harvested cropland. In 1980, Congress removed key restrictions that it had imposed on the agency in 1947 and permitted the FCIC to insure any crop for which sufficient actuarial data existed in any agricultural county. In 1994, the nation's lawmakers made crop insurance a prerequisite for federal loans or payments under governmental price support programs. Congress ended its experiment with mandatory participation in 1996, but it prohibited growers from receiving any disaster benefits from the government unless they had purchased crop insurance. In 2000, Congress permitted private com-

panies to submit proposals to the FCIC for insurance plans that either supplemented or supplanted insurance contracts offered by the agency.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT; FARM POLICY; WALLACE, HENRY A.

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BRIAN Q. CANNON

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (FDIC)

They became, unwittingly, the most powerful image of the Great Depression, standing nervously in long lines, clutching their deposit books, hoping against hope to get inside before the bank closed its doors, leaving them penniless. Today, their visages survive only in the memories of America's "greatest generation" or in the imaginations of television viewers watching another holiday season broadcast of Frank Capra's 1946 film *It's a Wonderful Life*. The long lines of nervous bank depositors disappeared, thanks to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), arguably the New Deal's most enduring and least controversial legacy. Knowing that the FDIC, an agency of the federal government, would guarantee all individual bank deposits up to a certain maximum, anxious depositors no longer needed to demand cash at teller windows, and bankers no longer had to engage in fire sale liquidations of assets to satisfy them. In doing so, the Federal De-

posit Insurance Corporation ended the gravest threat ever to financial instability in the United States.

During the 1920s and early 1930s, the American banking system underwent a financial meltdown because of undercapitalization, real estate speculation, the agricultural depression, problems on Wall Street, and overcompetition in some markets. Between 1918 and 1933, more than thirty thousand financial institutions—banks, savings banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions, and insurance companies—declared insolvency. The problem became so severe in the spring of 1933 that recently inaugurated President Franklin D. Roosevelt had to declare a national bank holiday, closing every bank in the United States and scrambling for short-term and long-term solutions to the problem.

During the end stage of the Herbert Hoover administration, when the banking crisis was reaching catastrophic proportions, Congressman Henry Steagall, a Democrat from Alabama, proposed the establishment of a federal agency to insure individual bank accounts. Such an agency, Steagall argued, would help preserve bank capital and prevent another crisis. If individual depositors knew that the government guaranteed their deposits, they would be less likely to make a so-called run on the bank to empty their accounts. Bankers would then be saved from the need to generate cash by calling in loans and selling stocks, bonds, and real estate, often at highly deflated prices, which badly eroded their capital reserves and permanently weakened them. Most private bankers, however, bitterly opposed the measure, and President Hoover was not inclined to undertake such a vast expansion of federal authority.

By March 1933, however, with Hoover out of the White House, the opposition of private bankers melted away. The nation was caught in an unprecedented financial crisis, and the private sector possessed neither the resources nor the will to address it. Congressman Steagall attached his proposal for a federal agency to guarantee bank deposits to what later became known as the Banking Act of 1933. At first, President Franklin D. Roosevelt opposed the notion of federal deposit insurance, not so much

because of any personal philosophical disagreements but because Senator Carter Glass of Virginia, the influential chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, worried that federal deposit insurance would concentrate too much power in Washington, D.C. As the legislation was written and debated, however, Glass's opposition waned, and so did the president's.

The measure went through Congress with little opposition, and on June 16, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed it into law. The legislation established the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which insured individual bank accounts up to \$5,000. All national banks had to sign up for FDIC insurance, and all state banks wanting to enroll also had to agree to become part of the Federal Reserve System, requirements that automatically brought more stability to financial markets. The insurance program went into effect on January 1, 1934, financed with \$150 million in federal appropriations and premium payments by member banks.

In a matter of weeks, the value of the FDIC became obvious. Americans treated non-FDIC banks like financial pariahs. Bankers had no choice, if they had any hope of surviving and profiting, but to join the FDIC. By the end of 1935, more than 14,400 banks had enrolled for FDIC insurance, and bankers displayed the FDIC sign at every teller's window. Those signs became American icons, proof that every bank displaying one was safe; if it was not, the federal government would make good on the deposit. During 1934, only thirty-two banks failed in the United States, the fewest in a generation. Since then, the American banking system, from the perspective of depositors, has become the safest in the world, thanks largely to the FDIC.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); GLASS-STEGALL ACT OF 1933.

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JAMES S. OLSON

FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA)

Before 1929 public relief was not designed to cope with the continuing effects of mass unemployment. The responsibility for helping the destitute lay with towns, townships, and county governments whose efforts were supplemented by private charities. There was great faith in the ability of community representatives to judge who was, and who was not, entitled to public assistance. In order to prevent the growth of dependency, relief was always minimal and usually given in kind rather than cash.

As early in the Great Depression as the winter of 1930 to 1931, however, it was clear that the existing system could not provide sufficient help for the destitute in some parts of the country. Legitimate demands for assistance grew, but tax revenues declined and taxpayers resisted further calls on their contributions to local budgets. Gradually states were obliged to assist their local units, but state coffers were soon exhausted and in some cases constitutional limitations severely restricted the contributions states could make to the relief problem. Private charities engaged in vigorous fund-raising, but by 1932 many donors had lost the will, or the ability, to maintain contributions at a high level. In the vast majority of cases, public and private relief was given without proper investigation by a trained social worker, and record keeping ranged from poor to nonexistent. Many relief agencies expected the able-bodied to perform a physical task, such as wood chopping, before assistance would be given.

Before long the demands for federal intervention, which had previously been limited to help with natural disasters, became too strong to resist. In July 1932 the Emergency Relief and Construction Act made \$300 million available for distribution to the states by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). Federal funding could be secured by



These unemployed men wait outside the FERA office in New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1935 in hope of finding temporary work.

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governors in the form of a loan, but only if it was shown that the resources of their states were insufficient to meet legitimate relief needs. In other words, federal loans were to supplement, but not replace, the states' own efforts. By March 1933 the \$300 million had been exhausted, but the problems remained acute, and the public waited to see how the new president would respond.

THE FOUNDATION OF THE FERA

On May 12, 1933, Congress established the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Initially \$500 million was made available for the FERA to distribute to the states as grants rather than loans. The loan policy of the RFC was discontinued, and in June 1934 the requirement that the loans be repaid was waived. However, as with the

RFC, all FERA applications had to be made by governors, who were required to give detailed information on how the grant would be used and to provide a full accounting of the resources available within the state. Like RFC funds, FERA funds were allocated on the understanding that they supplemented rather than replaced local efforts. The FERA, under its administrator, Harry Hopkins, was authorized to analyze requests and distribute the funds to individual states within the constraints of a newly devised regulatory framework.

The \$500 million allocated by Congress was divided into two equal parts, with \$250 million available to states on a matching basis. States could secure one dollar of federal money for every three that had been spent on unemployment relief over the previous three months, provided the standards of

relief administration were consistent with those laid down by the FERA. The majority of grants advanced during the first few months of the FERA were made using this rigid formula, but it was soon clear that many states were unable to meet the matching requirements.

The second portion of \$250 million was given to the administrator to allocate on a discretionary basis, and all future funding was distributed in this manner. This was a recognition that the impact of the Depression was regionally variable, as was the ability of individual states to cope with the problems posed by it. The imposition of a national formula was, therefore, unrealistic, but the FERA wanted to ensure that each state did what it could to help its own destitute. Hopkins was also determined to impose minimum professional standards for the delivery of relief, including the development of useful work relief projects that would both raise the morale of those employed on them and generate public support. Because its principal concern was loan repayment, the RFC had required governors to provide financial information with their applications. However, the FERA had a more broadly based agenda.

In order to make equitable discretionary allocations, the FERA demanded from all states monthly reports that included details of the numbers receiving relief, the case load, case load costs, the administration of relief operations, and the influence of seasonal factors on relief numbers. In addition, the states provided information on economic conditions, on taxation policy, on current and future debt, and on the possibility of raising additional tax revenue. The data played a crucial role in determining monthly discretionary allocations and in building up an accurate national picture of a wide range of complex social problems. Moreover, FERA field officers advised state relief administrations on federal policy; they also encouraged the adoption of best practice in, for example, determining eligibility for relief and methods of social investigation, and they provided a valuable link between Washington and those implementing policy. As the quality of the monthly state reports improved and the accounts of the field agents were absorbed, it became clear that hardship had many different causes and affected a wide variety of individuals and families.

The relationships that developed between the FERA, the states, and their political subdivisions were important to the functioning of FERA. Each state was required to create a central body known as the State Emergency Relief Administration (SERA), which each month would distribute FERA grants, usually to county relief committees. Appointments to SERAs had to be approved by Hopkins and private welfare agencies were excluded from the administration of FERA funds. Relief clients did not receive their wages or their grocery orders directly from the FERA, but from local relief agencies. The FERA was a state- and locally-run initiative based on cooperation with the federal government. However, where Hopkins judged cooperation deficient, the FERA could assume control of the state's relief administration, and during 1934 and 1935 six states had their relief programs federalized.

THE BUDGETARY DEFICIENCY PRINCIPLE

All applicants for relief were investigated by social workers at a local relief station in order to determine their eligibility. There was widespread support for the view that successful applicants for relief who were fit for work should perform some task that would help maintain work habits. Hopkins and his colleagues were determined that FERA work relief would emphasize projects that were of value to the community, and they encouraged the elimination of demeaning make-work tasks designed solely as a deterrent.

The general rule with all work relief projects was that they should not compete with private business and that remuneration must be sufficient to maintain morale but not so generous that private sector jobs became unattractive. The FERA issued regulations outlining the types of projects that were acceptable, but the selection, planning, and management of them was a matter for states and localities. Relief work was heavily skewed towards road improvements and the construction of public buildings. The unskilled were easily accommodated, but there were relatively few opportunities for white-collar workers and women. Hourly wage rates matched those for similar work in the private sector.

However, the weekly relief wage, or the value of relief in kind, was determined by the *budgetary deficiency principle*. In the course of assessing relief eligibility, social workers, following FERA guidelines, conducted a detailed investigation of the possible sources of income for each applicant. For example, help from churches or local charities, income from part-time work or the sale of garden produce, or the existence of savings were recorded. The investigation also required the social worker to visit the applicant's home, and an assessment was made of the applicant's needs: What was the cost of food, housing, fuel, and other necessities required to ensure that living standards did not fall below an unacceptable minimum. The difference between the incomings and the needs represented the deficiency in the applicant's budget and the amount of relief, either in work relief wages or in kind, to which the applicant was entitled.

The advantage of this system was that differences in circumstances, including the cost of living, could be taken into account. Moreover each relief applicant was, in theory, subject to a proper case-work investigation. However, the exercise was initially very time consuming and also called for regular reinvestigation to ensure that any changes in the client's deficiency budget could be taken into account. There were also formidable managerial problems on relief projects because there was no standard working week. Each worker was employed only for as long as it took to earn the deficiency in his or her budget.

Although the FERA emphasized the need for carefully planned work relief projects paying wages in cash, it proved difficult for some states to deliver this program for their fit needy unemployed. In November 1933, the federal government decided to introduce a new initiative, the Civil Works Administration (CWA), which took over the FERA's role until April 1934. For a short while the CWA provided work for some four million unemployed, whether they were in need of relief or not.

EMERGENCY RELIEF PROGRAMS

After the CWA wound down, a new work relief program was introduced with the FERA and the states resuming the relationship they had estab-

lished before November 1933. The budgetary deficiency principle that had been suspended under the CWA was reactivated and over five million cases received emergency relief each month during the first half of 1935. Although FERA officials were strong supporters of work relief for the able-bodied, during the first six months of 1935 less than half of all relief cases received work relief wages; the remainder were direct relief cases. Only some of the direct relief recipients were unemployable. It was clear that a number of states lacked the zeal and managerial efficiency required to establish effective work relief projects. In 1935 Roosevelt announced a major change in relief policy. With the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the federal government would provide a work relief program that would cater to the needy able-bodied. Unemployables would be cared for by the states and would no longer be a federal responsibility. When the president stated that he wanted the federal government to quit the business of relief, it was care of unemployables he had in mind. During the second half of 1935 the FERA was gradually eliminated.

The realization of the complexity of economic distress had persuaded FERA administrators to develop four special emergency relief programs that targeted specific groups. They were Rural Rehabilitation, Relief for Transients, College Student Aid, and Emergency Education. With the demise of the FERA, care for transients became the responsibility of the states.

CONCLUSION

The FERA was a bold initiative of great significance. The federal government assumed responsibility for the welfare of millions of Americans, both employable and unemployable, and did so by means of grants, not loans. FERA staff sought to improve relief administration standards, and they accommodated local problems and tried to support work relief wherever possible. Thanks to the FERA, relief provision became more generous and payment in cash rather than kind became much more common. The collection of detailed information on relief provision across the nation meant that both urban and rural hardship was better understood and could be addressed more systematically.

Total FERA grants to the states amounted to \$3,022,602,326, which represented just over 70 percent of the entire expenditure on emergency relief during this period. Because so much of the allocation was distributed on a discretionary basis, some poverty-stricken states, mostly in the South, had over 90 percent of their spending on emergency relief provided by the federal government. This was an extraordinary and necessary intervention by Washington. The flexibility of the FERA and the high administrative standards it sought to impose on all states made it an excellent foundation for future relief initiatives.

See Also: CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION (CWA); EMERGENCY RELIEF AND CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1932; HOPKINS, HARRY; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA)

Created by the Federal Housing Act of 1934, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) was the core of the early New Deal's strategy to revive the construction industry and expand home ownership. The agency did not build homes or loan money but provided federal insurance for private mortgages to protect creditors against default and thereby encouraged banks to loan more money for housing construction and home improvements. Federal mortgage insurance also enabled private lenders to

charge lower interest rates and extend mortgage repayment periods, which helped to reduce the national rate of mortgage foreclosure from 250,000 non-farm units in 1932 to 18,000 in 1951. It also brought about lower down payment requirements (average FHA-backed mortgages were for 93 percent of home value compared with 58 percent for savings and loan association mortgages in the 1920s). Furthermore, the FHA's real assessment regulations did much to establish minimum standards for housing construction throughout the building industry. From 1935 to 1939, the agency insured 400,000 housing units, representing 23.4 percent of the total number of units financed through the mortgage market during this period. Over the next five-year period its mortgage insurance was substantially extended to cover 806,000 units, 45.4 percent of total units that received mortgage finance. Between 1934 and 1972 the FHA helped nearly eleven million families to own their homes and another twenty-two million to improve their properties. Thanks in part to its insurance program, middle-income and lower-middle-income families gained access to home ownership and the number of families living in owner-occupied units rose from 44 percent to 63 percent over this period.

Reflecting the rationale for its creation, the FHA was more concerned to revive home construction than to help cities. In the words of its first administrator, oil executive James Moffett, it also acted like a "conservative business operation" intent on encouraging sound loans by lending agencies, with the agency itself delivering a small profit on its operations for the federal government. As a result, the FHA was reluctant to insure rental housing, the predominant form of accommodation for low-income inner-city residents, because it viewed such property as a relatively nonliquid asset, capable of delivering only long-term profits, and subject to profit constraints like rent control, maintenance costs, and tenant problems. Between 1934 and 1937 it insured only twenty-one rental projects, none of which was intended to provide low-income accommodation. There was a brief policy change in 1938 when the agency insured a low-cost prefabricated municipal project constructed by Works Progress Administration labor in Fort Wayne, Indiana, that was planned to become a model for other municipi-

pal ventures until the American Federation of Labor's opposition to the use of relief labor killed off the scheme.

The FHA also favored suburban over inner-city development as a sounder actuarial risk. Its ideal home was a bungalow or a colonial set on an ample lot with a driveway and garage. Consequently its insurance of single-family units exceeded that of multi-family units by a ratio in excess of four to one between 1940 and 1950. The agency also evaluated the suitability of neighborhoods for mortgage risk through adoption of the conservative appraisal methods of the Home Owners Loan Corporation. It trained underwriters to measure the quality of an area based primarily on its social and economic stability and its protection from so-called adverse influences. Consequently the FHA refused to insure in neighborhoods that suffered blight or were deemed likely to do so. As late as 1966, for example, it did not insure a single mortgage in Camden, New Jersey, a declining industrial city. Its banker-like approach to what constituted sound property investment also made it prejudicial against heterogeneous and racially mixed neighborhoods, as well as districts where African Americans were deemed likely to settle. FHA redlining excluded half of Detroit's neighborhoods and one-third of Chicago's from its insurance program in 1940. The agency also promoted racial segregation through its active encouragement of restrictive covenants, even after these were ruled unenforceable by the U.S. Supreme Court's *Shelley v. Kraemer* judgment in 1948.

The FHA worked in favor of white suburbanization and against the interests of the increasingly nonwhite inner cities. It helped to transform the American suburb from a rich person's preserve into a middle-class enclave. The consequences for the other America became evident when urban disorder focused attention on the nation's ghettos in the 1960s. In 1968 former Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois reported for the National Commission on Urban Problems: "The poor and those on the fringes of poverty have been almost completely excluded. These and the lower middle class, together constituting the 40 percent of the population whose housing needs are greatest, [have] received only 11 percent of the FHA mortgages."

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION (HOLC); HOUSING; NATIONAL HOUSING ACT OF 1934.

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FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT (FMP)

The U. S. federal government created the Federal Music Project (FMP) in July 1935 as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Because it was a relief project, the Federal Music Project escaped much of the controversy that Congress and other sources aimed at many other New Deal programs. Nikolai Sokoloff, the director of the project, was given the responsibility of elevating America's musical standards. To do this, he employed well-trained and highly skilled music teachers, singers, and instrumentalists, and he promoted the understanding of and an appreciation for music in line with the ideals of President Franklin Roosevelt.

The Federal Music Project pursued its goals in a number of ways. It offered free or low-cost concerts to the public, as well as music lessons for poor adults, music appreciation programs for children, and training for music teachers. The project ultimately led to higher standards for musical performance in the United States, and encouraged increased participation by amateurs in music presentation. The project established new orchestras throughout the country in cities that had never had orchestras, and it set up bands, theater groups, opera and vocal companies, black music groups, dance troops, and many other forms of musical ensembles. The Federal Music Project also sponsored radio programs and summer park performances, as



This violin class, held in New York City in 1936, was one of many music classes sponsored by the WPA's Federal Music Project.

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well as numerous concerts by itinerant musical groups, many given in high schools.

The program provided work to composers, teachers, and performers, as well as copyists and librarians, who did a great service by compiling, preserving, and centralizing scores, indexes, bibliographies, and other materials that had previously been scattered throughout the country. The Federal Music Project also created a permanent body of unpublished orchestral works.

Foremost among the project's significant achievements was the establishment of composers' forum laboratories, which helped define American music by promoting its performance. The first

forum was set up in New York in 1935, and they were later established in other cities. Composers whose work was selected for laboratory performances rehearsed the musicians themselves, conducted the orchestra, and essentially organized the entire performance. The composer and musicians also conducted after-performance discussions, where they described what they felt made the music distinctly American.

The Federal Music Project achieved a number of firsts in its list of accomplishments. It was the first federal project to use money for a cultural undertaking, and its creation marked the first time the government assumed responsibility for improving

American cultural life and encouraging Americans to use their leisure time more creatively. Moreover, the project was egalitarian in that it was explicitly established to serve all Americans.

There were, of course, many problematic aspects of the project. Although the Federal Music Project promoted culture, there were questions about whose version of culture should be presented? Should “lowbrow” as well as “highbrow” culture be promoted by the project? What did the phrase “quality of American life” really mean? What constitutes fine art? Moreover, the very idea of a national music proved controversial.

Despite these issues, the project made an honest attempt to grapple with the challenge laid down by nineteenth-century poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson: Emerson challenged American artists and intellectuals to create a distinctively American intellectual and artistic tradition. The issue was relevant in the 1930s when most American composers still preferred to study and perform in Europe before returning to the United States, and the American musical elite worshipped the European masters. Many American musicians thus found themselves at odds with the direction of American popular culture, in which a lively popular music scene was challenging old assumptions.

The recreation and education divisions of the Federal Music Project sought to solve this problem by identifying ways in which people who were not performers could participate in the music. The project set great emphasis on teaching music to the masses, and during the 1930s music programs became part of the public school curriculum. In addition, the WPA began to develop rural music programs in 1936. These programs initially focused entirely on art music, and ignored indigenous music. This neglect ended in November 1937 when Charles Seeger became deputy director of the Federal Music Project and began to promote many varieties of American music. Under Seeger, the project began to promote folk music and recreation associated with music. Seeger’s goal was to have every American singing, playing an instrument, or both. The project also sponsored fieldwork on folk music, most of it in the South and Appalachian Mountain area, where, in spite of terrible rural poverty, there was a vital and rich folk tradition.

Seeger enlisted the support of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt in his endeavors. She commissioned Seeger to plan a program of American folk music for the visiting British Royal Family. Seeger next turned to music education as a means of encouraging appreciation and performance of American music; he also promoted the collection and preservation of American folk and ethnic music. Seeger was aware that Europeans regarded jazz as the greatest American musical contribution of the twentieth century, whereas “serious” American composers tended to neglect it. Seeger thus began a program to encourage the performance and study of British folk music, colonial music, and African-American music.

By 1939, Congress began to cut the Federal Music Project budget, along with the budgets of other New Deal programs and agencies. In 1939 the project was renamed the WPA Music Program. After a year under state control, Congress ended the program entirely.

In spite of setbacks, the Federal Music Project can claim a great number of achievements. The project helped bring about social change by, for example, hiring many women and placing them in charge of arts projects. The Federal Music Project also influenced the style of American musical and theatrical performance, engendered a great interest in American music, especially American folk music, and through its programs for collecting and documenting America’s indigenous music, aided the understanding of the development of American art forms. Despite its accomplishments, however, the Federal Music Project never became a model for subsequent federal aid to the arts.

See Also: EDUCATION; FEDERAL ONE; MUSIC; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION (FNMA)

At the request of President Franklin Roosevelt, the Federal National Mortgage Association (FNMA), popularly known as Fannie Mae, was chartered on February 10, 1938, as a wholly owned and controlled subsidiary of the federal Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC). Fannie Mae was designed primarily to increase the availability of mortgage credit in order to stimulate the home construction industry and reduce unemployment. When credit was in short supply due to a recession, Fannie Mae would purchase home mortgages that were made by private lenders and had been insured by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). When credit became more plentiful, Fannie Mae would resell the mortgages to other lenders, thereby smoothing out the highs and lows of the economic cycle. It was also hoped that Fannie Mae's purchases would lower national interest rates and generate lender confidence in FHA-insured loans.

The establishment of Fannie Mae marked the culmination of the federal government's involvement in housing markets during the Great Depression. Both the Home Owners Loan Corporation, created in 1933 to refinance troubled mortgages, and the FHA, established in 1934 to insure new mortgages, substantially increased funds available to homeowners. The National Housing Act, which created the FHA, also authorized the chartering of private national mortgage associations to help market federally insured mortgages. The mortgage associations were to be supervised by the head of the Federal Housing Administration and they were authorized to purchase mortgages with funds raised through the public sale of notes, bonds, and other obligations. It was hoped that primary lenders who sold their existing mortgages would use their new funds to finance additional mortgages.

Contrary to the expectations of policymakers, investors did not form private mortgage associations and home financing continued to be scarce. The first, reluctant experiment with federal mortgage acquisition occurred when the RFC Mortgage Company, set up in March 1935 to support the commercial real estate market, agreed to purchase some FHA-insured mortgages in order to help the ailing construction industry. Fannie Mae finally opened its doors in 1938 with a charter issued by the Federal Housing Administration and \$11 million provided by the RFC.

Fannie Mae remained a relatively small operation in its early years. Under its founding president, Sam Husbands, Fannie Mae issued just two series of obligations to pay for mortgage acquisitions, raising \$29.7 million in 1938 and \$55.5 million in 1939. Since its inception Fannie Mae has undergone many changes. In 1948 it was authorized to purchase loans insured by the Veterans Administration as well. Congress partially privatized Fannie Mae in 1954 and completed the process in 1968 when it set up a new scaled-back federal agency, the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae). Fannie Mae has continued to grow, becoming the third largest corporation in the United States, with total assets of \$800 billion in 2001. Fannie Mae is credited with helping to expand homeownership in the immediate postwar years.

However, critics have charged that the secondary mortgage market, which it created, hurt urban communities by allowing financial institutions to transfer savings funds out of cities and into mortgage loans made in profitable suburban developments throughout the country.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION (HOLC); HOUSING; RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION (RFC).

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FEDERAL ONE

Federal One was established with an appropriation of \$27 million under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935. It was to provide work relief to unemployed artists and to preserve their skills until they could be absorbed into the private sector. In effect, Federal One sought to occupy the vacuum left by private patronage of the fine arts and mass support for the popular arts due to the austerity of the Depression. Between 1929 and 1933, as the prices paid for paintings declined by two-thirds and magazines dismissed graphic artists because of declining revenues, ten thousand artists became unemployed. Theater workers were equally hard hit as the number of Broadway productions was drastically reduced and the number of employed actors fell by 50 percent.

Creative and commercial writers also suffered as the revenues of the publishing industry were halved, and when newspapers sales declined, the employment of many journalists and advertising copywriters was terminated. Musicians, whose job security had already been hurt by the advent of sound in motion pictures, experienced the impact of the Depression as hotels cancelled their small ensembles, symphony orchestras were disbanded, and fewer pupils paid for private music lessons. In 1933, two-thirds of the membership of the American Federation of Musicians was unemployed.

Efforts by professional associations and unions to promote self-help were ineffective, and, with the exception of New York and a handful of state relief agencies, no major initiative was taken by government to provide relevant work for unemployed artists. Some of the New Deal's earliest agencies, including the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps, and, in particular, the Civil Works Administration, aided artists, but the effort did not match the need.

Four major arts were organized under the aegis of Federal One: the Federal Art Project, the Federal Theatre Project, the Federal Music Project, and the Federal Writers' Project. Their respective national directors—Holger Cahill, Hallie Flanagan, Nikolai Sokoloff, and Henry Alsberg—headed complex and extensive bureaucracies with a network of state and local offices throughout the United States. However, the directors were not exclusively concerned with the disbursement of funds and the development of projects to provide assistance to unemployed artists. The four directors had clear ideas about the nature of culture and sought to use the federal government to promote them.

Historian Jane De Hart Mathews refers to the New Deal elite's "quest for a cultural democracy"; its aim was to make art more accessible ("art for the millions") by creating new civic institutions for the arts and by transforming attitudes and values about how art was produced and to whom it communicated. Federal One challenged the metropolitan dominance of the arts by taking arts to the people through gallery and company tours, and the Federal Music Project, with its three hundred ensembles, established orchestras in states such as Oklahoma

and Utah, where none had existed previously. Federal One also sought to reach wider audiences by making art more comprehensible and relevant to contemporary issues and by incorporating regional and ethnic distinctions in its productions and presentations. The Federal Theatre Project established production companies in forty states, organized sixteen African-American units in eleven cities, and performed plays in languages other than English. Its Living Newspaper productions courted controversy by addressing contemporary issues, such as slum housing, the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, and the plight of American agriculture. It is estimated that the Federal Theatre Project organized some 1,200 productions that played to twenty-five million Americans, 65 percent of whom were attending the theater for the first time.

Federal One sought to stimulate involvement as well as appreciation. The Federal Art Project provided free art classes for sixty thousand people each month, while the Federal Music Project employed six thousand music teachers who organized programs in schools, parks, and hospitals, developing the music skills of some fourteen million pupils. The vision of Federal One was extremely ambitious. It sought to sponsor a cultural renaissance in America through a mass movement. The aim was to integrate the artist into society and to make the arts integral to everyday life.

Despite frequent criticisms of some American failings, the projects were self-consciously and assertively nationalistic in both their themes and their forms; one WPA poster declared, "Out of the spirit of a people arises its art." The nationalism of Federal One is most evident in the Federal Writers' Project's American Guide series, a collection of 378 books and pamphlets describing all of America's states, principal cities, and highways. Federal One sought to orient Americans to their history, as well as to their geography. The arts projects worked to connect contemporary life with American traditions. The Federal Writers' Project, for example, employed writers to make inventories of state and local archives and to collect the testimony of ex-slaves; a Folklore Studies Division launched oral history projects to preserve American folklore and humor. The Federal Art Project's Index of American

Design recorded the history of the decorative arts from early settlement to 1890, while the Federal Writers' Project compiled an index of American composers that catalogued about seven thousand compositions by 2,200 composers. In addition, a joint committee on folk arts organized recordings of the songs and music of Latino Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and Cajuns, as well as music from the Appalachian region. These were not antiquarian endeavors; the sponsors of these projects believed that they were accumulating repositories of American art and expression that would inspire contemporary musicians, artists, and writers. Such an emphatic nationalism has led some cultural historians to claim that Federal One sought to distract Americans from the crisis of the Depression by affirming the United States and by imposing a false, purposeful consensus upon America's history and the character of its people. However, if a cultural hegemony to buttress the liberal economic and social programs of the New Deal was ever a goal, it was never attained.

Initiatives in 1938 to make Federal One a permanent agency met with failure. A broad range of interests was hostile to the organization. Some politicians were concerned about waste and inefficiency and questioned the relevance of the subsidization of culture in a period of mass unemployment. Republican politicians, in particular, claimed that the cultural projects were a propaganda arm of the Democratic Party. Federal One was also associated with radicalism and, during its investigations in 1938 and 1939, the House Committee on Un-American Activities claimed that the projects had been infiltrated by Communists. Even the arts "establishment" did not favor making Federal One permanent because of the inconsistent quality of the work it produced.

In 1939, following an investigation by the House Committee on Appropriations, the Federal Theatre Project was terminated and Federal One was abolished. The remaining projects were transferred to the supervision of the states with the expectation that the states would contribute 25 percent of their costs and terminate the contracts of workers who had served for eighteen months. Deprived of central direction, the remaining arts proj-

ects began to lose their creative dynamism, and after 1940 project workers were transferred to the war preparedness campaign. However, it is doubtful that, even at its height, Federal One came close to challenging the metropolitan bias of American cultural production or to integrating the artist securely in American life. Perhaps Federal One will be best remembered by those who were assisted by the projects during the Depression and who established international reputations in the postwar period: artist Jackson Pollock, stage and screen director Elia Kazan, actor Burt Lancaster, and writers Richard Wright, Saul Bellow, and Arthur Miller, to name but a few.

See Also: AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP); FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT (FMP); FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP); FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP); SLAVE NARRATIVES; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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STUART KIDD

FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

The Federal Reserve System (Fed) came into existence in 1913. To overcome fears that a unified U.S. central bank would become too closely allied to the federal government and to big money interests, the Fed was made up of twelve regional reserve banks each with a high degree of local autonomy. A Federal Reserve Board, located in Washington D.C., operated as a supervisory body with a duty to ensure that the Federal Reserve banks complied with the law. All national banks, that is institutions that had received their charter from the federal government, were required to join the Fed. State banks were permitted to join if they could meet the relatively high reserve requirements laid down by the new system.

THE EARLY EXPERIENCE: 1913–1921

Few bankers wanted a strong central bank, and there was widespread support for regional division. In fact the dual system of national and state banks that the majority of bankers wished to retain had been preserved. After 1913 the commercial banking sector was made up of national banks, which were members of the Fed, and state banks, some of which joined the Fed while others remained non-members. In 1921, only 9,779 of the 29,018 commercial banks were members of the reserve system. Even in 1929 the structure was essentially the same. The Fed had 8,522 members while non-members numbered 15,173.

Among the objectives of the new system were the provision of ample credit for legitimate business, the stabilization of interest rates, and the maintenance of the gold standard. A key aspiration stressed by the supporters of central banking was the avoidance of financial panics and the attendant bank failures to which the American financial system was prone. Multiple bank failures during the depression of 1907 had proved to be a decisive turning point in the argument for the creation of a central bank.

Almost as soon as the Fed was established, the economy was affected by the demands of World War I. The Fed successfully lubricated the wheels of credit and after April 1917, when the United States

entered the conflict, it directed credit to essential users and also supported the Treasury in its aim of keeping interest rates low so that the costs of war borrowing would be minimized. Unfortunately this action helped to fan the flames of inflation. When, in 1920, the Fed raised interest rates in order to bring rising prices under control, the severe post-war Depression of 1920 and 1921 quickly followed. Only after 1921 did the Fed begin to operate under normal peacetime conditions.

MONETARY POLICY: 1922–1928

During this period the New York Reserve Bank, under its influential governor, Benjamin Strong, emerged as the leading institution. It had become apparent that if the reserve banks insisted on behaving independently, each raising or lowering discount rates or purchasing or selling securities, monetary policy would lack cohesion. Strong advocated the coordination of open market operations, and in 1922 a committee was formed to supervise the sale and purchase of government securities. With this tool, Monetary policy could be used to counter the impact of both booms and slumps and seasonal fluctuations in credit, so that the monetary authorities could influence events rather than simply react to them.

Some scholars believe that the Fed intervened directly to ensure that the minor recessions of 1924 and 1927 did not develop into full-blown Depressions. During each, the Fed adopted liberal credit policies by purchasing government securities and lowering discount rates. As the economy recovered rapidly in both cases, it would seem that the policies were very effective. However, compelling evidence suggests that the motives for the Fed's actions were linked to international rather than domestic issues. The Reserve wanted to keep U.S. interest rates low in order to assist European countries in either returning to the gold standard or staying on it. Credit was extended to European central banks, and low U.S. interest rates encouraged capital to flow to the old world. In other words, the domestic benefits of expansionary monetary policy were entirely secondary.

While the Fed encouraged the adoption of the gold standard overseas, it efficiently managed the

massive influx of gold into the United States during the war and post-war years. The gold was effectively sterilized and not allowed to exert inflationary pressure. Indeed, this period is one of remarkable price stability given the economy's vigorous growth. However, the actions of the Fed in accumulating a large gold reserve, a strategy also pursued by the French, put pressure on other gold standard countries that were attempting to operate the system with inadequate reserves.

By 1928 the domestic advantages of reserve bank monetary co-operation had become apparent. For example, collective action had reduced seasonal fluctuations in interest rates, and bankers were becoming more confident in their ability to use monetary policy effectively. Bank failures, however, continued to be a problem. Between 1921 and 1929, some 776 national banks, 229 state banks, and 4,416 non-member banks closed their doors. The vast majority of the failed institutions were small banks adversely affected by farm misfortune. The figures reflect the fact that big banks joined the Fed, and the small, usually under-capitalized unit banks, remained outside and were unable to call on central bank help when in need.

THE FED AND THE ONSET OF THE DEPRESSION

In 1928 danger signals from the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) were becoming a concern. The Fed reacted to growing stock market speculation by introducing a tight money policy. Intended to make borrowing for speculation less attractive, the higher interest rates were expected to reduce frenetic speculative activity. Unfortunately, this policy was totally ineffective as speculative activity actually increased. However, the policy did have an adverse effect on economic performance, and in the middle of 1929 it was clear that the economic boom had come to an end. Wall Street quickly absorbed these signs, the stock market collapsed in October 1929, and then the Fed, seeing speculation quashed, reduced interest rates.

The economic recovery that followed the crash did not last long. From the middle of 1930 the economy began a long slide, which took it to a trough in the winter of 1932 and 1933. A sustained recov-

ery did not begin until the spring of 1933. A central feature of the Great Depression was extensive bank failure. Indeed, in mid-March 1933 there were approximately 12,600 fewer commercial banks than had been open for business in June 1929. Yet one of the duties of the reserve system was to act as a bulwark against bank failure. Why did the Fed fail in this task?

Scholars usually identify three banking crises in which the failures were concentrated: the first took place in 1930, the second in the fall of 1931, and finally the banking system reached an almost total state of collapse in the winter of 1932 and 1933. There is now widespread agreement that the 1930 wave of bank failures was part of a regional problem and had little national impact. However, the 1931 crisis was far more serious and occurred after Great Britain left the gold standard and devalued sterling. Speculators who had previously worried about the ability of the Bank of England to support the pound now turned their attention to the dollar. To give speculators a clear message that protecting the currency was a priority, the Federal Reserve raised interest rates and pursued a tight money policy. This was a logical move to protect the dollar, but it was disastrous for a banking system under great pressure. The beleaguered banks needed low interest rates and an easy money policy that would give them ready access to central bank support, quite the reverse of what was provided. As some institutions failed, panic spread and even soundly run banks could not keep their doors open when faced with so many customers who wished to withdraw deposits. Exactly the same thing happened during the "lame duck" period between Roosevelt's election in November 1932 and his inauguration in March 1933. Uncertainty led to further speculation against the dollar and the Fed responded by raising interest rates. By this time the financial sector had been exposed to such shocks that most state governors were forced to close their banks in order to save them from failing. The creation of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in January 1932, with powers to assist troubled banks, is a clear indication that the Fed was failing to do its job. In February, the Glass-Steagall Act liberalized the Fed's discount provisions but, unfortunately, this move came too late to have a major impact.

Milton Friedman and Anna Schwartz are highly critical of the Federal Reserve and believe that its perverse decisions, which led to the failure of so many banks and a severe contraction in the money supply, transformed a recession into a major depression. However, the actions of the Fed in defending the dollar were consistent with the policies that seemed so effective in 1924 and in 1927, when external factors determined action. Elmus Wicker, the most authoritative of banking historians for this period, is cautious in his assessment of Federal Reserve policy. Unlike most commentators he does not believe that the Fed initiated the 1931 banking crisis, but he is critical of the failure to implement vigorous open market operations in 1930 and in 1931 that could have prevented the dramatic fall in depositor confidence. Even though most of the failed banks were not reserve members, the Fed wins few friends for its policy choices in the worst years of the Depression. Most scholars debate whether the failures were just bad or disastrous.

THE FEDERAL RESERVE AND THE NEW DEAL

There was unanimous agreement that the banking sector needed assistance to achieve stability, and the first response of the Roosevelt administration was to create a breathing space by declaring a national bank holiday. On March 9, 1933, the Emergency Banking Act gave the executive branch of the government power to reopen banks once they had been examined and declared sound. The Banking Act (June 16, 1933), gave the Fed increased control over bank credit, called for greater coordination of open market operations and the legal recognition of an Open Market Committee. The act forbade the payment of interest on demand deposits by member banks and also regulated the interest payments on time deposits. The decision to separate commercial and investment banks so that the former could no longer underwrite securities gained widespread support. In spite of a lack of enthusiasm on the part of both the president and bankers, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) was established to ensure that depositors would be so confident in the security of their deposits that bank runs would become a thing of

the past. All members of the Federal Reserve System were obliged to join FDIC.

A further refinement of the banking system came with the Banking Act (1935), which brought about fundamental changes in the Federal Reserve System. Marriner Eccles had assumed the chairmanship of the Board of Governors. An experienced banker with a forceful personality and known by Congress to be no friend of Wall Street, Eccles insisted on greater centralization and more power for the board. The 1935 Act was one of the most significant pieces of legislation in U.S. financial history establishing with its predecessor a structure for banking that was to last half a century. It created a Federal Reserve Board consisting of seven members to be appointed by the president and confirmed by Senate. The Federal Open Market Committee, which had consisted of the twelve governors of the Federal Reserve banks, was replaced by one consisting of the board and just five representatives from the Reserve Banks. The new Committee, which had far more authority than the one it replaced, came to play a leading role in shaping policy. It exercised a firm control over interest rates, the provision of credit, and the money supply. The board also gained the power to approve the appointments of the presidents, as they came to be called, of reserve banks and the authority to alter the reserve requirements of member banks.

The 1935 act transferred power from the reserve banks to the Reserve Board. This shift was possible because of Eccles's determination and authority combined with a congressional distrust of the reserve bankers that was shared by many members of the public. The U.S. president also acquired new powers of appointment to the board.

It is ironic that the Fed, having relentlessly pursued policies that most scholars believe made the impact of the Depression more acute, was given so much additional power by New Dealers. Moreover, an early action of the newly constituted board was to tighten the reserve requirements of member banks, which were viewed as excessive and a potential inflationary threat. This action, together with the imposition of a restrictive fiscal policy as Roosevelt strove to balance the federal budget, contributed to the onset of the deep recession of 1937 and 1938.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (FDIC); GOLD STANDARD; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933; MONETARY POLICY; RECESSION OF 1937; STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929).

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PETER FEARON

FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN INSURANCE CORPORATION (FSLIC)

The Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation (FSLIC) was created by the federal government on June 27, 1934, to secure the stability of the savings and loan industry. The main purpose of savings and loans, also known as S&Ls, was to receive deposits from individuals and institutions and reinvest those funds in residential mortgages. During the banking crisis of the late 1920s and early 1930s,

many savings and loans collapsed. If a bank or savings and loan failed, depositors who had not withdrawn their money lost everything. After the onset of the Great Depression many unemployed workers could not repay their loans and nearly one-quarter of all home mortgages went into default. Between 1930 and 1935 nearly one thousand savings and loans collapsed, wiping out almost \$300 million in assets.

In 1934 Congress moved to boost both the savings and loan and the residential construction industries with the National Housing Act. One provision created the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) that encouraged banks and savings and loans to make loans for building homes, farm buildings, and small business establishments. The FHA insured the loans so that if the debtor defaulted, the FHA would reimburse the creditor. Because of the reduced risk, creditors demanded lower down payments and extended the length of mortgages. More people were able to manage these new loans and buy their own homes. Title IV of the National Housing Act created the FSLIC to insure deposits in savings and loans up to \$5,000. Depositors knew that if their savings and loan failed the FSLIC would reimburse them for the amount in their account up to a \$5,000 limit. Federally chartered savings and loans had to pay a mandatory fee for coverage, while those with state charters could voluntarily insure their deposits with the FSLIC by paying the fee. The FSLIC, modeled after the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) created the previous year, revived public confidence in the stability of the industry. As a result, people returned their deposits to savings and loans and the frequency of runs was diminished. Smaller savings and loans were more able to compete with larger institutions because they also held the confidence of the public. Savings and loans were able to loan more money for housing purchases and construction and consequently contributed to the recovery of the residential real-estate market.

The housing policies of the New Deal that created the FSLIC, FHA, Home Owners Loan Corporation, and Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae) stimulated private home building and individual homeownership by coordinating private

and public institutions. Before the New Deal only two out of five Americans owned their homes. The New Deal built a system of home building finance that allowed private money to fund the construction of postwar suburbia. By the 1970s two out of three Americans lived in owner-occupied houses.

Along with insurance for the industry came regulation. In 1934 Congress established the Federal Home Loan Bank Board to maintain the stability of savings and loans by restricting their financial practices. The New Deal housing and banking policies ultimately demonstrated, however, that the expansion of the state did not result in the reduction of private power and flexibility. In fact historian David M. Kennedy argues in *Freedom from Fear* (1999) that these reforms actually liberated capital. Government regulations made people secure about depositing their money in banks and savings and loans. As a result, banks and S&Ls had a reliable cash reserve which freed them to make loans and invest in mortgages.

Traditionally most savings and loans were mutuals or community-based institutions owned by the depositors themselves. But in the 1980s the federal government initiated deregulatory measures, which transformed the savings and loan industry. Speculators were allowed to convert savings and loans into stock corporations. This freedom enabled savings and loans to raise more capital but the new owners were less concerned with the local community and more interested in quick profit. The Depository Institutions Deregulation and Monetary Control Act of 1980 raised the deposit insurance from \$40,000 to \$100,000. This change, along with higher interest rates, doubled the amount of money deposited in the savings and loans and as a result increased the taxpayers' burden when savings and loans failed in great numbers at the end of the decade. As more money was deposited, savings and loans were forced to meet rising interest rate payments to depositors. Congress freed them to engage in commercial lending and non-mortgage consumer lending to help them meet the new commitments. Many critics contend the increase in coverage emboldened savings and loans to provide riskier loans than they might have otherwise. The 1984 Depository Institutions Act permitted devel-

opers to own savings and loans and allowed owners of these institutions to lend to themselves. Savings and loans quickly took advantage of the new rules to engage in high-risk speculation, particularly in commercial real estate. When these deals failed so did many savings and loans. Over five hundred savings and loans collapsed during the 1980s and created a crisis that forced the FSLIC into insolvency in 1989. Responsibility for FSLIC's insurance obligations fell to the FDIC. The U.S. government expects taxpayers will have to pay more than \$500 billion over thirty years to bail out the failed savings and loan associations.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION (FNMA); HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION (HOLC); HOUSING; NATIONAL HOUSING ACT OF 1934.

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FEDERAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES CORPORATION (FSCC)

The famous “slaughter of the innocents” (the slaughter of some six million piglets to prevent a

surplus of pork in the market) that took place during the early months of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's (AAA) surplus reduction program led to a public outcry against the emergency purchases. The idea of government-sponsored waste at a time of intense need nationwide led to a redirection of federal policy, and the creation of a new division, the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation (FSRC), within the country's primary relief organization, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). The mission of the FSRC was to divert surplus agricultural commodities from the open market to state and local relief administrations for the use of destitute families, thus redistributing products as it removed price-depressing surpluses from the market. The original members of the FSRC were Henry A. Wallace, the secretary of agriculture; Harold L. Ickes, the emergency administrator of public works; and FERA head Harry L. Hopkins. The governor of the Farm Credit Administration was later added to the group. Thus, some of President Franklin Roosevelt's top aides were involved with this aspect of federal relief.

The commodities that the FSRC accumulated for redistribution came from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration's crop adjustment program purchases, as well as from state relief purchases. The FSRC was responsible not only for processing the commodities, work that was often contracted out, but also for initial storage and distribution of the surplus goods. Once the FSRC received surplus crops it passed title to the states; thus state and local relief agencies were directly responsible for distributing the goods under the regulatory control of the federal corporation.

Between October 1933 and October 1935, the FSRC distributed to the states a variety of surplus commodities with a value totaling \$265,271,056. In November 1935, the program was transferred to the AAA and renamed the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation (FSCC). The corporation was reorganized again in 1937, though it still retained its function as a purchaser and distributor of surplus agricultural commodities.

The FSCC sought to encourage consumption, and its primary function was to distribute products to relief clients “over and above” the aid they re-



Surplus foods being sold at bargain prices in 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

ceived based upon need. Thus the FSRC and FSCC augmented relief benefits, while avoiding direct competition with private industry. Among the foods the corporation distributed were beef, pork, sausage, mutton, lard, rice, fruits, eggs, and cereals. The corporation also handled various processed goods that had been produced by state work relief industries, including clothing, mattresses, bedding, and towels from textile factories, and preserved meats, fruits, and vegetables from canneries. In addition, the FSCC coordinated a state-level school lunch program from 1936 to 1940; in 1939 it initiated an experimental Food Stamp Program, the precursor to the modern food stamp program. The corporation was abolished in 1940 and its functions were reorganized into the Surplus Marketing Ad-

ministration, with duties shifting to meet wartime demand.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA).

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SARA M. GREGG



Bossa Moona, a musical that ran in New York City in 1935, was one of numerous shows produced by the African-American unit of the WPA's Federal Theatre Project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP)

The Federal Theatre Project (FTP) was a New Deal initiative that was spawned by hard times. Part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the Federal Theatre Project democratized modern American culture, signaling a distinct openness to new formats and ideas. Devised in part as a welfare measure, the American theater in the 1930s gained a major infusion of federal money, fostered an explosion of new talent, and stimulated wide public involvement. The actor, director, and producer John Houseman later saw this as "the most creative and dynamic approach that has yet been made to an American National Theater." Although the project

was terminated in 1939 due to its political vulnerability and the overall erosion of support for the New Deal, its influence as a model for expanding the public sphere remains.

The Depression accentuated a broad set of problems affecting the theater industry. More than twenty thousand theater workers were unemployed. Half of New York City's theaters closed and regional theaters across the nation were hard hit. Yet the Federal Theatre Project also grew out of the inadequacies of American commercial theater, inadequacies that had become clear to many by the early 1930s. Syndicates and the star system had grown powerful, reinforcing formulaic productions that standardized content, form, promotion, and

distribution of the theater industry's product. The movie industry had also siphoned off much of its market. Vaudeville, as well as regional and repertory theater companies, was badly hurt by the growing Depression. Yet even within this context there were signs of creative vitality: the "little theater movement," the Group Theater, and the attractions of European and Soviet theater all created an atmosphere of expectation, experimentation, and the politicization of social issues in American theater.

Although some theater workers had earlier received minor assistance from the Civil Works Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), funding for a full-scale Federal Theatre Project was funneled through the WPA, which was created in April 1935. The Federal Theatre Project was officially launched that August when the directors of the writers', music, art, and theater projects, collectively known as Federal Project Number One, were announced. President Roosevelt's close associate and WPA head Harry Hopkins chose Hallie Flanagan, an old friend from Iowa, to be director of the Federal Theatre Project.

Hopkins made an inspired choice. Born in 1890, Flanagan was a gifted drama teacher and producer who had worked at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York. Upon taking office she noted that "while our aim is to put to work thousands of theater people, our more far-reaching purpose is to organize and support theatrical enterprises so excellent in quality, so low in cost and so vital to the communities involved that they will be able to continue after federal aid is withdrawn." She later noted the novelty of the government getting into the theater business, saying, "We all believed that theater was more than a private enterprise, that it was also a public interest which, properly fostered, might come to be a social and educative force." Energetic and politically sensitive, Flanagan originally worked out of the old McLean Mansion in Washington, D.C., and dealt with a welter of bureaucratic nightmares—workers needed to prove residence for a year in a city where they would collect their checks, for example.

The Theatre Project employed more than twelve thousand theater workers at its peak, including numerous actors and directors who later



A 1935 stage production by the Jewish unit of the Federal Theatre Project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

became famous, such as Orson Welles, E.G. Marshall, Sidney Lumet, John Houseman, Burt Lancaster, and Will Geer. Units were established in thirty-one states and New York City. Overall the Federal Theatre Project produced more than one thousand productions and one thousand performances each month before nearly a million people. Seventy-eight percent of these audience members were admitted free of charge. Major radio networks carried the *Federal Theatre of the Air* to an estimated ten million listeners, while the Federal Theatre Project's National Service Bureau provided research, consultation, and play-reading services to all the units. It even created a *Federal Theater Magazine* and an Audience Research Department in October 1936 to track public interest in its productions.

Numerous productions were staged that raised provocative questions about the social and economic conditions of the time. Classic or ideologically conservative dramas such as Shakespeare's *Mac-*

beth and T. S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* were counterpoised with contemporary themes and new formats. One of the most controversial was a production of *It Can't Happen Here*, based on Sinclair Lewis's novel about fascism in the United States. The "Living Newspapers" productions were derived from social issues of the day and were often produced simultaneously in several cities. They used photographs, short films, animated sequences, and other novel techniques to gain audience attention.

The Federal Theatre Project placed special emphasis on promoting minority culture. Black theater companies were established in a dozen cities. Foreign language companies performed works in Yiddish, French, German, Italian, and Spanish. Although Flanagan wielded power from Washington, the Federal Theatre Project allowed considerable regional variation in its productions. States experimented with theaters for the blind, and puppeteers toured CCC camps. Some project employees assisted local dramatic clubs, while others provided historical information for playwrights.

However, the Federal Theatre Project was the most vulnerable of all New Deal cultural programs when it came to censorship. Its productions were sometimes provocative and many theater workers were outspoken advocates on the political left. Some Federal Theatre Project employees demonstrated when the government cut the project's funding. WPA chief Harry Hopkins had originally said that "what we want is a free, adult, uncensored theater," but that proved difficult to accomplish, especially after southern committee chairmen in Congress began voicing their concerns. Censorship quickly reared its head against the first Living Newspaper production, *Ethiopia*, which addressed the Italian invasion of that African nation. The White House feared international repercussions and sought to constrain elements of the production, which led to the resignation of the Federal Theatre Project's New York director, the playwright Elmer Rice.

Issues surrounding federal cutbacks, censorship, and criticism of the leftist political content of some of the Federal Theatre Project's productions grew after the 1936 election. By 1938, the Dies

Committee held hearings into what some of its members labeled communist subversion of the Federal Theatre Project. Newspapers provided few opportunities for the Federal Theatre Project to defend itself against committee allegations of workers' association with the Communist Party. On June 30, 1939, the House Appropriations Committee suspended use of WPA funds for any theater activities, and the Federal Theater Project ended abruptly. A grand experiment had ended in a manner that presaged the red-baiting of the postwar era.

See Also: CRADLE WILL ROCK, THE; FEDERAL ONE; FLANAGAN, HALLIE; WELLES, ORSON; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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GREGORY W. BUSH

FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP)

The Federal Writers' Project (FWP) was created in 1935 as part of the service branch of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) to provide work relief for writers and to develop writing and research projects approved by the WPA. In July 1935 Henry Alsberg was appointed project director. The project was organized into state branches across the country, and special units were also established in Puerto Rico, New York City, and Washington, D.C. From 1935 until the WPA's demise in 1943, about seven thousand people worked for the FWP, including a number of the most important American writers of the 1930s and 1940s. It produced several keystone anthologies of American writing that remain central to the study of American literature. The FWP also made the first comprehensive attempt to document American folklore and oral history, and created a series of guidebooks to states and regions of the United States that remain unparalleled in scope and quality.

The largest state branches of the Federal Writers' Project existed in Illinois and New York. Chicago was the center of the Illinois Project, which attracted the most important writers of the Midwest. Among them were Arna Bontemps and Jack Conroy, who gathered material for their important migration study *They Seek a City*; novelist Nelson Algren, author of *The Man with the Golden Arm*; dancer and choreographer Katherine Dunham; novelists Willard Motley and Frank Yerby; novelist Saul Bellow; and poet Margaret Walker. While working for the FWP, Richard Wright gathered materials for his 1941 book, *Twelve Million Black Voices*, in collaboration with Farm Security Administration photographer Edward Rosskam. Many of these Chicago writers comprised what critic Robert Bone later termed the Chicago Renaissance in American literature.

Notable writers who worked for the New York City Project included novelist and short story writer John Cheever; poet Waring Cuney; novelist Ralph Ellison (who drew on FWP interviews with Harlem residents in writing the 1952 classic *Invisible Man*); poet Claude McKay; social historian Roi Ottley;

poet Kenneth Fearing; and novelist Anzia Yezierska. Many of the New York City writers, such as Earl Conrad, Sol Funaroff, and Claude McKay, had ties to the organized Left, including to the Communist Party; FWP writer Philip Rahv famously broke with the Communist Party and became an editor at the important literary journal *Partisan Review*. Other major American writers who participated in state FWPs include Zora Neale Hurston in Florida, John Steinbeck in California, and Conrad Aiken in Massachusetts. Among the important literary anthologies to emerge from the Federal Writers Project were *American Stuff: An Anthology of Prose and Verse*, published in 1937, and *Poetry*, published in 1938. Special issues of literary journals, such as the winter 1938 *Frontier and Midland*, were devoted entirely to FWP writings, and the May 11, 1938, *New Republic* included a feature titled "Federal Poets: An Anthology."

Yet it was in folklore and ethnic studies that the FWP made its most original contributions. From 1936 to 1937 scholar John A. Lomax served as national advisor on folklore to the FWP. Between 1936 and 1938, project writers conducted interviews with former slaves in more than a dozen states. During 1938, Benjamin A. Botkin served as both folklore consultant and folklore editor to the Federal Writers' Project. In 1944, Botkin assembled a selection of the slave interviews into *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery*. Botkin also collected industrial folktales gathered such writers as Jack Conroy and Nelson Algren into *A Treasury of American Folklore*, which was published in 1944. FWP recordings of African-American musicians led to the release of records by Louis Armstrong and such compilations as *News and the Blues: Telling It Like It Is*. Other significant ethnic studies conducted by the project include *The Italians of New York*, published in 1938, *Jewish Families and Family Circles of New York*, published in 1939, *The Armenians in Massachusetts*, published in 1937, and *The Hopi and The Navaho*, published by the FWP in Arizona in 1937 and 1938, respectively.

In addition to the state and area guidebooks, the project also produced regional studies, both serious and light. Notable studies of regional folklore and folk music included *Sodbusters: Tales of South-*

eastern South Dakota and South Carolina Folk Tales: Stories of Animals and Supernatural Beings. Baseball, bird-watching, reptiles and amphibians, and skiing were subjects of other FWP books. Materials collected by FWP staffers also appeared in important books published after the demise of the project, including Horace Cayton and St. Clair Drake's *Black Metropolis*, a monumental study of Chicago's South Side, and Jerre Mangione's *The Dream and the Deal*, still the most comprehensive first-person account of the Federal Writers' Project.

In September 1939 the Works Progress Administration changed its name to the Work Projects Administration, and the Federal Writers' Project became known as the WPA Writers' Program. The FWP, hobbled by funding cuts and accusations of communist influence, produced its last guidebook (on Oklahoma) in 1941. The WPA itself disbanded June 30, 1943.

The Federal Writers' Project was one of the great successes of the Roosevelt administration. It nurtured and sustained some of the most important American literary careers of the 1930s and 1940s, and its focus on social documentary approaches influenced the realism and naturalistic themes of American letters during the Depression and World War II. Oral historians such as Studs Terkel and archival enterprises such as Folkways Records extended the methods and findings of the FWP into the contemporary period. The FWP's attention to migration, urbanization, folk culture, ethnic studies, labor, and race also predicted the themes of government and university study of American culture and society in the postwar period.

See Also: AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES; FEDERAL ONE; FOLKLORISTS; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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BILL V. MULLEN

FERA. *See* FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION.

FHA. *See* FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION.

FIELDS, W.C. *See* HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; HUMOR.

FIRESIDE CHATS

During his twelve years as president, Franklin Roosevelt delivered thirty-one radio addresses called "fireside chats," a name coined in May 1933, immediately before the second of them, by Harry M. Butcher, a CBS radio executive. The public, the press, and Roosevelt himself adopted the homey appellation, and the label stuck. These speeches were intended to be relatively brief and informal reports to the American people, delivered in a conversational tone and in simple, unadorned language. Roosevelt, who had experimented with this use of the radio when he was governor of New York, was a master of that form of communication; he had a clear, bell-like voice and developed an unpretentious and good-humored style that endeared him to millions of Americans across the country.

The first fireside chat was given on March 12, 1933, only a week after Roosevelt's inauguration. It



President Franklin D. Roosevelt, preparing to deliver a fireside chat in April 1935. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

addressed the banking crisis, and the everyday language and easy tone of the opening sentences set the pattern for all the fireside chats that were to follow: “My friends, I want to talk for a few minutes with the people of the United States about banking—to talk with the comparatively few who understand the mechanics of banking, but more particularly with the overwhelming majority of you who use banks for the making of deposits and the drawing of checks. I want to tell you what has been done in the last few days, and why it was done, and what the next steps are going to be.”

The first thirteen of these radio talks (aired from March 1933 through July 1938) were devoted to domestic policy, explaining aspects of the New Deal and asking for political support for his various programs. The final eighteen talks (aired from Septem-

ber 1939 through January 1945) addressed the issues and dangers raised by the war in Europe and, once the United States entered, reported on the progress toward ultimate victory. Although Roosevelt occasionally shared bad news in the fireside chats, their prevailing tone was patriotic, inspirational, and upbeat—the president of the United States trying, in his neighborly way, to encourage optimism, pride in America, and confidence in the future.

Most of the fireside chats were delivered by Roosevelt from the diplomatic reception room on the first floor of the White House, seated at a table loaded with microphones from the major radio networks. About a third of the talks were given on Sunday evenings. Normally the president invited a small audience to be present—twenty or thirty

friends, civil servants, and houseguests, all seated on folding chairs. The president would be wheeled into the room about ten minutes before airtime, carrying his reading copy and smoking the usual cigarette.

Roosevelt had the benefit of a team of talented speechwriters. Some of them were political operatives with other duties, advisers such as Samuel Rosenman, Harry Hopkins, Rexford Tugwell, Adolph Berle, and a half dozen others. The wartime fireside chats had the additional advantage of two legendary American writers, Robert Sherwood and Archibald MacLeish. But the accounts of all the participants agree that the president himself was an active participant in the speechwriting process. He would dictate initial versions of certain passages, review each draft meticulously, require changes and rearrangements, and practice speaking the sentences until he had the material just the way he wanted it. He also sometimes changed words here and there as he delivered the speech.

The impact of these talks on the American people would be difficult to overestimate. The first fireside chat was carried by around 150 radio stations and entered an estimated twenty million homes (reaching perhaps sixty million Americans). By the late 1930s, around five hundred of the nation's eight hundred radio stations were carrying the speeches, and estimates of the audience range as high as one hundred million. It was not unusual for the White House to receive forty thousand letters from around the country after a broadcast. The picture of a family gathered around the kitchen table listening to the president on the radio, became one of the enduring images of the 1930s and early 1940s.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS;
RADIO; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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DAVID W. LEVY

FISH, HAMILTON

Hamilton Fish (December 7, 1888–January 18, 1991) served in the U.S. Congress as Republican representative from New York from 1925 to 1945. Fish was best known for his investigations into domestic communism. A Hudson Valley blueblood whose grandfather had been secretary of state, Fish graduated from Harvard University in 1910, sat in the New York state assembly from 1914 to 1916 as a member of the Progressive Party, served overseas as an infantry captain during World War I, and helped to organized the American Legion in 1919. Though he hailed from New York's Dutchess county, the home of Franklin Roosevelt, Fish voiced strong opposition to Roosevelt's foreign policy.

In May 1933 Fish claimed that the extraordinary powers that had been given to Roosevelt constituted "an American dictatorship based on the consent of the governed." In 1933 Fish voted for the Economy Act, while opposing the Agricultural Adjustment Act, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and inflationary measures. In January 1934 Fish backed an increase in Civil Works Administration payments, but that March he found the New Deal dominated by "professors, radicals, and near-Socialists." In February 1935 Fish accused the National Recovery Administration of strangling small enterprises, and he fought pending banking legislation for giving the Federal Reserve Board too much power. He continually sought compromise on veterans' bonus legislation, opposing the bills of Congressman Wright Patman, a Democrat from Texas, while favoring installment payments to veterans. To solve the depression in agriculture, Fish endorsed the McNary-Haugen bill, which centered on dumping surpluses overseas.

As the 1936 campaign approached, Fish expressed interest in the Republican presidential nomination, and was backed by Representative Harold Knutson from Minnesota. A man as far to the left as New York Representative Vito Marcantonio wanted Fish to serve as a delegate to the party convention, saying he stood "for social and economic justice and a square deal for labor and small business interests." Like Marcantonio, Fish endorsed the candidacy of William E. Borah, advancing the argument that the Idaho senator, as the most liberal of the contenders, could best carry New England, New York, and Pennsylvania. Though he supported the Supreme Court's ruling against the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Fish was disturbed enough by the *Tipaldo* decision, which struck down a state minimum wage law, to offer a constitutional amendment giving each state the power to fix minimum wages for workers. In the wake of the Republican defeat in 1936, he called for the resignation of conservative party chairman John Hamilton and maintained that his party must endorse old-age pensions and protection for children.

Though Fish found Roosevelt's court-packing scheme a "revolutionary, unlawful and a monstrous doctrine," he pledged to vote for mandatory retirement of aged Supreme Court justices and desired a constitutional amendment that would require a two-thirds vote to invalidate congressional legislation. He welcomed the court's decisions backing the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act), arguing that the court showed that liberal legislation would receive "a square deal." In October 1937 he blamed the president for the stock market decline, saying business lacked confidence in his rule. In 1938 Fish accused the Works Progress Administration of political corruption, supported the wages and hours bill, and wanted his state party organization to endorse Democrats Al Smith and Herbert Lehman for the Senate. That year the American Federation of Labor, pleased with Fish's pro-labor stance, endorsed his reelection. In 1944, Fish lost the House race by a decisive margin, partly as a result of the gerrymandering of his district. As a private citizen, he increasingly espoused rightwing views until his death at age 102.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1936; NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD (NRPB); REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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JUSTUS D. DOENECKE

FLANAGAN, HALLIE

A theater director, educator, and playwright, Hallie Mae Ferguson Flanagan (August 27, 1890–July 23, 1969) served as the administrator of the Federal Theatre Project from 1935 to 1939. Born in Redfield, South Dakota, Flanagan graduated in 1911 from Iowa's Grinnell College, where she was a classmate of Harry Hopkins. Flanagan taught high school before marrying insurance salesman Murray Flanagan in 1912. The couple produced two sons, one of whom survived to adulthood. After her husband's 1919 death, Flanagan returned to the classroom.

A charismatic woman who loved to be at the center of attention, Flanagan ventured into the dramatic arts in 1921. While an assistant director at Grinnell's Colonial Theatre, she penned several plays. *The Curtain*, about two likable liars, won the Iowa State Playwriting Contest in 1922 and propelled Flanagan into Harvard professor George Pierce Baker's 47 Workshop for playwriting. In 1924, after completing her master of arts degree at Radcliffe College in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Flanagan returned to Grinnell College to head the theater program. She left in 1925 to teach at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Flanagan's Vassar duties were delayed when she won a Guggenheim Fellowship for study

abroad. During her year in Europe she saw not only new plays but also new methods of staging. Politically to the left of center, Flanagan appreciated the Soviet Union's employment of drama as an instrument of social and political change. Once back in the United States, she developed a reputation as an authority on Soviet drama and contributed regularly to various theater publications. At the Vassar Experimental Theatre, she became one of the first Americans to use agitprop plays to rouse public opinion against poverty and unemployment.

In 1935 Harry Hopkins, head of the Works Progress Administration, asked his friend Flanagan to run the new Federal Theatre Project (FTP). Flanagan saw the mission of the FTP as providing a social and educational contribution to the country through the establishment of a federation of non-commercial theaters. She spent most of her tenure battling administrators who had no interest in culture and wanted only an inconspicuous jobs program. To educate through drama without building expensive sets, Flanagan created Living Newspaper productions similar to works she had seen in Russia. Innovative and controversial, these plays documented current social and political issues. The FTP ended in 1939, amidst charges of Communist infiltration.

Flanagan returned to Vassar. She joined Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1942 as a dean and then resumed full-time theater teaching in 1946. She died in Old Tappan, New Jersey.

See Also: CRADLE WILL ROCK, THE; FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP).

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CARYN E. NEUMANN

FLYNN, EDWARD J.

Longtime boss of the Bronx, Edward (Ed) Joseph Flynn (September 22, 1891–August 18, 1953)

helped Franklin D. Roosevelt rise to power and then served as his presidential campaign organizer and chief political advisor on urban machine politics.

Unlike most city bosses, Flynn came from a comfortable background. The son of a college-educated Irish immigrant father, Flynn was born in New York City in 1891. He earned a law degree from Fordham University in 1912 and quickly became a successful Bronx attorney. Flynn's name recognition brought him to the notice of the Tammany Hall machine, a Democratic organization that had controlled New York City politics for decades. Tammany Hall pushed Flynn into running for the New York State Assembly in 1917. He served two terms and then in 1921 was elected sheriff of Bronx County. In 1925, Mayor James J. Walker named Flynn as New York City chamberlain. Already one of the mightiest men in New York City, Flynn showed more interest in politics than power. In 1922 he became chairman of the Bronx County Democratic Executive Committee—in effect, the political chief of the county—a position that he retained until his death thirty years later.

Quiet, reserved, and more comfortable with books than people, Flynn proved to have a flair for behind-the-scenes politics. As boss, he tightened up the Democratic organization in the Bronx by running an efficient borough, judiciously distributing patronage, and avoiding the corruption scandals that had plagued earlier administrations. In 1928, he campaigned hard for Roosevelt's successful New York gubernatorial campaign and earned the loyalty of the rising star. Upon taking office in 1929, Roosevelt appointed Flynn to be secretary of New York state, a post that he held for ten years.

After setting his sights on the White House, Roosevelt relied on Flynn to gather the support of Democrats in big-city machines throughout the nation. Flynn, a pragmatic liberal who appreciated creative solutions to vexing problems, emerged from the campaign as one of Roosevelt's closest advisors. Always a loyalist, Flynn supported the president even when the two disagreed over political matters, such as Roosevelt's support of New York City mayor Fiorello La Guardia.

Roosevelt appointed Flynn to positions as regional administrator of the National Recovery Ad-

ministration public works program and as U.S. commissioner general to the New York World's Fair, but Flynn's political actions were more significant. In the mid-1930s, Flynn joined other politicians who advised Roosevelt of the potential importance of the African-American vote and of the need to take action to bring black voters into the party. Flynn also assisted James A. Farley with the second presidential campaign and then, as a proponent of Roosevelt's third presidential bid, replaced Farley in 1940 as chairman of the Democratic National Committee. After Congress rejected Flynn's 1943 nomination as ambassador to Australia, he gradually withdrew from national politics, although he continued to serve as chairman of the Bronx County Democrats. Flynn succumbed to a heart attack while visiting Dublin.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1940; TAMMANY HALL.

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CARYN E. NEUMANN

FMHA. *See* FARMERS HOME ADMINISTRATION.

FMP. *See* FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT.

FNMA. *See* FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION.

FOLKLORISTS

The key figures in charting new directions in folklore studies in the 1930s were New Deal folklorists B. A. Botkin (national folklore editor, Federal Writers' Project, 1938–39; chief editor, Writers' Unit, Library of Congress Project, 1939–1941; head, Archive of American Folksong, 1942–1945); Alan

Lomax (head, Archive of American Folksong, 1937–1942); and Charles Seeger (head, Resettlement Administration's Special Skills Division, 1935–1937; assistant director, Federal Music Project, 1937–1939). These three men paid special attention to the culture of marginalized rural and urban communities. They saw themselves as contributing to a new liberal/Popular Front culture for an emerging, pluralistic, and industrial society.

Botkin, Lomax, and Seeger rejected traditional folklore scholarship's privileged hierarchies regarding what constituted the object of study—the lore over the folk, the past over the present, the rural over the urban, the agrarian over the industrial, survivals over revivals, older genres over newer emergent forms, oral transmission over technological media, homogeneous groups over heterogeneous ones. The New Deal provided an institutional base for an approach to folklore that would have been virtually impossible to pursue at that time in the university world. The New Deal folklorists argued for a rejection of evolutionary anthropology and for a functionalist approach to the role of lore in a culture. They were also cultural nationalists, who sought to reconcile romantic nationalist assumptions about the need for a homogenous folk tradition on which to build a national culture with the reality of American diversity. They envisioned the study and use of American folklore as playing an important role in a democratic culture.

Botkin most fully articulated the views of New Deal folklorists. He disagreed with those folklorists, and other students of American culture, who felt there were no folk in America and with those who felt threatened by American diversity. He declared that "there is not one folk [in America] but many folk groups—as many folk groups as there are regional cultures or occupational groups within a region." He also insisted that it was time "to recognize that we have in America a variety of folk groups, representing different racial, regional, and even industrial cultures." Botkin argued that while once geography had been a key factor in creating folklore, in the modern world the social structure itself produces the isolation and separation out of which comes a folklore of the educated, as well as the uneducated.

Federal Writers' Project director Henry Alsberg was convinced that Botkin's appointment would help the project move into a new phase of cultural studies focusing on the contemporary life of the nation's ethnic minorities and working class. Although John Lomax, Alan's father and Botkin's predecessor as Federal Writers' Project folklore editor, was a great folksong collector who broadened the canon of American folksong, he also saw folklore as flourishing only when the folk who valued it were separated from the mainstream of modern life. In sharp contrast, Botkin pioneered in the study of urban and labor lore and created experimental Federal Writers' Project Living Lore units consisting of creative writers. He believed folklore had an important role to play in a democratic culture: "The WPA looks upon folklore research not as a private but as a public function, and folklore as public, not private property."

In 1937 Alan Lomax succeeded John Lomax as head of the Archive of American Folksong. Like Botkin, but unlike his father, Alan Lomax thought the creation of folklore was a permanent and ongoing activity. He formed close ties with other New Deal folklorists and shared their left-of-center politics, egalitarian values, and functionalist approach. In an unprecedented manner, Alan Lomax used commercial radio to share the materials folklorists collected and his view that although folklore reflected specific traditions it could also help create intercultural understanding.

New Deal folklorists strove to institutionalize the informal supportive network that existed among them. Like Botkin and Lomax, Charles Seeger also regarded American folklore as hybrid forms best understood by documenting their function in cultures in transition. After becoming national Federal Writers' Project folklore editor, Botkin established a Joint WPA (Works Progress Administration) Folklore Committee. Botkin and Seeger co-chaired the committee. When it became apparent that the days of the Federal Writers' Project and Federal Music Project were numbered, Botkin and Seeger used the contacts they had made through the Committee to try to find a permanent home in the Library of Congress for the projects they had begun and those they still wanted to undertake.

As it turned out, New Deal folklorists were not able to establish a permanent federal agency to promote such work. Nevertheless the episode was hardly without value. Botkin, Lomax, and Seeger would find ways to continue their work along lines they had established during the New Deal. Botkin published for general readers a collection of Federal Writers' Project ex-slave narratives, *Lay My Burden Down: A Folk History of Slavery* (1945). Although much of the Living Lore and other Federal Writers' Project folklore material remained unpublished, Botkin would draw on it in *A Treasury of American Folklore* (1944), and in his later regional and topical folklore treasuries. In the 1950s, he argued for *applied folklore*, a new term that embodied the values of New Deal folklorists. The work that Alan Lomax began in the 1930s later earned him the title "godfather of the folksong revival." Charles Seeger became one of the founders of the discipline of ethnomusicology.

In the 1950s, folklorist Richard Dorson, who as a young scholar in 1939 had sought Botkin's guidance, worked to secure a foothold in academe for folklore as a Ph.D. granting discipline. To achieve this he sought to enforce a narrow definition of what folklorists studied and to define the role of the folklorist strictly in terms of academic scholarship. He viewed the New Deal folklorists' ideas about folklore for the public as a threat to the academic identity of folklore, the authority of folklore as an academic discipline, and most importantly as a threat to the authority of academic folklorists.

Even during the postwar years, when New Deal folklorists' opponents in folklore studies sought to marginalize their influence, some younger folklorists sought contact with them and received the encouragement they sought in resisting narrow approaches to the material of folklore studies and to the role of the folklorist in the larger culture. In time, a group of folklorists, including some who had participated in the folksong revival, and who had been brought up on Botkin and Lomax's folklore anthologies, supported (1) the establishment in 1967 of the Smithsonian Institution's Annual Festival of American Folklife; (2) folklorist Archie Green's efforts to create an American Folklife Center, established in the Library of Congress in 1976;

and (3) the creation of a network of public sector folklorists funded by the National Endowment for the Arts' Folk Arts Program, which was established in 1974. Given that much of the theory and practice of New Deal folklorists needs further study and given the constant ferment of a multicultural and advanced technological society, there is reason to think that the New Deal folklorist have left future generations a living legacy.

See Also: FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP); LITERATURE; LOMAX, ALAN; MUSIC; POETRY; SLAVE NARRATIVES.

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JERROLD HIRSCH

FORD, HENRY

Henry Ford (July 30, 1863–April 7, 1947), who gained international fame as an innovator and entrepreneur in the automobile industry, was born into a farm family in present-day Dearborn, Michigan. Ford channeled an engineering background and a notable stint as a motorcar racer into a career as a pioneer in the development of mass production systems and the manufacture of low-priced vehicles, beginning with the Model T in 1908. The spectacular expansion of the Ford Motor Company between 1910 and 1923 established it as the country's leading automobile producer, transformed the automobile industry, and enabled Henry Ford to secure complete control of his business. The associated publicity established Henry Ford's international reputation as the inventor of mass production and a symbol of successful entrepreneurship. Prominent aspects of this public persona included the introduction of the \$5 per day wage, peace campaigning during World War I, and a virulent anti-Semitism that was propounded through Ford's own newspaper, the *Dearborn Independent*, between 1920 and 1927. Henry Ford's anti-Semitic views reflected a strand of midwestern populist thought that was also reflected in his distrust of financial interests and international agencies. It created considerable controversy that tarnished his public image considerably by 1927.

Although Ford Motor Company was the industry leader and extended its multinational operations considerably from 1911 to 1926, General Motors and Chrysler were potent competitors after 1923. Ford's investment in associated enterprises, such as mines, steelworks, and shipping, and the firm's focus on a single model imposed higher fixed costs than the less integrated General Motors, which of-

ferred a range of models. Moreover, Henry Ford's autocratic style alienated key managers and delayed modernization of the Model T. Model T production ended in 1927, and the Ford Motor Company's vast River Rouge plant was shut down for retooling in preparation for the manufacture of the new Ford Model A. Thousands of auto workers were left idle. Public interest in the new Model A focused on the Ford Motor Company's reputation and status, and initial sales were promising, with Ford regaining its leading position in 1929 and 1930. But industry sales slumped from more than 5 million new cars in 1929 to 1.4 million in 1932, and sales recovered only slowly. For such a capital-intensive industry, the result was persistent overcapacity, even after the failure of many small firms. The Ford Motor Company's own sales and profits fell steeply, and the firm followed the general pattern of dismissing workers and operating shorter hours. Although Henry Ford's financial control precluded external threats from banks, the crisis diminished his reputation for transcending economic trends. The virtues of mass production as a means of extending consumption and, thus, employment became associated with fear of technological unemployment during the 1930s.

Although Ford remained a major public figure during the Depression years, his self-help ideals associated him with aspects of a discredited form of conservatism. In addition, his company's competitive strength ebbed as the aging Ford's arbitrary and intermittent authority impeded technological changes and inhibited an effective succession to his only son, Edsel Ford. The Ford Motor Company's management systems were weak compared to those at General Motors. Above all, Henry Ford's opposition to labor unions created a sour atmosphere within the company. The company's pioneering and paternalistic labor practices, including the \$5 per day wage and the sociological department, which administered the scheme, were attempts to support and stabilize the firm's expanding and diverse workforce. Sociological Department's inspectors used questionnaires and home visits to determine whether workers qualified for the highest hourly rates. Despite positive aspects, the system had an authoritarian edge that contained the seeds of later problems. By the late 1920s

Ford's industrial relations were explicitly coercive, especially in the giant Rouge plant. Henry Ford placed control of labor policies in the hands of Harry Bennett and his Service Department. Bennett oversaw a network of spies, employed violence to intimidate workers, awarded catering contracts to underworld associates, and parlayed his control of personnel and his close relationship with Henry Ford into wider influence. The latter element compounded the disunity and turnover among executives, but the consequences were more direct for the workers. Competitive pressures translated into wage reductions and "speed-up" of the assembly line, as well as an intense work regime, favoritism, and a repressive management culture. By the 1930s Ford was among the worst examples of industrial practices in American manufacturing.

Always eager for complete control, Ford was hostile to New Deal initiatives and to the emergence of union organizing campaigns. This was demonstrated graphically on March 7, 1932, when three thousand people marched to the River Rouge demanding work-sharing, union representation, and reforms to labor practices. The Dearborn police and members of Ford's service department acted violently to disperse the crowd, eventually firing directly into them. Four people were killed and at least twenty seriously wounded. Antipathy to the New Deal, combined with distaste for trade associations, was reflected in Ford's refusal to participate in the automobile industry code under the National Recovery Administration (NRA) between 1933 and 1935. Since the industry monitored its trade practices effectively, the NRA code centered on labor relations. Despite federal rhetoric, Ford's opposition to the NRA had little adverse impact on the company. However, union organizing activities gained momentum with the creation of United Automobile Workers (UAW) in 1935 and its transfer to the newly formed Committee for Industrial Organization, later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Legal support for the union came from the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. A series of sit-down strikes and organizing drives, plus the revival of business, persuaded General Motors and Chrysler to recognize the UAW in 1937. Yet Henry Ford ensured that his firm continued to resist unionization through intimidation and

legal challenges. The most striking public images of this opposition came in May 1937 when photographers captured the "Battle of the Overpass" at the Rouge plant as Bennett's men assaulted UAW organizers. Similar tactics were used at Ford plants in Dallas and Kansas City. Finally, in 1941 Ford faced a more unified UAW after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against the firm's labor practices. A strike and blockade of the Rouge plant in April convinced Ford to negotiate, and the UAW emerged from the resulting National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election as the representative union. The first union contract was signed in June in spite of Henry Ford's opposition.

During the 1930s Henry Ford's other interests included opening Greenfield Village, a museum that symbolized the rural childhood that had shaped his attitudes, including his preference for political isolationism and his suspicion of financiers. Ford also promoted "village industries" by locating plants in rural areas, and he promoted experiments in the cultivation of soybeans and their use in manufacturing. World War II revived Ford's pacifist ideals: In 1940 he refused to manufacture Rolls Royce engines for Great Britain. Once the United States entered the war, Ford concentrated the company's production on defense contracts, including trucks, jeeps, munitions, and aircraft. After a stroke in 1941, Ford became less active, though more capricious, in management, and the death of his son Edsel in 1943 weakened the firm's leadership. Henry Ford became company president and his grandson, Henry Ford II, was released from the navy to join management. Bennett's ambitions for control were thwarted by Clara Ford and Eleanor Ford, the wives of Henry and Edsel respectively, who mobilized the family's financial power and Clara's influence over Henry to ensure a transition to Henry Ford II. In 1947, Ford died quietly at the Fair Lane estate. His lying "in state" in Greenfield Village attracted thousands and his funeral was a major civic occasion.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; ORGANIZED LABOR; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STRIKES; UNITED AUTO WORKERS (UAW).

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MICHAEL FRENCH

FORD, JOHN

John Ford (February 1, 1894–August 31, 1973), motion-picture director, was born John Martin Feeney in Cape Elizabeth, Maine, to first-generation Irish Catholic immigrants. He spent his childhood in Portland, Maine, and in July 1914 he followed his older brother Francis, a movie actor and director, to California. There he began working in silent films as a crew member, stuntman, actor, and, from 1917 on, director. Until the start of the Depression, he was best known as a director of westerns, for Universal through 1921 and for Fox thereafter. *The Iron Horse* (1924) was his most famous western during the silent era. Between 1930 and 1941, Ford directed thirty-one films in a number of genres for a variety of studios, often working with screenwriter Dudley Nichols. His reputation and confidence grew after he was awarded an Oscar for best direction for *The Informer* (1935), an honor he also received for *Grapes of Wrath* in 1940 and for *How Green Was My Valley* in 1941.

Although Ford's political views evolved throughout his life, the progressive and antifascist



Henry Fonda (center) as Tom Joad, with Jane Darwell and Russell Simpson as Ma and Pa Joad, in John Ford's 1940 film version of John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. BETTMANN/CORBIS

political climate in Hollywood in the late 1930s and the influence of liberal screenwriters with whom he worked (such as Nichols) helped move his political views further left during the Depression than at any other time of his life. During that period he joined several leftist organizations, including the Motion Picture Democratic Committee, the Motion Picture Artists Committee to Aid Republican Spain, and the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League.

Two of Ford's films in particular bear the imprint of this political climate. In Ford's first western of the 1930s, *Stagecoach* (1939), the most sympathetically portrayed characters are the escaped convict Ringo, the prostitute Dallas, and the drunken Doc Boone, and the chief antagonist is the banker

Gatewood. In line with Roosevelt's New Deal coalition, the common people are celebrated while greedy elites are scorned. *Grapes of Wrath* (1940), the adaptation of John Steinbeck's celebrated 1939 novel about Oklahoma farmers displaced by the Dust Bowl and seeking a new life in California, likewise drew a sympathetic portrait of the Joad family, who struggle to survive in a system stacked against them, even if Ford softened the novel's dark ending by concluding with Ma Joad's optimistic speech about the endurance of the common people.

In 1939 Ford fed the growing American nationalism on the eve of World War II with two historical films, *Drums along the Mohawk* and *Young Mr. Lincoln*. His final film before the U. S. entered World

War II, *How Green Was My Valley* (1941), nostalgically portrayed a Welsh coal-mining family from the adult point of view of the family's youngest son. Together, these three films foreshadowed Ford's evolution from leftist politics to concerns of patriotism, national myths, and memory that would preoccupy him in his films of the next decade.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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CHARLES J. MALAND

FOREMAN, CLARK

Clark Howell Foreman (February 19, 1902–June 15, 1977) served in the Franklin Roosevelt administration from 1933 to 1941. As a New Deal administrator and a founding member of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, Foreman was a leading advocate of racial integration and actively supported the expansion of economic and political democracy in the South.

Foreman, the grandson of the founder of *The Atlanta Constitution*, had rejected the racial mores of his native Georgia by the time he joined the Roosevelt administration in 1933. He supported an activist role for the federal government in advancing the economic and social welfare of all citizens. As special advisor on the economic status of Negroes from 1933 to 1935 under Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, Foreman and his assistant Robert Weaver actively promoted full and fair inclusion of African Americans in New Deal programs. In 1935, Weaver succeeded Foreman in that post and Foreman be-

came director of the Public Works Administration's Division of Public Power, where he developed an expanded program of grants and loans to cities to establish municipally owned power plants. This ambitious effort withstood a major legal challenge from private power companies.

In 1938, Roosevelt sought Foreman's advice regarding the president's effort to defeat southern congressional opponents of the New Deal during the 1938 Democratic primary elections. Foreman recommended that the president sponsor a report documenting what the New Deal had done for the South, and the importance of federal assistance to the region's economic development. As a result, Foreman and other southerners compiled *The Report on the Economic Conditions of the South*, and Foreman went on to help organize the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW) in November of 1938 as an expression of southern support for the New Deal.

Foreman became director of defense housing in 1940. A year later a major controversy developed around a housing project built for black defense workers in Detroit in an area bordering a predominantly white neighborhood. When Foreman refused to give in to demands that the Sojourner Truth housing project be changed to white occupancy, southern conservatives in Congress joined with Republicans and successfully pressured for Foreman's dismissal. After leaving the federal government, Foreman became chairman of the SCHW, and devoted his efforts towards challenging segregation and voter restrictions in the South, and expanding the political participation of both blacks and whites.

See Also: REPORT ON THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE SOUTH; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW).

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PATRICIA SULLIVAN

FOSTER, WILLIAM Z.

William Zebulon Foster (February 25, 1881–September 1, 1961), a leading member of the Communist Party for four decades, was possibly the best-known radical activist of Depression-era America. Born in Taunton, Massachusetts, the son of immigrants, Foster grew up in an impoverished community in Philadelphia. His formal education ended at the age of ten, and, after a brief stint as an apprentice to a craftsman, he worked at a variety of unskilled jobs.

In 1901, at the age of nineteen, Foster joined the Socialist Party and for the next two decades crisscrossed the country as an itinerant worker. In 1909 he became a member of the International Workers of the World (IWW) but left the organization in 1911 over the issue of dual unionism, advocating instead capturing and radicalizing mainstream unions. To that end he joined the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and became one of its most effective organizers. Foster gained a national reputation for his leading role in major organizing campaigns in the meat and steel industries.

Foster joined the Communist Party in 1921 and assumed a prominent role in party work. As a highly respected labor organizer he directed trade union activities throughout the 1920s and the early 1930s. In 1924, he became party chairman (a position he held until 1957) and also headed the party's ticket for president, as he did in 1928 and 1932. By the end of the 1920s he had risen to the top of the Communist Party hierarchy as a member of a three-man secretariat that included Earl Browder and William Weinstone.

In 1930, Foster launched the party's unemployed campaign with a mass demonstration of an estimated 100,000 in New York City. While campaigning in 1932, he suffered a heart attack and for the next three years was unable to engage in active party work. Once recuperated, Foster found Browder firmly in control and his role limited primarily to "literary activities." A prolific writer, he made good use of this period. Between 1932 and 1939, he penned three books, including two autobiographies, and numerous articles and tracts.

Throughout the 1930s Foster wrangled with Browder over the direction of the party. Respected but isolated, he regained a dominant voice in party affairs after Browder's removal from leadership and expulsion from the party in 1945. In 1957, Foster's health again collapsed, and he died four years later in the Soviet Union, where he had gone to seek medical treatment. Foster's widow returned his ashes to the United States and deposited them near the graves of the Haymarket martyrs in Chicago.

See Also: BROWDER, EARL; COMMUNIST PARTY.

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GWEN MOORE

FRANK, JEROME

Born in New York City to parents of German-Jewish descent, Jerome Frank (September 10, 1889–January 13, 1957) grew up there and in Chicago, where his family moved in his youth. Exceptionally bright, Frank graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Chicago in 1909 and set a new academic standard at Chicago's law school three years later. A corporate lawyer in Chicago, he dabbled in Progressive politics and underwent Freudian analysis to confirm that the legal profession was for him. It was. Joining a New York law firm in the late 1920s, he soon published the first of several books, *Law and the Modern Mind*, wherein Frank championed "Legal Realism," a Freudian-informed assault on the rigidity of law and jurisprudence. Appointments at Yale and the New School in New York followed, as did his entree into national public service in the New Deal, mediated by his friend, Harvard law professor Felix Frankfurter. As general counsel of the new Agricultural Adjustment

Administration (AAA) in 1933, Frank assembled a legendary cadre of brilliant lawyers, including future Democratic presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson, future Supreme Court justice Abe Fortas, future trustbuster Thurman Arnold, and Alger Hiss, later convicted of perjury over passing secrets to the Soviet Union in the trial-of-the-century.

While the AAA's huge Legal Division included communists or sympathizers, Frank remained a liberal pragmatist within the profit system, paralleling the New Deal itself. But clashes between the Legal Division and the conservative landlord and processor establishment were inevitable. Led first by AAA administrator George N. Peek and then by Chester C. Davis, the conservatives wanted to raise commodity prices and limit production but resisted upsetting landlord-tenant relationships or making the AAA an instrument of land reform. Tensions over policy and procedure flared frequently in 1933 and 1934 but climaxed in early 1935 when the liberals tried to reinterpret a controversial paragraph in the cotton acreage reduction contract in favor of sharecroppers against landlords. That led to the infamous "purge" wherein Davis ousted Frank along with others in the Legal Division and the AAA's Consumer's Counsel. The firings were confirmed by Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, while President Franklin D. Roosevelt, with friends on both sides, pleaded ignorance and remained aloof. The purge ended any liberal hope of serious agricultural reform in the AAA. Professionally unharmed by his ouster, Frank held other federal jobs before his 1941 appointment to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the influential Second Circuit, a position he held until his death in January 1957.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); WALLACE, HENRY A.

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LAWRENCE J. NELSON

FRANKFURTER, FELIX

Felix Frankfurter (November 15, 1882–February 21, 1965) was associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court from 1939 to 1962. He was born in Vienna, Austria, one of six children of Leopold and Emma (Winter) Frankfurter. In 1894, the family moved to New York. Financial fortune proved elusive to Frankfurter's father; selling linen door-to-door and from their apartment, the kindhearted tradesman managed only a meager living and often spent any extra money he acquired on fruit baskets for less fortunate neighbors.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Felix's two older brothers had to work to supplement their father's income, but the future justice was largely spared that fate. Leopold's brother Solomon had become a successful scholar in Vienna, and Emma seemed determined to give Felix the same opportunity, allowing her precocious son to attend lectures and spend hours in the Cooper Union library. After graduating third in his class at the City College of New York, Felix attended Harvard Law School, ranking first each of his three years there. One of his Harvard examinations was so impressive that a faculty member regularly read it aloud to classes over the years.

In 1906, Frankfurter joined Hornblower, Byrne, Miller and Potter, becoming the first Jewish person ever hired by that New York firm. He quickly became bored with private practice, however, and

when an opening became available in the office of the U.S. attorney for New York's southern district, Frankfurter jumped at the opportunity. Despite marked differences in their backgrounds, Frankfurter and Henry Stimson, the patrician federal attorney for the district, worked well together, pursuing corporate misconduct and more mundane law violators with equal zeal. When President William Howard Taft named Stimson secretary of war, Frankfurter also went to Washington, becoming counsel in the War Department's Bureau of Insular Affairs.

A master at flattery, the diminutive and effusive Frankfurter, with his piercing bird-like eyes and keen intellect, cultivated many new and influential Washington friends, not least among them justices Oliver W. Holmes and Louis D. Brandeis. The Washington house he shared with several friends became a center for nightly gatherings and frank intellectual discussions—Holmes, apparently, dubbed it "The House of Truth." There Frankfurter met the love of his life, Marion Denman, the Congregational minister's daughter he would marry in 1920, over his mother's intense opposition, after a six-year courtship. The couple would have no children, and Marion suffered periodic bouts of depression, but Frankfurter remained totally devoted to her throughout their marriage.

In 1914, Frankfurter took a position on the law faculty at Harvard. A natural teacher (to both willing and unwilling students), he enjoyed his new role immensely, particularly the opportunity his professorship offered him for continued involvement in contemporary political and policy issues. Like Brandeis before him, Frankfurter represented clients defending wage and hour legislation before the Supreme Court. On special assignments for the Wilson administration, he filed a report charging that the conviction and death sentence handed labor leader Tom Mooney for a San Francisco bombing was based on perjured evidence and he concluded that Arizona copper miners had been subject to gross brutality and injustice. He also spoke out vehemently against Wilson attorney general Mitchell Palmer's raids on suspected subversives, became a very vocal critic of the Sacco and Vanzetti convictions and executions, and urged U.S. diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union.

ADVISER TO ROOSEVELT

As the nation became preoccupied with the Depression, Frankfurter was again a figure of influence in Washington. He and Franklin D. Roosevelt had first met when Frankfurter was working in the War Department and Roosevelt was assistant Navy secretary. Frankfurter became a close friend and adviser to the future president during Roosevelt's tenure as governor of New York. When Roosevelt went to the White House in 1933, he offered Frankfurter the post of solicitor general, chief representative of the United States before the Supreme Court. Frankfurter declined, explaining that he could make a more substantial contribution as a source of personnel and ideas for the New Deal.

The future justice quickly became a major Washington figure. He played a prominent role in drafting and pushing recovery legislation through Congress. Holding Wall Street and big business primarily responsible for the nation's economic woes, Frankfurter relished the opportunity to oversee drafting of the Securities Act, subjecting the stock market to extensive federal control. Although others were primarily responsible for writing that legislation, Frankfurter mounted a brilliant defense of its provisions in testimony before Congress.

The future justice obviously had competition in his efforts to influence the direction of New Deal policies. James Farley and certain others in Roosevelt's inner circle were essentially political tacticians, largely unconcerned with substantive policy. But three Columbia University academics—Raymond Moley, Adolph Berle, and Rexford Tugwell—became Frankfurter's major intellectual rivals. The trio contended that continued domination of the economy by giant businesses was inevitable and favored the administration's use of centralized planning to channel that power toward service of the public interest. Frankfurter, on the other hand, was suspicious of concentrated economic power and the notion that national affairs could be managed best by Tugwell and other Washington experts. Instead, he favored heavy spending for public works and substantial corporate taxation as major weapons of economic recovery. Roosevelt never became the complete captive of either side, but Frankfurter would gradually gain influence over his Columbia counterparts.

Frankfurter became what one administrative official termed “the most influential single individual in the United States,” largely through his recruitment of talented individuals—who were called Felix’s “Happy Hot Dogs”—for the new administration. He brought Benjamin V. Cohen and James M. Landis, principal authors of the Securities Act, to the administration’s attention. Tommy Corcoran, one of Frankfurter’s Harvard students in the 1920s and a clerk to Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes largely on Frankfurter’s recommendation, was the future justice’s most spectacular “hot dog,” becoming one of the most influential players in Depression-era Washington.

Frankfurter also assumed a key role in Roosevelt’s growing attachment to the ideas of British economist John Maynard Keynes, who considered massive deficit government spending a major remedy for a stagnant economy. Long a supporter of balanced budgeting, Frankfurter came to know Keynes and admire his economic philosophy while teaching as a professor at Oxford in 1933 and 1934. Back in the United States, Frankfurter helped persuade Roosevelt to partially embrace Keynesian economics, especially during the 1937 recession. In fact, as a result of his immense knowledge and contacts, not to mention his constant flattery of the president, Frankfurter became one of Roosevelt’s closest advisers. He even lived in the White House during much of the summer of 1935.

During Roosevelt’s first term, Congress enacted much recovery legislation. But a laissez-faire Supreme Court coalition rejected most of those statutes, including the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). To a degree, such rulings played into Frankfurter’s hands. Drawing on the thinking of Moley, Berle, and Tugwell, the early New Deal had emphasized the development of a planned economy through, among other things, business participation in the creation of industry codes. Suspicious of business leaders, Frankfurter favored legislation directly imposing federal controls over the economy and creating social programs. The Court’s invalidation of the National Industrial Recovery Act in *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States* (1935) helped to convince Roosevelt that the administration should pursue Frankfurter’s approach.

Frankfurter privately opposed and refused to defend publicly, however, Roosevelt’s 1937 plan to enlarge the judiciary in an effort to defeat conservative domination of the bench. Ever optimistic, Frankfurter suggested patience, hopeful that the justices might alter the Court’s course; if not, a constitutional amendment could be passed modifying the Court’s composition and powers. When the president opted for Court-packing legislation rather than the more time-consuming amendment process, Frankfurter assured his friend and political benefactor that he would take no public stance on the controversial measure, then privately suggested ways Roosevelt might get it through Congress. But Frankfurter resented Roosevelt’s failure to inform him of the plan until the eve of its submission to Congress.

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE

Although the Court-packing plan failed, Roosevelt was given the opportunity, beginning early in his second term, to fill all but one seat on the high bench. His first choice was Senator Hugo Black of Alabama, his second Stanley Reed of Kentucky, his solicitor general. With the untimely death of Frankfurter’s esteemed friend Justice Benjamin N. Cardozo in 1938, the president had a chance to name a third justice. Whether out of a sincere concern for regional balance or simply because he wanted to keep the supremely confident Frankfurter dangling for a time, Roosevelt at first told his friend that since the current Court was composed entirely of easterners, Cardozo’s successor must come from the West. Roosevelt even asked Frankfurter to compile files on prospective candidates. But members of the president’s inner circle were virtually unanimous that Roosevelt choose Frankfurter for the position. On the evening of January 4, 1939, the president telephoned Frankfurter’s home to offer him the seat, but only after a lengthy, and for Frankfurter exasperating, conversation in which Roosevelt appeared determined *not* to appoint his adviser to the bench.

In those days, Supreme Court nominees rarely attended Senate judiciary committee confirmation hearings, and none had done so since Harlan F. Stone’s brief appearance in 1925. But after a parade

of anti-Semitic witnesses appeared, viciously misrepresenting Frankfurter's views, the committee decided to ask the nominee to appear as a witness. Only Senator Pat McCarran subjected Frankfurter, though, to extensive interrogation. Twelve days after the nomination was announced, the Senate, by voice vote, unanimously confirmed Roosevelt's choice.

Once on the bench, Frankfurter readily joined in the dismantling of the Court's laissez-faire precedents that a majority had begun in 1937. The new justice had long been firmly convinced that policy issues should be left to elected representatives and that judges should overturn statutes only when they lacked any rational basis. He thus had no difficulty affirming Roosevelt's New Deal program and comparable state recovery legislation.

The Roosevelt Court not only rejected the pre-1937 Court's laissez-faire precedents, but in a footnote to *United States v. Carolene Products Co.* (1938), decided the year before Frankfurter's appointment, Justice Stone laid the foundation for a constitutional double standard: The courts would defer to the political branches of government in economic cases, but would subject laws impinging on non-economic personal rights, such as the guarantees of the Bill of Rights, to close judicial scrutiny.

Contrary to the expectations of his liberal friends, however, Justice Frankfurter was almost equally willing to defer to the political branches when non-economic civil liberties were at stake as he was in economic cases; he had little use for the notion that the Constitution contained clear constitutional commands invulnerable to countervailing societal interests. In *Minersville School District v. Gobitis* (1940), he spoke for the Court in upholding compulsory school flag programs over the objections of Jehovah's Witness parents who considered such exercises contrary to their religious beliefs. When the Court overturned *Gobitis* in *West Virginia Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943), Frankfurter dissented, emphasizing his sensitivity as a Jew to religious liberty claims, but also insisting that in wartime individual freedom must yield to society's overriding interest in promoting patriotism.

Frankfurter assumed the same stance in cases involving free speech claims, repeatedly attacking

the First Amendment absolutism of Justice Black, his principal jurisprudential antagonist on the bench. A staunch apostle of federalism, Justice Frankfurter accorded state laws and proceedings particularly broad latitude. Justice Black, convinced that the Fourteenth Amendment's first section was intended by its framers to apply the Bill of Rights to the states, first set forth his total incorporation thesis extensively in his dissent for *Adamson v. California* (1947). Frankfurter was equally certain that the states would never have ratified the Fourteenth Amendment had they thought it would bind their officials to the specifics of the Bill of Rights—that "eighteenth century straitjacket," as Frankfurter characterized those fundamental guarantees.

Frankfurter was especially reluctant to interfere in state criminal proceedings. In *Wolf v. Colorado* (1949), he spoke for the Court in concluding that the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause included within its scope a right of privacy comparable to the Fourth Amendment's guarantee against unreasonable searches and seizures. But he refused to extend the exclusionary rule to the states, preferring instead that states adopt their own devices for deterring police misconduct. In *Rochin v. California* (1952), the Court, per Frankfurter, overturned a conviction based on morphine extracted from the defendant with a stomach pump, but only because he found such conduct "shocking to the conscience" and thus in violation of the right of the accused to a fair trial. When the Court, in *Mapp v. Ohio* (1961), ultimately rejected Frankfurter's "shock-the-conscience" standard as, among other things, highly subjective, the justice dissented, emphasizing once again his regard for state autonomy and rejection of the incorporation doctrine.

But Frankfurter's deference to the states was not absolute. When a five-four majority, speaking through Justice Black, espoused a separatist interpretation of the religious establishment guarantee in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947), yet upheld state reimbursement of bus fares for parochial school students, Frankfurter dissented. Although reluctant to have the federal judiciary interfere in local education, he ultimately joined Chief Justice Earl Warren's unanimous school desegregation decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*

(1954). In an effort to underscore the Court's unity on the issue, all nine justices signed the opinion in *Cooper v. Aaron* (1958), rejecting further delay in the desegregation of Little Rock's high school and underscoring the final authority of the courts to determine the Constitution's meaning. Characteristically, however, Frankfurter insisted on filing a concurrence, outraging, among others, Black and William J. Brennan (Frankfurter's former law student), who prepared but ultimately withdrew an opinion indicating that Frankfurter's concurrence should in no way be viewed as a "dilution" of the Court's firm stance in the case.

Frankfurter spoke for the Court in *Gomillion v. Lightfoot* (1960), striking down on Fifteenth Amendment grounds Alabama's racial gerrymander of the city of Tuskegee, which excluded all but a few of the community's African-American voters from local elections. The justice was unwilling, however, to join the Court's reapportionment revolution of the sixties. Speaking for a plurality in *Colegrove v. Green* (1946), he had rejected judicial intervention in that "political thicket." When the Court, in *Baker v. Carr* (1962), rejected such thinking, declaring that malapportioned governmental bodies raised justiciable constitutional questions, Frankfurter filed one of his most caustic dissents, reiterating his *Colegrove* stance and warning—forcefully, if not prophetically—that courts would be unable to force reapportionment on unwilling legislators.

Frankfurter's *Baker* dissent would be his last opinion. Shortly after the decision was announced, he suffered a serious stroke. On August 28, he sent President John F. Kennedy his letter of retirement. Through much of his tenure, Frankfurter had often been able to muster majorities to defeat civil liberties claims, especially in national security cases. The 1955 appointment of Justice John M. Harlan had given him another ally on the bench. Gradually, however, Frankfurter's principal judicial antagonists—Black, Warren, and Brennan—had come to dominate the Court. With his 1962 retirement, and replacement with Arthur Goldberg, the Court was poised to embark upon the most ambitious expansion of civil liberties in its history, including substantial incorporation of Bill of Rights safeguards into the Fourteenth Amendment.

Even in retirement, however, Frankfurter sought to influence the Court's work. Concerned that, without his presence at the Court, Justice Harlan might falter in his opposition to court-ordered reapportionment, he even attempted to enlist Harlan's clerks in a campaign to strengthen his colleague's resolve, an effort neither Harlan nor his clerks appreciated. Frankfurter also encouraged Justice Black to file a dissent from rulings overturning the trespass convictions of restaurant sit-ins. And when Black registered vigorous dissents in two 1964 sit-in cases, arguing that even bigoted restaurant proprietors had the right to choose their clientele, absent a valid statute to the contrary, Frankfurter wrote his old adversary an admiring letter. Less than a year later, Frankfurter died. Along with Black, he had been the most controversial justice of his era.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; DOUGLAS, WILLIAM O.; HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL, JR.; HUGHES, CHARLES EVANS; SUPREME COURT.

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TINSLEY E. YARBROUGH

FREAKS

Even among the myriad of 1930s horror films, perhaps no movie of the Great Depression was as bi-



Director Tod Browning (standing center) poses with cast members from his 1932 film *Freaks*. ARCHIVE PHOTOS

zarre or as disturbing as director Tod Browning's *Freaks* (1932). Browning built a noted film career during the 1920s on a series of collaborations with actor Lon Chaney, Sr., and he also ushered in the era of sound horror films with his highly successful *Dracula* (1931), starring Bela Lugosi. At MGM in 1932, Browning promised that he would direct the ultimate horror film: *Freaks*.

Based on the short story "Spurs" by Tod Robbins, *Freaks* offers a tale of circus and carnival performers who, despite their various physical deformities, exist within a kind of mutually caring family. When the dwarf Hans decides to marry the physically "normal" Cleopatra, the family accepts her as "one of us." But then they learn the truth: Cleopatra is plotting to poison Hans, inherit his money, and then marry the strong man Hercules. The film's epilogue shows her as a physically deformed sideshow act, the result of the "freaks'" vengeance.

Browning's cast, which included a "half boy" and "Siamese twins," was largely made up of actual sideshow performers who possessed a range of physical deformities. The emphasis on actual "freaks," as the studio called them, rather than the use of actors with makeup, created concern even before the film was released. By the time of its premiere, publicity hype around *Freaks* emphasized both the "real life" qualities of the players, as well as the oddity of a love affair between a dwarf and a "normal" woman.

The story of the film's release has become legendary, with historians generally claiming that MGM shelved *Freaks* due to audience outrage. The movie was even banned outright in England. While this is certainly true, what is often forgotten is that the film did receive some positive reviews and garnered strong box office receipts in some American cities, while being vilified in others. Many Depres-

sion-era audience members found the film to be little different from what they had actually seen at carnival sideshows. For those who were outraged, their alarm seems to have stemmed less from concerns over cast exploitation than from the shock of simply seeing them on screen.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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GARY D. RHODES

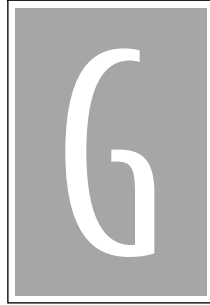
FSA. *See* FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION.

FSCC. *See* FEDERAL SURPLUS COMMODITIES CORPORATION.

FSLIC. *See* FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN INSURANCE CORPORATION.

FTP. *See* FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT.

FWP. *See* FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT.



GABRIEL OVER THE WHITE HOUSE

Gabriel Over the White House, released in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression and on the eve of Franklin D. Roosevelt's inauguration, is a political fable based on T. F. Tweed's novel, *Rinehard*. In the film, newly elected President Judson Hammond (played by Walter Huston) is transformed from a corrupt city politician to a benevolent dictator after a near-fatal car crash. He miraculously awakens from a coma, divinely inspired by the Archangel Gabriel, to rescue the nation from crime and economic disaster. Employing the radio to explain his aim to do "the greatest good for the greatest number," Hammond creates a dole to feed the hungry, musters an "Army of Construction" for the unemployed, declares war on rum-running criminals, imposes martial law, and steamrolls Congress into giving him dictatorial powers. He then invites world leaders to the presidential yacht and demands that they disarm to save their treasuries from bankruptcy and the world from war. The heads of state watch in horror as an American bomber plane destroys a battleship while Hammond warns that in the future warplanes will "bomb cities, kill populations." Mobilizing the navy and threatening force, he bullies the statesmen into promising to repay their war debts and into signing a new disarmament proclamation (with the same

quill pen used by Abraham Lincoln to sign the Emancipation Proclamation). His work on earth done, Hammond dies a martyr to strains of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

To the modern eye, the film seems naive, heavy-handed, and dangerously fascistic, relying as it does on the not-so-subtle message that the United States required a benevolent dictator in order to solve its problems, and the world required a well-armed United States to keep the peace. Yet at the time, it was among the top six releases in the spring of 1933. In the days before the rise of Nazi Germany, the film reflected the belief in some quarters that the country—and the world—needed an iron fist to set things right. Certainly that was the feeling of William Randolph Hearst, the newspaper magnate whose Cosmopolitan Pictures produced and released the movie in conjunction with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Studios. Indeed, some historians have concluded that the film was a thinly veiled "blueprint" for the New Deal. Admittedly, it did foretell, albeit in extreme fashion, Roosevelt's use of broad executive power to combat the Depression, of radio to rally public support, and of air power to wage war.

See Also: HEARST, WILLIAM RANDOLPH;
HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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MICHAEL B. STOFF

GAMBLING. See CRIME.**GANGSTER FILMS**

The gangster genre became codified and prominent during the early 1930s due to the success and the public outcry following the releases of such films as Mervyn LeRoy's *Little Caesar* (1930), William Wellman's *Public Enemy* (1931), and Howard Hawks's *Scarface* (1932). Celluloid gangsters did not have a literary source like the cowboy and the hard-boiled detective; gangsters were transferred onto the screen directly from the front-page headlines of contemporary newspapers. Gangster films therefore had a strong topical impact on audiences, and they based their narratives on events derived from criminal activity that was taking place in America's shadowy metropolises during the prohibition and Depression years.

Although the genre refined its conventions and reached its box-office popularity during the 1930s, there are important forerunners to the Depression gangster films that date back to the silent era. D. W. Griffith's *The Musketeers of Pig Alley* (1912) was probably the first film to fully exploit urban-based crime for its plot. This prototype was followed by two other silent films that would lay the foundations for what was to become the gangster genre: Lewis Milestone's *The Racket* (1927) and Josef von Sternberg's *Underworld* (1928).

According to Thomas Schatz, the catalyst for the evolution of the gangster film is to be found in

the confluence of technical innovation and the peculiar social context in which it took place. Warner Brothers' conversion to sound movies in the late 1920s coincided with a desperate economic and social climate. A year after the introduction of sound, the studio had already produced the first sound film in the gangster genre, Bryan Foy's *Lights of New York* (1928). Although it has not enjoyed the critical consideration of later gangster films, *Lights of New York* showed that sound could be effectively used in the genre to increase its impact on audiences. Sound gave to gangster films the screams, gun shots, and other audio effects they needed to develop incisive narratives. Warner Brothers was to lead the production of gangster films for years.

Gangster films focus on the rise to power of cold-blooded criminals who were modelled after notorious men of the era, such as Al Capone and Hymie Weiss, although several critics have argued that the impact of the genre was so strong that these real-life models tended to modify their mannerism and outlook so that they would resemble their celluloid counterparts. The conventions of the genre usually require a contrast between two men, either related through friendship or kinship, with one of them getting an honest job while the other resorts to crime. The contrast is usually set in an urban environment at night. The criminal is always the one gaining status, and this rise on the social ladder makes him, in Schatz's definition, "the perverse alter-ego of the ambitious, profit-minded American male." The criminal's growing status is visually signalled by the expensive clothes, flashy cars, and attractive women he acquires.

Because of their thematic and visual conventions, classic gangster films such as *Little Caesar*, *The Public Enemy*, and *Scarface* were accused of glamorizing violence and thus presenting the criminal as an appealing hero. The enforcement of the Motion Picture Production Code posed several important problems to the genre, so that studios tried to balance the social and economic career of the gangster with elements that could effectively deglamorize it. The gangster usually dies, showing that crime does not pay after all, a concept that in some films, such as *Scarface*, is reinforced by added scenes (not shot by Hawks) where reformers and

officers speak out against gangland and its culture. The struggle with censors not only affected the films' content, but also their distribution and promotion strategies. The press books for *Little Caesar* and *The Public Enemy* clearly claimed to present an exciting narrative of crime. Yet this is said not to be the ultimate purpose of the movies, which is instead, it is asserted, to present a serious social problem affecting urban America. Thus, the press book for *The Public Enemy* advised the managers of the cinemas where the film was being shown to send free tickets and a letter of invitation to "such organizations as the Parent-Teacher Association, the Y.M.H.A., the Y.M.C.A., Big Brothers, Catholic Big Brothers, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, School Teachers, [and] Sunday Schools." The invitation claimed that the film "is more vital and more important to everybody interested in child welfare than any picture we have ever shown before" and assured that "the work of your organization ties in directly with the powerful message embodied in *The Public Enemy*."

Strong censorship pressure ultimately brought to the genre significant modifications that were designed to redeem it, but that ultimately led to its demise. In such films as William Keighley's *G-Men* (1935) the cops become more prominent than the criminals and are played by actors, such as James Cagney and Edward G. Robinson, who are strongly associated with the genre's classic phase. The gangster also becomes less central in films that contrast him with a socially integrated and positive figure. Clear examples of this variation are William Wyler's *Dead End* (1938), based on a screenplay by Lillian Hellman, and Michael Curtiz's *Angels with Dirty Faces* (1938), both of which openly advise youth against taking a gangster as a role model.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY;
LITTLE CAESAR; ROBINSON, EDWARD G.

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LUCA PRONO

GARNER, JOHN NANCE

John Nance "Cactus Jack" Garner (November 22, 1868–November 7, 1967) served in Congress from his election in 1902 until 1933, holding the post of minority leader between 1929 and 1931 and speaker of the House for the last two years. He was elected vice president of the United States on the Democratic ticket with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936. Garner was a hard-drinking, poker-playing, straight-talking politician, who believed that compromise always superceded demagoguery. In his earliest days in the Texas state legislature, he advocated railroad and insurance company regulation. As he matured politically in the U.S. House, though, he became more pragmatic in his outlook, becoming close friends with Republicans as well as Democrats.

Garner quickly advanced in the Democratic leadership, becoming the whip in 1911. His pre-Depression era agenda included legislation providing construction projects for his district and tariff protection for agricultural producers. However, his greatest influence on national politics came from his behind-the-scenes leadership. He operated a hideaway office called the Board of Education during the Depression and New Deal years, in which he counseled members on the art of compromise. His years as speaker were less productive legislatively; he took an increasingly conservative and independent view of major economic questions on issues such as a national sales tax, which he favored, thus making it difficult to unify the Democratic congressional opposition to Herbert Hoover and the Republicans. One historian has called the period an "interregnum of despair."

Garner made an aborted run for the presidency in 1932, taking the vice presidential nomination



John Nance Garner (seated right) with Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Woodring in Topeka, Kansas, in September 1932.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

when it became clear after three ballots that a continued push for the presidency would likely deadlock his party and spell defeat in the November election. During his first term in office, he masterminded the strategy necessary for passage of much of the New Deal legislation and he maintained a solid working relationship with Roosevelt, differing with the president on issues such as diplomatic recognition of the Soviet Union and deficit spending. Garner's frustration with the vice presidency emerged after the 1936 election when Roosevelt pushed to expand membership on the Supreme Court in 1937 and attempted to purge conservative southern Democrats from Congress in 1938, moves that Garner opposed. Garner attempted a run for

the presidency in 1940 but gave up after leading Texas Democrats refused to back him. His national political career ended unceremoniously, and Garner returned to Uvalde, Texas, where his wife later burned his public papers.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1932; ELECTION OF 1936; ELECTION OF 1940.

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NANCY BECK YOUNG

GASTONIA, NORTH CAROLINA

The strike in the Loray Mill, in Gastonia, North Carolina, which began in April 1929, had lasting repercussions for the community. Though not the most violent of that year's industrial outbreaks in the South's textile mills, it has passed into the mythology of the American left, largely because its leaders were not from the country's homegrown textile unions. Rather, they were young activists from the National Textile Workers Union (NTWU), an adjunct of the Communist Party of the United States.

The immediate cause of the strike was the steady deterioration of the Loray Mill's working conditions as management attempted to cut costs to deal with the industry's massive overproduction. Quickly the NTWU leadership pictured it as a symbol of capitalism in its death throes. Their propaganda bore little relationship to reality, and the strike was largely ineffective. Nevertheless the climate of tension in the town soon led to violence against the NTWU leadership, who fought back. National guardsmen were deployed, vigilante groups patrolled the streets, and in June the town's chief of police, Orville Aderholt, was fatally shot during a fracas between deputies and strike leaders. For the rest of the year the repercussions of his death kept the town divided. The NTWU leaders were all charged with Aderholt's murder, and vigilantes took their revenge, murdering one of the local strike leaders, twenty-nine year old Ella May Wiggins, a mill worker, mother of nine young children, and the strikers' balladeer. Convicted after an emotive and highly politically charged trial, and freed on bail pending appeal, most of the strike leaders escaped into the vastness of the Soviet Union. No one was ever convicted of Wiggins's murder, though mill management was generally believed to have been behind it.

The strike at the Loray Mill was celebrated by the American left as a serious challenge to capital-

ism, and both Wiggins and the convicted strike leaders became its martyrs. In fact, the strike was a comprehensive failure. Never again did Communist union organizers venture below the Mason-Dixon line. The territory was deemed too hostile. Moreover, the violence they had provoked made the task of organizing southern textile mills even more difficult for those who followed the NTWU. The events in Gastonia cast a very long shadow.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; ORGANIZED LABOR; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STRIKES.

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JOHN A. SALMOND

GAYS AND LESBIANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The 1930s marked a particularly important moment for the transformation of sexuality within the United States. While the 1920s, with its economic and sexual exuberance, significantly rejected Victorian notions of sexuality, such changes were seen as much more threatening to the social order with the economic collapse that began in 1929. The prohibition era ushered in an increased visibility of homosexuality that peaked in the early years of the Depression. Indeed, on the theater and cabaret stages in large cities, in a number of Hollywood films, and in popular novels, implicit and explicit images of gay men and lesbians reached a wide audience. In speakeasies in New York City's Greenwich Village, nightclubs in Harlem, cabarets in Times Square, jazz clubs on Chicago's South Side, upper- and middle-class men and women enjoyed the spectacle of drag performers and mingled with overtly gay men, lesbians, and transvestites. During prohibi-

tion, these commercialized venues coupled sexual and legal transgressions that gave visibility and acceptability to homosexuality as an exotic feature of urban nightlife.

However, as the Depression deepened, homosexuality increasingly symbolized the prohibition era's excess and frivolity that undermined traditional values. Whereas homosexuality was seen as an entertaining diversion during the 1920s, by the late 1930s it was viewed much more as a threat to social and economic stability.

The repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment in 1933 ushered in new state agencies that regulated the sale of alcohol and set laws regarding the activities of bars, restaurants, and cabarets. Often these laws required owners to maintain an "orderly" environment or risk the loss of their liquor licenses. While the definition of *orderly* was often left vague, these laws had a severe impact on gay and lesbian sociability because the presence of overtly homosexual patrons was taken as indicative of a disorderly establishment. Police, with the backing of city officials and community leaders, raided such establishments and closed them down. Thus, these agencies became increasingly powerful in controlling the nature of social life in the 1930s, and served as vehicles in the larger campaigns to police homosexuality in the city.

In 1930, the Hayes Office, which was established as a self-monitoring agency set up by the film industry in 1922, instituted a strict Production Code that censored a range of behaviors on screen. Made even more stringent in 1934 under pressure from the Catholic organization the Legion of Decency, the Production Code censored any film that portrayed, among other things, cohabitation, seduction, violence, nudity, and, more specifically, any references to homosexuality. While homosexuality was expressed on screen through highly coded images, overt references were impossible until the 1960s. Lesbians were often coded as masculine through clothing, such as Greta Garbo's famous attire in *Queen Christina* (1933), in which the queen passionately kisses another woman on screen. More often, suggestions of lesbianism held tragic implications, where homosexuality was coupled with destructive and deadly power. Films such as

Girls in Uniform (1931) and *These Three* (1936), based on the hugely successful 1934 Broadway play *The Children's Hour* by Lillian Hellman, take place in all-girl boarding schools, and end with the tragic death of the lesbian character.

Films suggested the gay nature of male characters through effeminate behavior and the association of these characters with the seedy underworld of urban culture. Films such as *The Warrior's Husband* (1933), *Sailor's Luck* (1933), and *Wonder Bar* (1934), which showed two men dancing together, implied gay characters through feminine body language and gestures. Other films, such as *Little Caesar* (1931) and *Blood Money* (1933), portrayed suggestive relationships between mobsters and their sidekicks. In these coded portrayals, gay men and lesbians were increasingly depicted as tragic victims set within the margins of society.

Unlike Hollywood producers, publishers were less constrained by censorship. Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* was the most popular homosexual novel of the 1930s, a popularity promoted when its publisher was taken to court on obscenity charges in 1929 and ultimately won on appeal. Gertrude Stein's *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1932) and Djuna Barnes's *Nightwood* (1936) explicitly portray relationships between lesbians in the expatriate community of Paris. These works have become central to the modernist canon of American literature. Publishers of more popular literature produced a number of novels with lesbian themes. While novels such as *Hellcat* (1934), *Scorpion* (1933), *Love Like a Shadow* (1935), *Queer Patterns* (1935), and *Pity for Women* (1937) preached a moral disapproval of homosexuality, other works such as Gale Wilhelm's *We Too Are Drifting* (1935), Sheila Donisthorpe's *Loveliest of Friends* (1931), and Elizabeth Craigin's *Either Is Love* (1937) presented less judgmental portrayals of lesbian relationships, even as most of these novels ended with the tragic death or suicide of the main character.

Publishers were also producing a number of gay male novels that promoted or proscribed homosexuality. Popular works such as Blair Niles's *Strange Brother* (1931), Andrew Tellier's *Twilight Men* (1931), Robert Scully's *The Scarlet Pansy* (1932), Kennilworth Bruce's *Goldie* (1933), Richard

Meeker's *Better Angel* (1933), and Lew Levenson's *Butterfly Man* (1934) brought stories of gay male experience to a large audience. While these works portrayed the complexities of homosexual experience, they, like their lesbian counterparts, often concluded with the tragic demise of the protagonist. However, since these works were circulated in stores and rental libraries in many large cities, they conveyed a homosexual sensibility that promoted a shared identity for the men who read them. Indeed, many of these novels, as well as films, promoted the formation of a gay and lesbian subculture where such individuals began to see themselves as part of a larger group.

Research on sexuality grew significantly in the 1930s as a number of institutions conducted and published studies investigating the nature of sexuality and homosexuality in particular. La Forest Potter's *Strange Loves: A Study of Sexual Abnormalities* and James Segal's *Sex Life in America*, along with a number of other studies, represent the first wide-ranging, multi-institutional effort to study and analyze sexuality in the United States. While some of these studies were sympathetic to homosexuality, such as the exhaustive study *Sex Variants*, directed by George Henry and begun in 1935, most were efforts to cure sexual abnormalities that the researchers often explicitly interpreted as a social disease. Concerns for sexuality entered into many discussions about migrant labor and homelessness. For example, the writers of *Twenty-Thousand Homeless Men: A Study of Unemployed Men in Chicago Shelters* (1936) suggested that one cause for the men's unemployment was a lack of normal sexual experiences with women. These studies reflect the era's concern with gender and sexual abnormalities, which were increasingly viewed as a crucial social problem and a threat to the already fragile family and gender stability brought on by the Depression.

Eventually these studies began to circulate within legal and legislative venues, effecting the creation of a whole new set of crimes focused on sexual deviancy. The term *sex crime* emerged in newspapers and court rooms alike, encompassing a range of behaviors, including rape, child molestation, indecent exposure, and homosexuality. The sex crime laws set up the first extensive legislative

efforts that criminalized homosexuality within a broader category of violent crimes. By the late 1930s, homosexuals were increasingly the target of violence and scapegoats for social campaigns meant to "clean up" the moral standards of the community.

See Also: CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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JAMES POLCHIN

GELLHORN, MARTHA

Martha Gellhorn (November 8, 1908–February 15, 1998) was a relief investigator for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) during the 1930s. Gellhorn later provided vivid coverage of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) as a reporter for *Collier's Weekly*. In addition, she is known for fictional accounts of her experiences, including *What Mad Pursuit* (1934), *The Trouble I've Seen* (1936), and *The Lowest Trees Have Tops* (1967).

Gellhorn began her college studies at Bryn Mawr in 1924, but she left in 1927 before completing her degree. She wrote briefly for the *Albany Times Union*, and then began sending pieces to *The New Republic*, which published her first signed piece, a review of a Rudy Vallee performance, in August 1929. Gellhorn then traveled to France in 1930 and struggled to find permanent journalistic employment for several years.

In October 1934, Gellhorn returned in New York and secured an interview with Harry L. Hopkins, the director of FERA. Her new job required her to travel extensively and interview average Americans about their economic well-being, including their access to adequate food and medical care and their overall outlook for the future. She traveled to small textile towns in North Carolina, large urban areas such as Boston and Providence, Rhode Island, and desperate manufacturing towns like Camden, New Jersey. She wrote Hopkins meticulous reports, detailing malnutrition, rates of tuberculosis, lack of running water, and people's inability to secure employment at a living wage. She severely criticized local relief officials, particularly for graft and corruption, but she noted that most people with whom she talked did not blame President Roosevelt. Instead they held him in very high esteem. She met with Eleanor Roosevelt, and the two soon became good friends. Gellhorn worked as a FERA investigator for almost a year, and by the time she was done, she noted that the mood in the country was becoming more pessimistic and skeptical regarding the government's plans for reform. After leaving FERA, she wrote a fictionalized account of her travels and experiences, published in 1936 as *The Trouble I've Seen*.

Gellhorn met Ernest Hemingway in 1936, and they struck up a companionship that later led to a brief marriage. In March 1937, she arrived in Spain and began to cover the war for *Collier's Weekly*. This launched her journalistic career, and she moved from the Spanish Civil War, to the tumult in Germany, and finally to World War II.

Following World War II, Gellhorn continued her focus on wartime reporting, covering the Six-Day War in the Middle East, the Vietnam War, and conflicts in Central America. In addition to publish-

ing regular articles in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Gellhorn tackled issues of social justice, including the McCarthy trials, in her novel *The Lowest Trees Have Tops*.

See Also: FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA); HOPKINS, HARRY.

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LAURA J. HILTON

GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

Among the many momentous effects of the massive unemployment and deprivation caused by the Great Depression, those on gender roles and sexual relations can easily be overlooked, but they are profoundly important.

THREATENED MASCULINITY

In most societies, that of the United States prominent among them, men have traditionally defined their principal roles as being providers and protectors. The gender definition of a "real man" is one who has authority, who is in charge. The character Muley Graves speaks for this understanding of manhood when he proclaims in John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939): "Jesus Christ, a man can't [do something], when he's tol' to!" Men were seen as the ones who rightfully made decisions. "Ma looked to Tom to speak, because he was a man," Steinbeck wrote. "She let him have the chance that was his right." That "right," however, was linked to his fulfillment of the roles assigned to men. For millions of American men who lost their jobs during the Great Depression, the loss of the ability to provide for their families posed a direct threat to their sense of manhood.

It was bad enough for a man's ego to be unable to provide; it was worse for him to become depen-

dent on a woman. And this circumstance was more common during the 1930s than one might expect. Women's employment increased during the Depression, in part because the jobs from which they had been excluded, such as those in heavy industry, were most often in the areas of the economy hardest hit by the collapse, while some of the jobs that had been defined as "women's work," such as teaching, clerical work, and domestic service, were less severely affected by the Depression.

Many people saw the differential between female and male employment as a major cause of male unemployment. "Simply fire all the women, who shouldn't be working anyway, and hire the [unemployed] men," Norman Cousins wrote in 1939, summarizing this simplistic argument. "Presto! No unemployment. No relief rolls. No depression." Such arguments ignored a fundamental fact about the power of gender roles in the era: No matter how desperate they were for work, most men would not consider taking a job that was culturally defined as "women's work."

It is highly significant in terms of just how powerful was men's desire to avoid threats to their self-perceived masculinity that many white men during the Depression were willing to take jobs that had previously been defined as "Negro work," but not those that had been classified as "women's work." While women's employment actually increased during the Depression, African Americans were displaced by whites to an extraordinary degree. It has been estimated that black unemployment across the United States reached 50 percent in 1932. But take a job that was "woman's work"? Most men, it seemed, would sooner starve. The reason for this rigidity is not hard to discern. If one of the worst aspects for a man of being unable to provide was the effect of this circumstance on his sense of masculinity, taking on a woman's role would be seen as a remedy worse than the problem. To have no job was a serious blow to a man's masculinity; to have a woman's job was to abandon the argument that one was a "real man" at all.

A fictional depiction of a man attempting to go against this perception occurs in *The Grapes of Wrath* when Preacher Jim Casy offers to perform a kitchen task and Ma is taken aback. "It's women's

work," she says. "'It's all work,' the preacher replied. 'They's too much of it to split it up to men's or women's work.'" More often during the Depression, though, the problem was that there was too little work to split it up into men's and women's work, but the line of division remained sharp nonetheless.

DECREASING DEPENDENCE OF WOMEN

Men without work tended to lose their authority within the family. "The eyes of the whole family shifted back to Ma," Steinbeck wrote. "She was the power. She had taken control." Nor was such a power shift in families merely a fictional creation. In his 1940 book *Citizens without Work*, sociologist E. Wight Bakke found instances of men who lost their jobs and within a year or two the center of authority in the family had shifted to the wife.

Steinbeck uses the image of a stick as an appropriate metaphor for this transfer of authority from men to women. "Time was when a man said what we'd do," Pa Joad complains. "Seems like women is tellin' now." He threatens to get out his stick to put women in their place. "Times when they's food an' a place to set," Ma responds, "then maybe you can use your stick an' keep your skin whole. But you ain't a-doin' your job, either a thinkin' or a-workin'. If you was, why, you could use your stick, an' women folks'd sniffle their nose an' creep-mouse aroun'. But you jus' get you a stick now and you ain't lickin' no woman; you're a-fightin', cause I got a stick all laid out, too."

Men whose self-perceived masculinity was a casualty of unemployment yearned for a return to what they believed to be the natural order of gender. This vision was perhaps best captured in the words of the 1933 song, "Remember My Forgotten Man": "Ever since the world began, a woman's got to have a man."

During the Depression that male profession of faith in female dependence no longer seemed certain. We not only see increasing images of women who don't fit either of the categories in the traditional dichotomy, we see whores who *are* "virgins," such as Dallas in the 1939 John Ford film *Stagecoach*, and women with "sticks," such as Mae West in *She Done Him Wrong* and her other films and

Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*. And even if women didn't have sticks, they still had the female powers that had for so long been the source of feelings of inferiority in many men, as Steinbeck so memorably indicated with the novel's ending: a helpless, starving man being breast-fed by the Joads' daughter Rose of Sharon. The female is plainly the provider and the male the dependent one in that scene.

MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY IN THE DEPRESSION

"It's no wonder these young girls refuse to marry, refuse to rear children," Meridel LeSueur wrote in her 1932 article, "Women on Breadlines." She asserted that they were like the women in some parts of the world "who, when they have been conquered, refuse to breed."

Such an analysis seemed plausible and, with so many men unable to fulfill the role of provider, marriage rates did drop sharply early in the Depression, reaching a low of 7.9 marriages per 1000 population in 1932, down from 10.1 in 1929. Yet the rate of marriage rebounded in 1934 and remained at levels similar to those of the relatively prosperous 1920s for the remainder of the Depression. Birth rates, which had already been trending downward in the 1920s as women gained more independence, declined sharply under the impact of the Depression. The birth rate in the United States bottomed out at 126 per 10,000 23-year-old women in the United States in 1935 (compared with 181 in 1921 and 152 in 1928).

In her 1940 book *The Unemployed Man and His Family*, sociologist Mirra Komarovsky found that sexual activity virtually ceased in some families after the man lost his job. Another sociologist, Eli Ginsburg, reported that some women had "supposed it was [the husband's] right to have sexual relations" as long as he "was working and supporting her," but that changed when he was no longer earning the pleasure he derived from her acquiescence.

Even for those young people who postponed marriage, however, sexual desires were not easily switched off. Nor did the fact that married couples could not afford to have children mean that most of them would simply refrain from having sex. Ac-

cordingly, there was a boom in the number and business of birth-control clinics during the Depression and, following favorable court rulings in 1930 and 1936, physicians were allowed to provide birth control devices in most states. Being able to purchase birth control legally was of scant help, though, to people on relief who had no money. And it was in such destitute families that it often seemed more necessary to have sex because the men were so psychologically devastated and in need of having their self-respect boosted.

A man shorn of the sources of masculine identification usually found in the roles of provider and protector is left with one other means of asserting his masculinity—the most basic role of his sex. "You don't know what it's like when your husband's out of work," a woman in California's San Joaquin Valley told federal relief investigator Lorena Hickok in 1934. Of course they did not want to have additional mouths to feed, the woman explained, "but you don't have any money to buy anything at the drug store." Abstinence was not a realistic option, she maintained. "He's gloomy and unhappy all the time. Life is terrible. You must try all the time to keep him from going crazy. And many times—that's the only way," she said, alluding to sexual intercourse.

SNOW WHITE AND THE VISION OF A RETURN TO GENDER "NORMALCY"

Men in search of their lost masculinity could turn to Hollywood for the prescription they sought to cure their ailment. Most notably, Walt Disney's 1938 animated feature, *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, reflected the male fears and longings of the Depression years. The film portrays the "two kinds of women" view of the world with a vengeance. The Wicked Queen is a woman with power, like all too many women seemed, in the view of many men, to have in the 1930s. The heroine, on the other hand, is domestic, naïve, and finally completely helpless. Snow White must be restored to life by a man's kiss, reversing the reality of the Depression years for many men, who were in their own form of sleeping death, from which they could be brought back to life, however briefly, only by a woman's "kiss" (i.e., intercourse).

Thus Disney's fairy tale world of 1938 served as an architect's sketch for a reconstructed post-Depression (and, as it happened, postwar) world of gender relations.

See Also: FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GAYS AND LESBIANS, IMPACT OF THE DEPRESSION ON; GRAPES OF WRATH, *THE*; MEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; "REMEMBER MY FORGOTTEN MAN"; SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

GERSHWIN, GEORGE AND IRA

George Gershwin (September 26, 1898–July 11, 1937) and his brother Ira Gershwin (December 6, 1896–August 17, 1983) were children of Russian Jewish parents who emigrated to the United States in the late nineteenth century. Their surname was changed from Gershovitz to Gershwin and finally to Gershwin. George studied classical piano at an

early age with Charles Hambitzer and music theory with Edward Kilenyi. He began writing songs after working as an accompanist on New York City's Tin Pan Alley in the early part of the twentieth century. George Gershwin wrote many popular songs, including "Swanee," memorably sung by Al Jolson in 1920, and he soon began writing musicals, which included *Lady Be Good!* (1924), *Funny Face* (1927), and *Girl Crazy* (1930). His musical *Of Thee I Sing* (1931), a socio-political satire concerning ineffectual government policies, was the first Broadway musical to win a Pulitzer Prize.

George Gershwin was ebullient, friendly, and outgoing, whereas his older brother Ira was quiet and introspective. Nevertheless, they began what became a long and successful collaboration, combining George's music with lyrics by Ira, who was a masterful wordsmith. This partnership resulted in songs that have stood the test of time, including "The Man I Love" (1924), "Fascinating Rhythm" (1926), "Someone to Watch over Me" (1926), and "Embraceable You" (1930). Although written in 1926, Gershwin's "Someone to Watch over Me" took on special significance for many Americans during the Depression years. Gershwin sought to span the chasm between popular and classic musical styles by writing such works as the piano concerto *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924), *An American in Paris* (1928), and a group of preludes for piano. These compositions contain elements of jazz and blues couched in traditional romantic orchestration, as does George Gershwin's folk opera, *Porgy and Bess*, produced in 1935. Before writing this opera, which was based on DuBose Heyward's book *Porgy* and set on South Carolina's coastal islands, Gershwin traveled to South Carolina and lived among the people portrayed in the book, absorbing their rhythms, dialect, and culture. He then incorporated what he had learned into his music for the opera, with lyrics by Ira. *Porgy and Bess* was not an immediate success because audiences were confused by its tone, which was too heavy for Broadway and too light for serious opera. Though it appeared in 1935 to mixed reviews, it eventually, though not in George Gershwin's lifetime, became a great success around the world, possibly the first American opera to do so.

George Gershwin continued to compose and remained productive until his untimely death in July 1937. Ira Gershwin later wrote lyrics for other composers, including Kurt Weill, Aaron Copland, and Jerome Kern, but he is best known for his collaborations with his brother.

See Also: MUSIC.

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GLASS, CARTER

Carter Glass (January 4, 1858–May 28, 1946) was a U.S. senator from Virginia. Along with his colleague Senator Harry Byrd, Glass was a leading member of the Republican-Democratic congressional coalition that emerged to oppose the New Deal by 1938. In 1934 Glass declared that the New Deal "is not only a mistake; it is a disgrace to the Nation." According to historian James T. Patterson, Glass voted against the Roosevelt administration 81 percent of the time, more than any other Democrat.

Born in Lynchburg, Virginia, Carter Glass began his career in 1880 as city editor of the *Lynchburg News*; he soon rose to the position of editor and purchased the newspaper in 1888. As an outspoken editor, Glass grew more involved in politics. He was elected to the Virginia State Senate in 1899, and in 1901 he served as a delegate to the Virginia state constitutional convention, where he helped to devise voting restrictions that disfranchised African Americans. In 1902, Glass was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from the sixth district of Virginia. As a member of the House Banking and Currency Committee, Glass was responsible for drafting the Federal Reserve Act of 1913. A close ally of President Woodrow Wilson, Glass became his secretary of the treasury in 1919.

In 1920, upon the death of Senator Thomas Martin, Virginia Governor Westmoreland Davis ap-

pointed Glass to the U.S. Senate. The efficiency of the Virginia Democratic Party machine, along with its tightly restricted electorate, ensured Glass's repeated reelection to the Senate. This enabled Glass to become an early and outspoken critic of the New Deal. As one of the architects of the national financial system, he decried currency devaluation and the abandonment of the gold standard. He believed such federal programs as the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and Social Security undermined states' rights. Illness prevented Glass from being an active senator after 1942, but he remained in office until his death in 1946.

See Also: BYRD, HARRY; CONSERVATIVE COALITION; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1932; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933.

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LARISSA M. SMITH

GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1932

Waves of commercial bank failures and a progressive contraction of credit to businesses and individuals were central features of the economic collapse beginning in 1930. Both were exacerbated by the Federal Reserve's policy of reducing the money supply and by its decision to raise interest rates in the fall of 1931 with the aim of protecting the value of the dollar after Great Britain quit the gold standard. President Herbert Hoover's administration supported such orthodoxy, but recognized the need to buttress the banking system and the supply of credit. The administration's preferred strategy of bank cooperation and "self-help" via the National Credit Corporation failed in 1931, in part because of the unwillingness of leading bankers to lend to weaker institutions. Hoover was compelled to pro-

vide federal loans to banks and other businesses through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

As the credit crisis worsened both Hoover and Congress supported more liberal credit policies. By early 1932 a group of governors from the Federal Reserve temporarily sought a more expansionary policy based on buying government securities from banks so as to increase the banks' reserves. The Reserve banks could lend only on gold, government securities, or short-term commercial loans (known as *eligible paper*), in line with the conventions of commercial loan banking theories. However the banking system's gold reserves appeared inadequate; many banks lacked sufficient government securities or eligible paper to support further borrowing. Banks might also use extra funds to reduce their overall borrowings, leaving the Federal Reserve more reliant on its own gold reserves.

The Glass-Steagall Act of February 1932 was an emergency measure designed to support the expansion of bank credit through lending by district or regional Federal Reserve banks to banks that were members of the Federal Reserve System. Sponsored by Senator Carter Glass of Virginia and Representative Henry Steagall of Alabama, the Act widened the range of assets against which commercial banks could borrow to include promissory notes or government bonds if they had no other eligible assets. Senator Glass, who disliked such liberalization, ensured that these loans attracted higher interest rates. The measure eased the immediate availability of credit between February and August 1932, but the Act did not signal a full commitment to expansion by the Federal Reserve Board; its provisions were marginal amid the atmosphere of diminishing confidence among the public, businesses, and the banking community. More active use of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation's powers and more interventionist banking legislation had to await the New Deal.

See Also: FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; GLASS, CARTER; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933.

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MICHAEL FRENCH

GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933

Severe problems in the money markets were readily visible in the 1920s, but the prevailing economic prosperity blinded most Americans to the looming catastrophe. More than 5,600 banks failed during the 1920s, primarily because of undercapitalization, over competition, real-estate speculation, and corporate venality, and the stock market rocketed to new heights based more on mindless euphoria than on sound company profits. In the process, the line between commercial banking and investment banking grew perilously thin, with the money of millions of depositors leaking into stock and bond accounts of Wall Street securities affiliates. The stock market crash of October 1929 created a liquidity crisis of unprecedented proportions, leading to the meltdown of 1932 to 1933, when the nation's banking system finally collapsed. Senator Carter Glass of Virginia and Representative Henry Steagall of Alabama proposed reform legislation, but the outgoing Herbert Hoover administration refused to act. In 1931, Congressman Ferdinand Pecora had launched an investigation of the banking system, setting the stage for reform legislation.

In March 1933, with President Franklin D. Roosevelt recently inaugurated, Glass and Steagall found more support in the White House. By then, of course, the crisis demanded action. The president had declared a nationwide banking holiday, shutting down every bank in the country and assuring Americans that only sound banks would reopen. He also promised reforms in the banking system that would prevent future systemic catastrophes in the money markets. During the famous first "One Hundred Days" of the Roosevelt administration, Glass and Steagall resubmitted the legislation. Both houses of Congress passed the measure in mid-June, and on June 16, 1933, President Roosevelt signed it into law.

The Glass-Steagall Act, also known as the Banking Act of 1933, formally separated investment

banking and commercial banking and prohibited individual banks from engaging in both. Each institution had to declare itself either a commercial bank or an investment bank, and commercial banks had one year to divest themselves of securities affiliates. To prevent panic-stricken depositors from making runs on banks and forcing them into bankruptcy, the law established the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to guarantee individual bank accounts. To limit the possibilities of external manipulation of domestic money markets, the legislation also handed over control of the foreign operations of all Federal Reserve member banks to the Federal Reserve Board. Commercial banks were allowed to underwrite the securities only of state and local governments. Finally, the measure tightened Federal Reserve control over bank credit and provided more careful coordination of Federal Reserve open market operations. The Banking Act of 1933 helped restore confidence and liquidity to the money markets.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (FDIC); GLASS, CARTER; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1932.

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JAMES S. OLSON

GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933

In the 1930s, Warner Bros., a studio most often associated with gangster and social problem films, also pioneered in the musical genre. Drawing on the talents of choreographer Busby Berkeley and a stable of former vaudeville and Broadway performers, the studio produced three hugely popular back-

stage musicals in 1933: *Gold Diggers of 1933*, *Footlight Parade*, and *42nd Street*. Budgeted at only \$433,000, but ranking second at the box office for the year, *Gold Diggers of 1933* infused its predictable rags-to-riches romance and show-stopping musical numbers with a working-class elan and escapist glamour that appealed to Depression-era audiences.

When Broadway producer Barney Hopkins (Ned Sparks) can't pay the bills, the cops close down his show, and plucky chorus girls Polly (the ubiquitous Ruby Keeler), Carol (Joan Blondell), Trixie (Aline MacMahon), and Fay (Ginger Rogers) find themselves out of work and flat broke. Luckily, Polly's songwriter boyfriend Brad Roberts (Dick Powell) is really Robert Bradford, the scion of a wealthy Boston family that is opposed to his career in show business. Brad puts up the money for Barney's new show, and Barney hires Brad to write all the songs. When the male lead gets lumbago on opening night, the girls and Barney convince the reluctant Brad that he must step in to save the show. However, his secret is out and his older brother J. Lawrence Bradford (Warren William) and Faneul H. Peabody (Guy Kibbee), the family banker, soon arrive to put a stop to Brad's stage career and to his marriage to Polly. Offering her a bribe to leave Brad, J. Lawrence mistakes Carol for Polly. Thus begins a madcap charade as Carol and Trixie pretend to be "gold diggers" to teach the blue bloods a lesson in manners and class. In the end, of course, the mistaken identity farce is resolved, true love triumphs over class differences, and each chorus girl gets her man.

Though Mervyn LeRoy directed the narrative sections of *Gold Diggers*, Busby Berkeley both choreographed and directed the wildly extravagant musical numbers. The ironic opening number, "We're in the Money," is classic Berkeley: fragmented, interchangeable female bodies scantily costumed in huge gold coins, the precision choreography and elaborate geometric patterns highlighted by dizzying close-ups and innovative camera shots. In contrast to the glitzy spectacle and tongue-in-cheek frivolity of much of the film, *Gold Diggers* closes with "Remember My Forgotten Man," which invokes breadlines, homelessness,



An elaborate dance number from Merwyn LeRoy's *Gold Diggers of 1933*. ARCHIVE PHOTOS

and the Bonus Marchers, World War I veterans who had marched on Washington in 1932 demanding payment for their war service.

See Also: BERKELEY, BUSBY; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; "REMEMBER MY FORGOTTEN MAN."

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GOLDEN GATE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITION (1939–1940)

San Francisco's rebirth after its 1906 earthquake and fire culminated in 1939 with the Golden Gate International Exposition. The fair celebrated the recent completion of two landmark bridges—the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, which spans San Francisco Bay, and the Golden Gate Bridge, which crosses the strait at the entrance to the Bay. Still intent on capitalizing on boosterism, San Francisco started planning its third exposition in fifty years in 1934. The Bureau of International Exhibitions, however, refused to recognize the Golden Gate International Exposition, although it did endorse the 1939 New York World's Fair.

The setting for the fair was Treasure Island, an artificial 400-acre island built on the shoals near Yerba Buena Island between San Francisco and Oakland. The Works Progress Administration chipped in with 300,000 tons of boulders for a sea-wall that was filled with sand and silt dredged from the Bay. Treasure Island became accessible by automobile when the Bay Bridge was completed in 1936. The city was planning to use the island for an airport once the fair closed.

The fair opened on February 17, 1939, with the theme "A Pageant of the Pacific." Architect Arthur Brown, Jr., a beaux arts classicist who designed San Francisco's City Hall, designed the island's landscape and some of the buildings. Brown headed a panel of architects who decided on a blend of oriental and occidental styles that would symbolize the city's role linking East and West. Two massive *Elephant Towers* designed by Donald Macky flanked the entrance to the island. Ralph Stackpole's eighty-foot sculpture of the allegorical goddess *Pacifica* was the central emblem of peaceful Oriental trade. Lewis P. Hobart melded styles in his coral-colored, quasi-oriental, ninety-foot-tall Arch of Triumph in the Court of Flowers, with included a fountain called *Rainbow Girl* by O. C. Malmquist. George W. Kelham designed the Court of the Moon and Stars, which was topped by sculptor Ettore Cadorin's allegoric *Evening Star*. Timothy L. Pflueger's Federal Building featured forty-eight columns for the number of states. The fair also featured exhibitions of over \$40 million worth of "educational" art, largely from Europe.

Attractions included the Pan-American or "China" Clipper, promising continuing trade with Asia. "The Cavalcade of the Golden West" and "America! Cavalcade of a Nation" provided historic pageantry. Site themes varied from South Sea Islands to Chinatown to the Old West. There was a scale model of San Francisco as it was predicted to appear in 1999 and dioramas of futuristic college campuses, vacation resorts, and industries.

The entertainment zone featured mechanical rides and numerous shows by such performers as Count Basie, Bing Crosby, Eddie Duchin, Benny Goodman, and the Folies Bergere from Paris. Esther Williams swam in Billy Rose's Aquacade. Sally

Rand, the fan dancer, performed in her Nude Ranch. Military bands and roaming Mexican folk musicians played amid camels and rickshaws giving tourists rides.

Despite predictions of "California's greatest tourist season," the fair was a financial disaster, losing \$4,166,000 in 1939. A court order forestalled bankruptcy, awarding creditors eighty-two cents on the dollar and permitting a second season. The fair closed in the red in September 1940, despite seventeen million visitors, most from the West. Stackpole's *Pacifica* fell to planned destruction six weeks after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The U.S. Navy began using Treasure Island as a base during World War II and continued to occupy the site until 1997, when the Navy began the process of turning the island over to the control of the city of San Francisco.

See Also: NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR (1939–1940).

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BLANCHE M. G. LINDEN

GOLD STANDARD

The end of World War I triggered a heartfelt desire across much of the world to make a new world. But when it came to economics, it was a different story. The spectacular growth of the international economy before 1914 persuaded almost everyone that the main objective was to recreate the international gold standard system, a stable currency exchange mechanism that facilitated the movement of money and goods around by globe by stabilizing currency values at a fixed rate.

The war had caused most countries to abandon “gold,” the shorthand term for the mechanism; however, by 1919 the need to recreate the gold standard seemed imperative thanks to the currency instability and inflation that were sweeping Europe. The lead was taken by the United States and Great Britain, which, sometimes with the assistance of the League of Nations, organized stabilization loans and technical support to help countries back onto gold, but the lion’s share of the work was undertaken by national governments and their central banks. To be a member of the gold standard, countries had to follow the three central rules of what has become known as “orthodox economic policy.” The first two rules applied to governments, which had to sustain a positive balance of payments (spending could not exceed income levels) and a positive balance of trade (exports should exceed imports). The third rule affected central banks, which were expected to shadow the interest rates of all the other members of the system and use all their resources to stay on gold when the national currency was under speculative pressure.

By 1928 forty-four countries had returned to the gold standard. Cracks in the system quickly began to appear, however, as countries struggled to follow the rules of economic orthodoxy, particularly after 1930. The effective end of the gold standard order came when its chief supporter, the United States, left the system on April 19, 1933. A temporary shortage of gold within the U.S. banking system had prompted Franklin Roosevelt to call an extended bank holiday, but the real reason for the U.S. break with gold was to free Roosevelt to make economic policy as he saw fit. Subsequently, interest rates were allowed to fall (bank loans now cost less) and the dollar fell on the international exchange by almost 40 percent, helping prices to rise and making U.S. exports cheaper and imports from gold countries more expensive. Equally importantly, Roosevelt was now able to increase government spending.

This U.S. shift in policy greatly increased the pressures on countries such as France and Poland, which were still committed to the system. In contrast to the 1920s, there were now competing views on monetary policy, making international co-

operation all the more difficult to achieve given the increasingly nationalist climate of the 1930s.

See Also: MONETARY POLICY.

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PATRICIA CLAVIN

GONE WITH THE WIND

Margaret Mitchell’s bestselling novel of the Civil War and Reconstruction revolves around the tempestuous love triangle of fiery southern belle Scarlett O’Hara, the noble but weak Ashley Wilkes, and the dashing scoundrel Rhett Butler. At the story’s opening in the halcyon days of a romanticized Old South, the willful and spoiled Scarlett schemes to win Ashley’s love, despite his impending marriage to his cousin Melanie. Over the course of this thousand-page novel, Scarlett survives the burning of Atlanta and the devastation of Tara, the O’Hara family plantation, by the Union army; picks cotton side-by-side with her former slaves to keep her family from starving; marries her sister’s beau in order to pay the taxes on Tara; makes a fortune selling lumber during Atlanta’s postwar boom; provokes a Ku Klux Klan raid on the local shantytown; and marries Rhett for his money only to find, after he no longer gives “a damn,” that it is Rhett, not Ashley, whom she truly loves.

Outraged black and liberal critics condemned *Gone with the Wind* as an apology for American racism, arguing that Mitchell’s unabashedly pro-Confederate depiction glossed over the realities of slavery and condoned the atrocities of the Klan. Nonetheless, Scarlett’s indomitable will to survive war, poverty, and heartbreak resonated powerfully for many readers in the midst of the trials of the Great Depression and with the prospect of a second

world war on the horizon. Published by Macmillan in the summer of 1936, *Gone with the Wind* sold over a million copies in the first six months.

Independent producer David O. Selznick purchased the film rights for \$50,000, a hefty sum at the time for the first work of an unknown novelist. The making of *Gone with the Wind*, which took three years and cost over \$4 million, became an obsession for Selznick. His unwillingness to compromise his grand vision for the film ultimately cost him control of his studio, Selznick International Pictures. Selznick spent \$100,000 on the now-legendary “search for Scarlett,” a brilliant publicity campaign that involved screen tests for dozens of major Hollywood actresses, including Bette Davis, Paulette Goddard, and Katherine Hepburn, as well as beauty queens from around the country. Ultimately the part went to Vivien Leigh, a relatively unknown British actress. Fan mail convinced Selznick that only Clark Gable could play Rhett, and he paid MGM an exorbitant sum for Gable’s services. Olivia de Havilland was cast as Melanie, Leslie Howard as Ashley, and Hattie McDaniel as Mammy.

Capturing the historical sweep and political themes of Mitchell’s epic novel without offending the sensibilities of either African-American or white Southern audiences required eleven screenwriters, including F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ben Hecht, though playwright Sidney Howard received a sole writing credit. Similarly, four directors worked on the film, though only Victor Fleming received screen credit. Filmed in Technicolor, *Gone with the Wind* is a visually opulent extravaganza, thanks to set designer Lyle Wheeler and production designer William Cameron MacKenzie, who also directed key scenes, including the burning of Atlanta.

Gone with the Wind was a blockbuster hit with mainstream audiences and critics. At the film’s premier in Atlanta on December 15, 1939, over one million spectators crowded the streets to catch a glimpse of the motorcade of Hollywood stars. The film grossed over \$1 million on opening weekend and eventually won eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actress, and Best Supporting Actress for Hattie McDaniel, the first African-American to win an Oscar. Though picketers protested in several major cities, for the

most part black leaders and critics chose to overlook the film’s questionable racial politics and stereotypical “darky” performances (particularly Butterfly McQueen as Prissy), emphasizing instead the more rounded character of Mammy and the breakthrough of McDaniel’s Oscar. Ranked as the top-grossing film for nearly thirty years, *Gone with the Wind* is still considered one of the best films ever made.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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JENNIFER LANGDON-TECLAW

GOODMAN, BENNY

Jazz clarinetist and bandleader Benjamin David Goodman (May 30, 1909–June 13, 1986) was born in Chicago, the ninth of twelve children of poor immigrant parents. The children worked at early ages but also studied music. Benny showed talent on the clarinet, and he soon acquired a professional competence. While in Chicago Benny was exposed to “hot” African-American jazz, which deeply influenced his tastes.

At sixteen Goodman joined Ben Pollack’s rising orchestra and began touring and recording. In 1929 he began freelancing in New York City to help support his family. He hoped to form his own band, but prospects during the Depression were dim. In 1933, though, the important young jazz promoter John Hammond (Goodman’s future brother-in-law) hired the clarinetist to lead a recording ensemble. The two soon created a “hot” orchestra that challenged the dominance of “sweet” band music. Skilled white musicians, such as the trumpeter

Bunny Berigan, drummer Gene Krupa, and Goodman's brother Harry, a bassist, were hired, as was the African-American arranger and ex-bandleader Fletcher Henderson. In 1935, appearances on the NBC Radio program *Let's Dance* inspired a cross-country tour. The final engagement at Los Angeles's Palomar Ballroom was a wild success. The band's youthful hot "swing"—performed by white musicians—arrived just as economic optimism stirred and young listeners were spending more on leisure. Extended bookings and recording contracts resulted; Goodman was dubbed "the King of Swing," and the big-band era had begun.

Hammond, a civil rights activist, encouraged the hiring of the pianist Teddy Wilson and the vibraphonist Lionel Hampton for recordings also featuring Goodman and Krupa. When the quartet appeared in public with the band, Goodman was credited by many with breaking jazz's color line. The combo's brilliant improvisations enhanced swing artistically and inspired other bandleaders to integrate. Goodman later hired such fine white and black players as the trumpeters Harry James and Cootie Williams and the guitarist Charlie Christian. The 1938 Carnegie Hall concert, instigated by Hammond, was a highlight of this period.

In the late 1930s Goodman confronted frequent personnel changes and competition from other bands. His popularity fluctuated, but his almost fanatical work ethic kept the band (and his own playing) at artistically high levels. After 1940 he would commission clarinet works from Béla Bartók and Aaron Copland and increasingly perform classical music. Jazz's most important white bandleader and clarinetist, Goodman established his reputation in his twenties and maintained it for the rest of his long career.

See Also: BIG BAND MUSIC; ELLINGTON, DUKE; JAZZ; MUSIC.

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BURTON W. PERETTI

GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

The term "Good Neighbor Policy" is used to describe the Latin American policy of the United States from 1933 to 1945. But the policy did not actually begin in 1933. During the 1920s there had been increasing criticism in Latin America that the United States was an aggressive and overbearing power. President Herbert Hoover, who was elected president in 1928, sought an improvement in inter-American relations and visited a number of Latin American countries prior to his inauguration. This conciliatory policy was continued by Hoover's successor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. In fact it acquired a name as a result of part of Roosevelt's inaugural address of March 4, 1933, in which he stated that American foreign policy would in future be dedicated to "the policy of the good neighbor." The concept of acting as a good neighbor implied equality and mutual respect among adjacent nations and was specifically applied by Roosevelt to the countries of the Western Hemisphere. Thus, it was Roosevelt and not Hoover who became popularly regarded as the originator of the Good Neighbor Policy.

Roosevelt's speech in 1933 affirmed American good intentions but was vague on detail. Indeed, the resulting Good Neighbor Policy was neither planned nor systematically implemented. Behind the uplifting rhetoric, however, was a desire to promote commercial relations to help the American economy recover from the Great Depression. In practical terms, closer economic contact was secured by the negotiation of a series of reciprocal trade agreements. Starting with Cuba in 1934, reciprocity arrangements were concluded with eleven Latin American countries by 1939. Trade was also expanded by the creation in 1934 of the Export-Import Bank to provide foreign countries with credit for the purchase of imports from the United States. Further inter-American contact and cooperation was achieved by cultural and educational exchange programs that facilitated the movement of scholars and scientists.

For Latin Americans the sincerity of U.S. pretensions to be a good neighbor was contingent on U.S. disavowal of the policy of military intervention

in Latin American domestic affairs. Hoover had already ordered the withdrawal of U.S. marines from Nicaragua. Roosevelt accelerated a similar plan for withdrawal from Haiti. The right of the United States to interfere in Cuba ended in 1934 with the abrogation of the Platt Amendment, which had been incorporated into the 1901 Cuban Constitution and gave the U.S. the legal right of military intervention in Cuban affairs. Similar evidence of good neighborliness was illustrated by the U.S. refusal to give military support to American oil companies in their disputes with the governments of Bolivia and Mexico. These actions contributed to a distinct improvement in inter-American relations, so that most Latin American countries joined the United States in organizing resistance against the fascist threat posed by Germany and Italy during World War II. The Good Neighbor Policy was, therefore, successful in improving the image of the United States in Latin America. At the same time, however, the policy also served to increase U.S. economic and military influence. The Latin American nations were nominal equals of the United States, but they remained vulnerable to the great power of their northern neighbor.

See Also: INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; LATIN AMERICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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JOSEPH SMITH

GOVERNMENT, UNITED STATES FEDERAL, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

Prior to 1930, the economic role of the federal government was relatively small. Federal civilian employment barely exceeded 1 percent of total em-

ployment, and the government's share of the gross national product (GNP) was a mere 1.6 percent. Aside from veterans' pensions, the federal government did not provide a social safety net of transfer payments to the aged, the unemployed, or the merely poor. Larger banks were federally regulated, but there was no federal deposit insurance, and failures among smaller banks were common in the 1920s. The stock market boom of the 1920s proceeded without significant federal oversight. Only 2.5 million families paid any federal income tax in 1929.

After 1929, the federal government's economic role increased substantially. By 1940 its civilian payroll exceeded one million workers, and federal purchases of goods and services accounted for over 6 percent of the GNP. From the New Deal period beginning in 1933 came many programs that have remained important into the twenty-first century, including Social Security, unemployment compensation, the minimum wage, agricultural price supports, deposit insurance, and protection for labor unions.

The decrease in aggregate demand that underlay the Depression caused production to fall. By 1933, about one-fourth of the labor force was unemployed. Falling prices increased the burden of debt on farmers, business firms, and home owners, and bankruptcies and foreclosures increased.

The federal government under President Herbert Hoover moved promptly to try to deal with the Depression. Hoover pressed employers not to reduce wages, and he increased federal funding for public works projects. He also persuaded Congress to reduce income tax rates in December 1929. Despite misgivings, he accepted a bill to pay about \$1 billion as a bonus to war veterans in 1931. Beyond this, Hoover opposed giving federal money to the unemployed. In June 1930, he signed the Hawley-Smoot Tariff bill, which greatly increased the taxes imposed on imports. The tariff reduced U.S. imports and helped spread the Depression to other countries.

Worsening business led to a rising tide of bank failures, beginning in late 1930. This in turn provoked depositors to withdraw currency and gold coin. Hoover refused to suspend convertibility of

dollars into gold, and gold outflows exerted a strong deflationary force. At Hoover's urging, Congress created the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) in January 1932. It provided funds to distressed banks.

The federal government entered the Depression with a substantial surplus of revenues over expenditures. Hoover was willing to see federal spending increase as long as it did not lead to deficit spending. However, as declining incomes led to declining tax revenues and a deficit of \$2 billion in 1931, Hoover reduced federal spending and persuaded Congress to enact the largest peacetime tax increase in American history.

ROOSEVELT AND THE NEW DEAL

During the presidential campaign of 1932, Franklin Roosevelt criticized the deficits under Hoover, and on taking office in March 1933 he moved to cut federal spending, including veterans' benefits. He also suspended the convertibility of dollars into gold; private individuals were required to turn in all their gold coins. Roosevelt ordered all the banks to close and be examined, so the sound ones could be reopened. When they reopened, depositors stopped drawing out funds, and the tide of bank failures ceased. In June 1933, Congress created the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), which successfully prevented a recurrence of the massive deposit withdrawals.

Roosevelt then undertook an extensive economic program that sought relief, recovery, and reform. Unlike Hoover, Roosevelt was willing to use federal money to make direct assistance payments to the unemployed. The Federal Emergency Relief Act of May 1933 authorized \$500 million for such purposes. In June 1933 the government created the Public Works Administration (PWA), which was empowered to undertake government construction projects that would provide employment and produce useful infrastructure. Among its many activities were slum clearance and the development of public housing projects. These activities were extended by the U.S. Housing Act of September 1937. Greater stress on job creation was provided by the Civil Works Administration (CWA), begun in December 1933. Lasting for only four months, the

CWA employed approximately five million people and spent nearly \$1 billion. By early 1934, about one-fifth of American families were receiving direct benefits from one or more of these programs. The Works Progress Administration (WPA), established in August 1935, gave primary emphasis to providing jobs for the unemployed, with secondary attention to the quality of the projects undertaken. WPA employment through the rest of the 1930s averaged slightly over two million persons. Much more popular was the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), established in April 1933. It recruited young men for outdoor work, such as tree planting and improving national parks.

In May 1933 Congress created the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). Initiated out of the debate over the disposition of the government power dam and nitrate plants built at Muscle Shoals, Alabama, during World War I, the TVA was designed as a comprehensive economic development plan for the region. Multipurpose dams provided cheap electricity and created recreational facilities on the resulting lakes.

In the area of international trade, the high-tariff policy adopted in 1930 with the Hawley-Smoot Tariff was modified by the Trade Agreements Act of May 1934. This authorized the government to negotiate reciprocal trade agreements with other countries, providing for mutual reduction of trade barriers. It helped expand the value of U.S. merchandise exports from \$1.6 billion in 1932 to \$5 billion in 1941.

"RECOVERY" MEASURES: THE NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT AND THE AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT

The National Industrial Recovery Act of June 1933 authorized—even pressured—business firms in each industry to adopt codes of "fair competition." Such codes, when approved by the National Recovery Administration (NRA), were binding on all firms in the industry that joined the NRA and were exempt from antitrust laws. Each code was required to contain pro-labor provisions, such as minimum wages, maximum hours, and protection for collective bargaining. Many of the codes contained provisions to reduce competition. Since the

program did nothing to increase the demand for goods and services, it also did little to improve employment and was generally condemned by economists. The Supreme Court held it to be unconstitutional in 1935. However, measures to limit competition in individual industries, such as airlines, motor transport, petroleum, and coal, were subsequently adopted.

The New Deal recovery program also involved agriculture. On average, farm prices in 1932 were 56 percent below their 1929 levels. Raising farm prices and farm incomes was the major goal of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of May 1933. This legislation provided for cash benefits to farmers who agreed to reduce their output. To finance the benefits, the government levied a “processing tax” on firms that processed farm products. In addition, the government created the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation, which purchased farm products and distributed them to needy persons.

In response to these programs and to the international depreciation of the dollar, farm prices rose more than 50 percent from 1933 to 1935. The price increases benefited the wealthiest farmers and tended to burden consumers in proportion to their food consumption, falling most heavily on low-income families.

Like the National Industrial Recovery Act, the first Agricultural Adjustment Act was declared unconstitutional, in January 1936. Congress responded by adopting the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act in February 1936. This paid farmers to reduce output of soil-depleting crops. The second Agricultural Adjustment Act of February 1938 sought to implement the principle of the ever-normal granary—buying up surplus products in times of abundant production to be carried over for periods of less abundance. Emphasis tended to shift from reducing farm output to buying surplus products, but all with the goal of raising farm incomes.

The New Deal “reform” campaign extended into numerous industries and activities. Notable were the regulations imposed on corporate finance by the Securities Act of May 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of June 1934. The latter created the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Any firm wishing to issue new securities (stocks and

bonds) was required to publish information about the company and how it would use the money. Companies whose securities were traded on organized exchanges were also required to file periodic reports of their condition and activities. Various unfair methods of securities trading, such as insider trading, were outlawed.

THE LABOR MARKET

The Depression fell heavily on workers through loss of jobs, shorter hours, and reduced wages. Labor unions pressed for measures to improve their bargaining position. In 1932 the Norris-LaGuardia Act restricted the use of injunctions as an anti-union practice. As noted, the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 had contained provisions relating to minimum wages and collective bargaining. In May 1935 Congress enacted the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act), which gave workers the right to organize unions and to bargain collectively with employers. It also outlawed a number of anti-union practices and created the National Labor Relations Board, which had the authority to conduct elections among workers to determine if they wanted to be represented by a union. When a union was certified by the National Labor Relations Board, the employer was required to bargain with it in good faith.

In June 1938 Congress approved the Fair Labor Standards Act, which instituted a minimum wage law. Employers in interstate commerce were required to pay workers at least twenty-five cents per hour and to pay extra for overtime in excess of (initially) forty-four hours per week, and ultimately forty hours per week. The minimum wage was steadily increased over time, as was the proportion of workers covered by the law.

SOCIAL SECURITY

One of the most far-reaching of New Deal economic measures was the Social Security Act of August 1935. It created three types of programs: (1) old-age pensions to be financed by a tax on wages—benefits were paid as a matter of right, not according to need; (2) unemployment insurance to be administered by states, financed by another wage tax—both of these programs developed into

large elements of the federal fiscal system over the rest of the twentieth century; and (3) federally funded, state-administered programs to aid low-income families—benefits were based on need and financed from general revenue. The most controversial was the program of aid to families with dependent children—“welfare.”

From fiscal year 1932 to fiscal year 1940, federal cash payments to the public roughly doubled, from \$4.8 billion to \$9.6 billion. Higher tax rates raised the government’s cash receipts from the public by almost the same dollar amount, from \$2 billion to \$7 billion. Most economists now believe this high-tax policy held down the potential stimulating effect of federal expenditures.

The New Deal economic program did not succeed in producing rapid recovery of production and employment, but recovery was rapid after the United States went to war in 1941. Most of the relief and recovery measures lapsed. However, the scale and scope of the federal government were vastly enlarged in response to the Depression. Notable areas that persisted through the twentieth century included:

1. Agricultural price supports and production controls.
2. The social “safety net” associated with Social Security, which transfers payments to the elderly, the unemployed, and the unfortunate.
3. Measures to protect workers through the minimum wage law and support for labor unions.
4. A vast array of regulatory programs directed at individual industries, including railroads, highway transport, airlines, electric power, and natural gas.
5. Regulation of banking and finance, particularly through the Securities and Exchange Commission and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and through direct loan and loan guarantee programs, particularly involving housing.

Influenced to an extent by the macroeconomic ideas of John Maynard Keynes, the government became committed to “demand management” to promote full employment, stable prices, and economic growth. Abolition of the gold standard enabled the money supply to be controlled by the government through the Federal Reserve System. Commitment

to the balanced budget was replaced by a willingness to use deficit finance to combat depression. As a result, no serious economic depression occurred in the remaining years of the twentieth century.

One of the most significant legacies of the Great Depression was the dramatically altered relationship between the people and the federal government. The role of the federal government would continue to grow in later years, but it is clear that the decisive shift occurred during the Depression.

See Also: CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC); CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION (CWA); GOVERNMENTS, STATE, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); NEW DEAL; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT.

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PAUL B. TRECOTT

GOVERNMENTS, STATE, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The New Deal policies enacted by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration during the 1930s in response to the Great Depression are traditionally interpreted in terms of how they affected the nation as a whole. However, New Deal policies also had a dramatic impact at the state and local level. Because many officials of state and local governments were unwilling to work in cooperation with the federal government, their response to New Deal policies often did not help the nation to recover as quickly and fully as it could have.

During the 1920s the states, rather than the federal government, led social reform efforts by improving schools and highways, establishing minimum labor standards, and regulating corporations. During this decade, state and local governments accounted for about three-fourths of public spending, while the federal government discouraged most reform efforts, concentrating only on such major reforms as prohibition, immigration restriction, and tariff revision.

State reform efforts, however, could not accurately be called progressive. Most state officials were only willing to spend money on necessities, such as hospitals and bridges, and rarely were eager to fund such non-essentials as factory inspections and public housing. More importantly, whatever legislation was enacted by the states was usually

poorly financed, incompetently administered, and indifferently enforced. Still, the readiness of most states to go into debt for these social programs meant that they were poorly prepared for the Great Depression.

WHY STATE GOVERNMENTS FAILED

Historians offer several explanations for the failure of state governments to deal with the magnitude of the Depression: (1) diminishing tax revenues, (2) constitutional/statutory debt restrictions, such as a balanced budget requirement, (3) localism, (4) outdated administrative organizations, and (5) inefficient and weak political leadership. The latter three reasons are most relevant to the Depression.

The southern states were especially immersed in localism. The South persisted in clinging to its traditional “southern way of life” throughout the Depression. Their region having been forced to suffer defeat and humiliation from the federal government during the Civil War and Reconstruction, southern politicians fought to preserve what they considered a superior way of life, which they saw embodied in racial segregation, fundamentalist religion, and one-party politics. Because political groups in each southern state were based primarily in localities, coordinated state action at the federal level was difficult even under normal conditions. Similarly, in the fiercely independent West, the recurring comment from county officials was similar to this statement from a Colorado report: “We will not need nor ask for any help outside our county as we have a great deal of local pride and will not ask for outside help as long as we can help ourselves.”

Archaic administrative structures were rampant in state legislatures where inexperienced men, who were poorly prepared and paid, operated under outdated constitutions. For example, Pennsylvania’s relief agencies broke down completely as 425 state boards under the control of 920 directors handled all public relief.

States benefited significantly from liberal New Deal programs, yet state politicians often blocked specific federal initiatives that did not parallel their conservative views. These defenders of states’ rights did not appreciate the federal government

delving into state matters, but during the Depression relief funds, employment, and construction overrode most concerns. Although most politicians continued to support Roosevelt's general policies, they increasingly disagreed with his New Deal policies. Because of this, state politicians often used corrupt or anti-federal methods against New Deal programs. In fact, historian Lyle W. Dorsett stated that politicians could be dishonest and incompetent, but little was said about their behavior as long as they remained loyal to the president. Mayor Ed Crump of Memphis, Tennessee, for example, supported nearly all of Roosevelt's New Deal measures because they brought thousands of jobs to Memphis. But all federal money first had to pass through Crump's organization, which was empowered to appoint local dispensing agents, who distributed to constituents. Crump's political organization was the frequently object of federal investigation into such practices as using federal jobs and relief to coerce voters. Even though newspapers such as the *Memphis Press-Scimitar* regularly published articles on the chicanery of the Crump machine, little action was taken against Crump because he was a strong Roosevelt supporter.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE RESCUE

From the end of 1929 to 1933, most state governments clearly demonstrated that they were incapable of dealing with the economic conditions that left millions of Americans destitute. Social programs were often studied rather than implemented, and most governors were unwilling to call special sessions to handle the problems. Many governors and state legislators simply made reassuring, but hollow, public statements about self-sufficiency. Unfortunately, many states were deep in debt from deficit spending during the 1920s, and during the Depression they strained under rising welfare costs and falling tax revenues.

State governments eventually called on the federal government for help, albeit reluctantly. Roosevelt decisively called for broad executive power in 1933 and Congress responded quickly. Such a positive response was primarily due to the growing realization that national problems, such as the Great Depression, required national remedies.

After 1933, federal government programs were much more successful than state efforts in providing relief and promoting recovery. However, the New Deal programs were often hampered by the partnership between federal, state, and local governments. For the most part, conflict occurred more frequently than cooperation between the federal government and state governments. That conflict occurred primarily within three areas: (1) the requirement of state matching funds for many New Deal programs, (2) the federal requirement to centralize and professionally manage welfare administration, and (3) the efforts by state and local politicians to exploit federal money and programs for their own political advantage.

Various improvements to state governments helped support the impression that federal matching funds strengthened the states. Eleven states passed reorganization statutes during the decade, while others removed administrative control and financial responsibility from archaic local units. Most matching funds came from the newly created (in 1933) Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which initially distributed a total of about \$500 million, of which \$250 million was targeted for matching grants, with states contributing \$3 for every \$1 of federal funds, and the remaining \$250 million earmarked for states facing immediate emergencies. Over the next two years a total of about \$3 billion was distributed.

In 1933 the FERA offered relief funds, for example, to Louisiana. Louisiana officials had requested additional money, pleading that state funds were insufficient, while, at the same time, local parishes exploited the FERA money by inappropriately using portions of it for unemployable people (FERA's federal money was reserved solely for employable people who were out of work, while state money was meant for people who were unemployable). By mid-1939, Louisiana had received about \$750 million in federal grants and loans, but as the flow of funds increased, so did state political corruption. The federal government initiated investigations into the use of federal relief funds, and numerous indictments were levied against Louisiana officials. A number of politicians in other states, including Governor William Langer of North Dakota, were convicted of misusing funds and served time in jail.

A variety of relief and recovery measures were introduced into Colorado, including approximately \$330 million dollars each month from FERA as long as state and local funds contributed their share. However, the Colorado legislature did not approve any such funds. Because of Colorado's failure to contribute, the federal government threatened to remove all federal aid, and pressure from citizens forced the state to divert highway funds and tax gasoline sales in order to match federal funds.

Before the Great Depression, politicians all too often were elected on the basis of their ability to control the state and demolish opposition. Such political machines included those of Huey Long of Louisiana, James Michael Curley of Massachusetts, and C. Ben Ross of Idaho. Because of New Deal programs, the 1930s saw noticeable expansion of performance-based merit systems within the states. Five states passed workable statutes in 1937 and 6 others applied the merit system to various departments. After nearly two decades of ignoring performance-based policies, the trend toward improving state merit systems continued throughout the forties, fifties, and sixties. The insistence of FERA administrators on merit in order to professionally manage state governments and later requirements in 1939 with regard to civil service procedures helped to increase state administrative efficiency. Most governors, however, resented federal stipulations calling for merit appointments.

FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP

Roosevelt's New Deal relief efforts rested largely on the development of a strong federal-state partnership. A state's support of federal expenditures had little to do with the acceptance or rejection of the New Deal or any reinterpretation of federalism. When a state desperately needed immediate help for relief and recovery, it usually received it. In the short-term, the New Deal helped the states survive the Depression. In the long-term, the states lost authority to a more powerful federal government. With a stronger federal government now in charge, state and local officials had to account to powerful federal entities for their actions, and corrupt or inefficient officials were consequently more likely to lose office.

See Also: GOVERNMENT, UNITED STATES FEDERAL, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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WILLIAM ARTHUR ATKINS

GRAND COULEE PROJECT

Construction of Grand Coulee Dam, built from 1934 to 1942, began as a New Deal works project. The dam is located on the Columbia River in eastern Washington state north of the semi-arid Columbia Basin. It remains among the world's most productive sites for generating hydroelectric power, irrigates more than one-half million acres (the largest reclamation project in the United States), and creates the 151-mile long Lake Roosevelt. Touted as "the Mightiest thing ever built by a man" by folk-singer Woody Guthrie when he was employed in May 1941 by the Bonneville Power Administration to compose songs about the project, Grand Coulee was smaller, in fact, than the earth-fill Fort Peck dam built at the same time in Montana. Still, at the time of its completion Grand Coulee Dam was the largest concrete structure in the world. The size and scope of the project, combined with its rural isolation, resulted in achievements in technology, innovations in employer-provided health care, and the nation's first completely electric city.

The project was originally proposed in the 1890s as one of two ambitious schemes for irrigating the Big Bend region; the other proposal would have resulted in a canal flowing into the region from the east from near Albeni Falls, Idaho, on the Pend Orielle River. In the battles between advocates of these contrasting visions for agricultural



The massive Grand Coulee Dam, under construction in 1936 on the Columbia River in Washington. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

development, and within Congress after the project began, hyperbolic rhetoric characterized the dispute as between socialism on the one hand, and undemocratic control of the government and the economy by under-regulated power companies on the other. The New Deal promoted federal government-funded economic development of the Columbia River and other Western waters in the name of jobs and reclamation. Grand Coulee's power production and irrigation established a strong foundation for economic growth in the Pacific Northwest, but the loss of the salmon fishery devastated tribal economies.

When construction began the Roosevelt administration approved only a low dam, funded through the Public Works Administration—the low dam would provide power, but not irrigation. The MWAK Company began construction in July 1934, contracted to build a dam 350 feet high above bedrock with the proviso that the contract might change prior to completion. In August 1935 plans for a higher dam (550 feet above bedrock) were approved by Congress. After MWAK concluded its work by completing the foundation in February 1938, Consolidated Builders Incorporated built the rest of the structure.

Over 12,000 workers were employed over the course of construction, with as many as 7,400 employed at one time. Wages were good while there was work, but most workers endured frequent layoffs as the project moved through several stages of construction, and as cold winters forced slow-downs. Although a disproportionate number of the workers were white, American Indians from the Colville Reservation (which occupies the north shore of the Columbia where the dam is located) were also hired, as were some African Americans. Clearing the land that would be flooded became the largest single Works Progress Administration project, employing two thousand men by the end of 1939.

See Also: BOULDER DAM; PUBLIC POWER; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JAMES STRIPES

GRAPES OF WRATH, THE

For several years before 1939, John Steinbeck had been familiarizing himself with the plight of the Okies, the Depression-era Oklahoma migrants to Steinbeck's native California. He had written about oppressed agricultural workers in his 1936 novel *In Dubious Battle* and that same year in a series of reports on "the Harvest Gypsies" in the *San Francisco News*. Steinbeck had also visited migrant camps around his hometown of Salinas and at Bakersfield. In the fall of 1937, he retraced the migrants' westward journey along Route 66. He began his masterpiece in May 1938, and finished the final draft in

late October. *The Grapes of Wrath* was released by Viking on April 14, 1939.

The novel tells the story of the Joads, a poverty-stricken, uneducated, and "dusted out" family of Oklahoma farmers. The first fifth of the book describes the desolate and dreary landscape of Dust Bowl Oklahoma, the Joads' hopeless situation, and the excruciating decision to load their meager possessions on an ancient jalopy and head for the promised land of California. Another fifth of the novel depicts the arduous cross-country trek and the hardships endured by the steadily dwindling Joad family. The rest of the story traces the disappointments of California, disappointments in the midst of plenty, caused by the selfishness, heartless dishonesty, and paranoia of the landowners and their law-enforcement lackeys. The only relief the Joads know comes during their stay at a "government camp," where they temporarily find democratic self-government, communal good-fellowship, and dignity.

The raw oppression of the migrants leads Tom Joad and Jim Casy, a former preacher traveling with the family, to become labor organizers. Casy, a kind of secularized Christ figure, is killed, and Tom is forced to leave the family and continue his work in the shadows. The novel ends with a controversial scene: The remaining Joads find a starving man in a barn, and Rose of Sharon, her own baby stillborn because of the horrid conditions the family faces, feeds the stranger with her breast milk. Alternating with the chapters about the family, Steinbeck brilliantly inserts brief "interchapters." These comprise about a sixth of the novel and attempt by dramatic episodes, eloquent exposition, and sometimes outright preaching to generalize and make universal the experience of the Joads.

The Grapes of Wrath was an instantaneous sensation. Despite angry responses from some who objected to the novel's "vulgarity," and from some proud Californians and Oklahomans (one Oklahoma congressman branded the work "a lie, a black, infernal creation of a twisted, distorted mind"), the book sold 430,000 copies its first year. It has never been out of print. It was also adapted into an acclaimed film with the same title, produced by Darryl Zanuck and directed by John Ford and rushed into release on January 24, 1940.

The novel's high reputation springs in part from Steinbeck's ability to deftly combine two purposes within the same work. First, he presents a graphic, realistic, heartrending account of a terrible social problem of the Great Depression era. In this way the book resembles other sociological novels, such as Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1851–1852) and Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* (1906); like those works, *The Grapes of Wrath* raised the awareness and aroused the sympathies of Americans. Second, *The Grapes of Wrath* is a literary triumph, beautifully and movingly written, artistically interweaving great themes of westward movement, Biblical sacrifice, human courage and endurance, the centrality of the family and of women within the family, the importance of community and human brotherhood, and the evils of selfish individualism. In the end, Steinbeck's skill in employing magnificent writing to explicate a shocking social injustice of the 1930s will insure the continuance of the book's reputation as a national epic and a classic expression of the courage and vitality of the American spirit in the face of adversity.

See Also: FORD, JOHN; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; OKIES; STEINBECK, JOHN.

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DAVID W. LEVY

GRASSROOTS DEMOCRACY

Born of desperation and political impotence, grassroots democratic action in the 1930s sought to force

government and business leaders to assist in providing direct assistance to individuals while at the same time improving overall economic conditions. As the effects of the Great Depression spread across the United States, most Americans had few options for seeking relief. Private charities were quickly overwhelmed, while state and local governments did not have the financial resources to combat the economic crisis. On the federal level, a mechanism did not exist to provide support for these beleaguered institutions.

Spontaneous demonstrations erupted across the nation as more Americans found themselves entangled in poverty. Starving farmers rioted for food in the South while their brethren in the Midwest violently opposed property foreclosures and destroyed crops in the hope of increasing farm prices. In the cities, industrial workers struck for increased wages, apartment dwellers refused to pay high rent and ignored eviction notices, and property owners refused to pay taxes.

Hunger marches held simultaneously in several cities on March 6, 1930, brought 500,000 people into the streets demanding government assistance for the unemployed. Sixteen thousand World War I veterans marched on Washington, D.C., in June 1932 demanding early payment of their promised bonus for military service. This grassroots organizing influenced both of the major political parties and began to subtly alter the relationship between citizen and government.

The first major shift came in July 1932 when Congress passed the Emergency Relief and Construction Act, which authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to provide \$300 million in loans to states for relief payments and \$1.5 million for public works projects. The relationship between the federal government and the people evolved dramatically after the inauguration of President Franklin Roosevelt in March 1933. The New Deal programs and government agencies adopted by Roosevelt and the Congress were not only designed to provide assistance to the thousands suffering from economic disaster, but were also a response to the grassroots activism of the American people.

Several New Deal agencies adopted measures demanded by citizens. In 1933 the Department of

Agriculture, under the aegis of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, ordered the destruction of crops in an attempt to raise farm prices, just as Midwestern farmers had advocated. Responding to the discontent over property foreclosures, the Federal Housing Administration regulated and underwrote home mortgages. Agitation by Francis Townsend and his millions of followers for federally guaranteed old-age retirement pensions helped lead to the adoption of the Social Security Act in 1935.

Politics was also influenced by this marriage between grassroots democracy and government bureaucracy. Much of the discontent evidenced before 1933 was absorbed by the New Deal and redirected into the traditional two-party system. Farmers, industrial workers, African Americans, and progressive liberals recast the Democratic Party, altering the American political landscape. The reforms introduced by the Roosevelt administration transformed the economic and social life of the nation, but they were largely adopted because of grassroots democracy practiced by the American people.

See Also: EMERGENCY RELIEF AND CONSTRUCTION ACT OF 1932; HUNGER MARCHES.

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G. WAYNE DOWDY

GREEN, WILLIAM

William Green (March 3, 1870–November 21, 1952) was a labor leader and president of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). Green was born in Coshocton, Ohio, the son of Hugh Green, a coal miner, and Jane Oram. He completed the eighth

grade and aspired to the Baptist ministry, but at fourteen he began work as a water boy for the railroad. Two years later he became his father's helper in the mines, and within a few years he was a skilled pick miner. In 1892 he married Jennie Mobley, daughter of a local miner. In time he fathered six children, and he remained in the mines for nineteen years.

In 1891 Green was elected secretary of his United Mine Workers (UMW) local, and the union movement became the calling he had once sought in the ministry. He was elected president of the Ohio district in 1906. In 1913 miners elected Green UMW national secretary-treasurer, a post he would hold until 1924. Also in 1913, Green was appointed to the powerful AFL executive committee. When AFL president Samuel Gompers died in December 1924, executive council members chose Green to succeed him. Green served as AFL president for the next twenty-eight years.

Although Green was a moralistic man who pursued a policy of peaceful cooperation with employers in the 1920s, the Great Depression clearly proved that his strategy had failed. By 1932, Green's speeches were replete with militant rhetoric about the need for "forceful methods" to bring about full employment. But militancy never suited Green. With rising rank-and-file pressure to seek legislative redress, Green happily assumed his chores as leading lobbyist for labor. His efforts helped to shape and pass many New Deal reforms, including the National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), the National Labor Relations Act (1935), the Social Security Act (1935), and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938).

When many AFL organizing campaigns during the Depression failed, a rupture developed between conservative craft union leaders, who dominated the AFL executive council, and more militant industrial union advocates. The second group, led by John L. Lewis of the UMW, pushed for aggressive campaigns to organize mass-production workers on an industry wide basis. The defeat of Lewis's resolutions at the 1935 AFL convention and the subsequent rise of the Committee for Industrial Organization (in 1938 to become the Congress of Industrial Organizations, CIO) shaped the remainder

of Green's career as a labor official. Green voted with the executive council majority in 1936 to suspend the CIO unions and in 1938 to expel them. For the rest of his life his energies would be consumed by a crusade against the rebel movement. Although he attended peace conferences with the CIO, the two labor federations remained divided until after his death.

By 1939, however, Green's power and influence within the AFL began to decline with the rise of an ambitious George Meany in the post of secretary-treasurer. Green did spearhead a vigorous but unsuccessful campaign to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, but by the time of his death in 1952 he had become a largely forgotten figure.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); LEWIS, JOHN L.; ORGANIZED LABOR; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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CRAIG PHELAN

GREENBELT TOWNS

The Greenbelt town program originated as part of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, aiding the poor by hiring the unemployed to build the towns and then by providing housing for low-income families. Placed within the Resettlement Administration headed by Rexford Tugwell, the Suburban Division, administered by John Lansill, constructed three towns: Greenbelt, Maryland, outside of Washington, D.C.; Greendale, Wisconsin, outside of Milwaukee; and Greenhills, Ohio, outside of Cincin-

nati. A fourth, Greenbrook, New Jersey, was initiated but not completed. Economist Tugwell yearned for a collectivized society and incorporated his desires into the town plans, placing an emphasis on economic and social cooperatives to serve town residents. Tugwell hoped to have 3,000 such communities built.

Tugwell left the design of the towns to planners who relied heavily on Clarence Perry's concept of the neighborhood unit, in which neighborhood boundaries consisted of major streets, but interior neighborhood roads carried only local traffic. In Perry's design, a central area containing shops, a park, and an elementary school that also served as a community center provided focus for the neighborhood and were within walking distance of residents. The planners for Greenbelt and Greenhills were also influenced heavily by Clarence Stein's design of Radburn, New Jersey, which utilized superblocs with central greens, separation of automobile and pedestrian traffic, cul-de-sacs, and homes facing their gardens with backs facing the street. In addition, a surrounding greenbelt provided land for parks or farming.

Frederick Bigger functioned as the chief planner for all three towns, and Hale Walker was the town planner for Greenbelt. Tenants first occupied Greenbelt's 885 rowhouses and apartment units in September 1937. Justin Hartzog and William Strong were the town planners for the 676 units of Greenhills, which looked much like Greenbelt, with rowhouses and apartments built in contemporary or "international" style. Residents first moved into Greenhills in April 1938 and into Greendale in May 1938. Jacob Crane and Elbert Peets, town planners for Greendale, used recently restored Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia, as a model for their work, copying the style of restored Williamsburg for its public buildings, as well as placing homes only a few feet from the street. The town consisted of 572 units, of which 274 were single-family detached homes and the remainder rowhouses.

The greenbelt town program in general and Tugwell in particular received much negative press coverage. Congressional critics of the New Deal focused on the expense of the towns, and businessmen clamored against the perceived communistic

and socialistic aspects. As a result, Tugwell resigned and Roosevelt dismantled the Resettlement Administration at the end of 1936, and the Farm Security Administration oversaw the completion of the towns. After World War II, the government resolved to sell the towns; in response, town residents who wanted to maintain their communities as planned cooperatives formed groups to purchase the government housing. In both Greenbelt and Greenhills, residents formed cooperatives to buy their homes, and Greenhills managed to retain most of its greenbelt. In 2000, each of the three towns had a population of about 20,000. The ideas and plans used in the Greenbelt towns reappeared briefly in the 1960s with the development of cities such as Reston, Virginia, and Columbia, Maryland, and appeared again in the 1990s in the guise of the New Urbanism or Neotraditional development.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; HOUSING; TUGWELL, REXFORD G.

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CATHY D. KNEPPER

GUFFEY-SNYDER ACT OF 1935

Under Title I of the National Industrial Recovery Act, the bituminous coal industry in late 1933 drafted a code governing business and labor practices in an effort to stabilize an industry long plagued by cutthroat competition and labor conflict. The code brought higher profits and wages, an increase in union membership, and a reduction in strikes. But the industry's peace and prosperity were fleeting, for within months the code began to collapse in the face of widespread violations. Thereupon, the Unit-

ed Mine Workers (UMW), with the support of many operators in the northern coalfields, fashioned a bill to bring stricter controls to the industry than the National Recovery Administration (NRA) had provided.

Introduced in Congress in January 1935 by Senator Joseph F. Guffey and Representative J. Buell Snyder, both Democrats from Pennsylvania, the bill initially made little headway. Large consumers of coal contended it would unreasonably increase prices; southern and western operators said it would discriminate against low-wage and nonunion mines; and political conservatives, fearing it would set a precedent for regulatory measures affecting other industries, questioned its constitutionality.

After the U.S. Supreme Court declared Title I of the National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional in May 1935, proponents of coal stabilization urged Congress to pass the Guffey-Snyder bill or see the industry degenerate into chaos, a warning given added weight when John L. Lewis, head of the UMW, threatened a strike if Congress did not act. Nevertheless, the bill remained stalled until President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked legislators to leave constitutional questions to the courts, prompting the House of Representatives to approve it on August 20 by a vote of 194 to 168 and the Senate on August 23, 45 to 37.

The Guffey-Snyder Act established a National Bituminous Coal Commission to determine prices and approve and enforce trade practices and marketing agreements. It also guaranteed workers the right to collective bargaining and uniform wages and hours. To enforce compliance, it prescribed a penalty tax on the selling price of coal, most of which would be rebated to those who adhered to the law.

Sometimes called "a little NRA," the Guffey-Snyder Act was designed to favor those who had benefited from the coal code. From the outset, however, it was ineffective. Operators feuded over prices, and restraining orders crippled the commission's authority. Finally, on May 18, 1936, the U.S. Supreme Court declared the act unconstitutional in *Carter v. Carter Coal Company*. In the majority's opinion, the labor provisions were a federal intru-

sion on states rights and therefore made the price provisions invalid since the two were inextricably intertwined.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; GUFFEY-VINSON ACT OF 1937; LEWIS, JOHN L.; ORGANIZED LABOR; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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JOHN KENNEDY OHL

GUFFEY-VINSON ACT OF 1937

In May 1936 the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated the Guffey-Snyder Act, a measure enacted in 1935 to curb the destructive effects of cutthroat competition in the bituminous coal industry through agreements on business practices and prices and the improvement of wages and labor conditions. Anxious to preserve the essentials of the act, proponents of federal legislation to stabilize the industry, primarily operators in the northern coalfields and the United Mine Workers (UMW), pressed Congress to approve a revised measure, minus the labor provisions the court had found objectionable. Sponsored by Senator Joseph F. Guffey, Democrat of Pennsylvania, and Representative Fred Vinson, Democrat of Kentucky, it passed the House of Representatives in June 1936, but was killed in the Senate by a filibuster.

Aided by the decisive Democratic victory in the 1936 election and the growing political power of John L. Lewis, head of the UMW, the bill's proponents in 1937 overcame the opposition of southern operators, who had argued that it would negate the

competitive advantage they enjoyed from the use of low-wage nonunion labor. The House approved the bill without a record vote on March 11, while the Senate passed it on April 5 by a vote of 58 to 18.

The Guffey-Vinson Act, which was to run for four years, provided for a National Bituminous Coal Commission (NBCC) with authority to determine minimum prices for coal and enforce marketing and fair practices agreements. Almost immediately implementation floundered. Patronage squabbles involving the filling of the hundreds of posts within the NBCC divided the commissioners, and the process of getting operators to establish coal classifications and fix prices dragged on for years, running afoul of the regional splits that had long bedeviled the industry. Complaints about increased prices from such large consumers of coal as railroads and public utilities and disputes over the lack of public hearings added fuel to the commission's difficulties. Tiring of the turmoil, President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the summer of 1939 transferred the NBCC's functions to the Department of the Interior.

Despite Roosevelt's action, the wrangling over prices continued, and not until October 1940 did the coal authorities promulgate the minimum prices sought by northern operators and the UMW. By this time prices were already climbing because of the emerging war economy, eliminating the need for minimum prices. Nevertheless, Congress in 1941 extended the Guffey-Vinson Act for two more years, but in 1943, no longer seeing any need for legislation to protect operators and miners from competitive pressures, Congress let the act die when it reached its legal limit.

See Also: GUFFEY-SNYDER ACT OF 1935; LEWIS, JOHN L.; ORGANIZED LABOR; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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Woody Guthrie, 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

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JOHN KENNEDY OHL

GUTHRIE, WOODY

Woodrow Wilson Guthrie (July 14, 1912–October 3, 1967) was arguably the most influential songwriter and performer in twentieth-century American folk music. As the first major artist to combine traditional American folk melodies with lyrics about contemporary political, social, and personal concerns, Guthrie left behind an unparalleled collection of ballads and populist anthems. Both his music and performing style have continued to influence artists long after his death.

Guthrie was born in Okemah, Oklahoma. As a youth, he saw his family disintegrate in a series of personal and financial tragedies. During his adolescent years, he worked odd jobs and learned the guitar in his spare time. When the dust storms of 1935 hit the area, Guthrie took his guitar and drifted, hitchhiked, and hopped freight trains, eventually joining other “Okie” refugees in California. Already a keen observer of the world, Guthrie became radically politicized by what he saw and experienced there. Empathizing with the migrant orchard workers, union organizers, and other victims of greed and social injustice, Guthrie channeled his populist patriotism and moral outrage into songwriting. Singing his plainspoken lyrics in high nasally vocals to the tune of simple chords and melodies derived from traditional Appalachian folk songs, Guthrie established a mythic voice for beaten-down Americans. Radio performances from Los Angeles won Guthrie wide renown, especially with intellectuals and activists associated with the Popular Front and the Communist Party.

In 1939 Guthrie moved to New York City, where he became more active in left-wing politics, writing articles for Communist newspapers and penning some of his best-known songs, including “God Blessed America” (usually known as “This Land Is Your Land”). A passionate antifascist and champion of the Popular Front, Guthrie felt dismayed and conflicted by the Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact of 1939. But the 1941 German invasion of the Soviet Union removed any doubts that he had about the need for America to enter World War II. Guthrie emblazoned his guitar with the slogan, “This Machine Kills Fascists,” and he contributed to the war effort not only with patriotic ballads like “Reuben James,” but by serving for two years in the American merchant marine. Upon returning, he resumed his songwriting and toured in the late 1940s with his protégé Pete Seeger and the Almanac Singers. Cold War blacklists and a debilitating affliction with Huntington’s chorea limited Guthrie’s activities in his later years, but in the 1960s a new generation of songwriters and performers revived both his songs and his spirit with their own contemporary folk music.

A prolific songwriter with far more versatility than his common image suggests, Guthrie’s sub-

jects ranged from political corruption and hunger to romantic love and children's songs. But he has always been best known for his Dust Bowl ballads and common-man anthems written in the late 1930s and first recorded in 1940 by folklorist Alan Lomax. These included songs about poverty and deprivation ("Dust Bowl Blues" and "I Ain't Got No Home"), greed and intolerance ("Do Re Mi" and "Vigilante Man"), and odes to mythical heroes and outlaws ("Pretty Boy Floyd" and "Tom Joad"). The first few verses of his most famous composition, commonly known as "This Land Is Your Land," rank among America's most recognizable anthems. Less well known are the rest of the original lyrics, which include reference to the traveling narrator being obstructed by a sign reading "Private Property" and witnessing hungry people waiting outside a relief office.

A figure of towering importance in the history of both folk and popular music, Woody Guthrie helped to revolutionize what songs could mean in

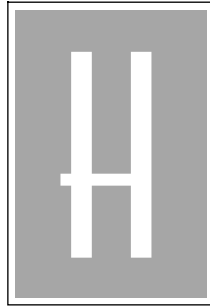
American culture. His 1988 induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame speaks to a legacy that transcends the boundaries of Depression-era topical songs. The moral authority and personal integrity at the heart of Guthrie's music truly make him a hero for all artists who have aspired to move the conscience and soul of an audience with a song.

See Also: "BALLAD OF PRETTY BOY FLOYD;" MUSIC.

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BRADFORD W. WRIGHT



HAGUE, FRANK

Of all the bosses who ruled their machines during the 1930s, none exerted greater power or held it longer than Mayor Frank Hague (January 17, 1876–January 1, 1956) of Jersey City, New Jersey. Hague’s influence not only made him the most powerful Democrat in his state, it helped nominate Franklin D. Roosevelt and delivered New Jersey’s electoral vote to Roosevelt in all four presidential elections in which Roosevelt ran. Critics condemned Hague as the “Hitler of Hudson County,” where he was also accurately called “the law.”

Hague’s career began in a Jersey City slum known as the Horseshoe, where he was born to Catholic parents. Juvenile delinquency, tempered by an occasional appearance at Sunday Mass, characterized his childhood. A sixth-grade dropout, Hague learned the political game from local Democratic bosses and became mayor in 1917. Thirty years would pass before he relinquished power.

During the Depression, Hague’s machine cared for the poor, built social clubs for the middle class, and gave tax breaks to the rich and money to all religions, especially the Catholic Church. People loved and feared the dapper mayor. In 1932 he dropped his support for Al Smith and delivered New Jersey to Franklin D. Roosevelt for the first of four consecutive presidential elections.

In turn, the New Deal funneled massive amounts of patronage and money, as well as numerous projects, through Hague’s organization. Choosing to ignore the machine’s scandals, Roosevelt allowed the Jersey boss to add hundreds of thousands of federal jobs and millions of dollars to the power that the machine already wielded throughout the state. The Public Works Administration (PWA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) enabled the mayor to exert national influence and near total control over New Jersey. The machine coerced 115,000 CWA and WPA employees to support its candidates. As a result, Hague manipulated governors, senators, and congressmen because he could (sometimes illegally) produce huge election-day majorities.

Roosevelt wanted to prosecute the machine’s criminals, but he also wanted to provide Depression relief and New Jersey’s electoral vote, both of which the mayor controlled. This reality proved crucial to Roosevelt’s election to an unprecedented third term in 1940. Thanks to 173,000 ballots produced by the mayor in Hudson County, Roosevelt overcame Wendell Willkie’s lead of 101,500 and won the state’s electoral vote by a plurality of 71,500. Although most of the ballots were legal, critics complained of extensive fraud.

The New Deal's Department of Justice did not investigate Republican complaints because Roosevelt appreciated the electoral and legislative support rendered by the machine and its senators and representatives. For these and other reasons, Roosevelt never got around to ousting the totalitarian mayor who outlasted him by two years before voluntarily retiring in 1947. When Frank Hague died on New Year's Day, 1956, obituary writers noted that his rule constituted perhaps the most exceptional exhibition of power wielded by any city leader in American history.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1932.

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J. CHRISTOPHER SCHNELL

HAMMETT, DASHIELL

Dashiell Hammett (May 27, 1894–January 10, 1961) was born on a tobacco farm in St. Mary's County, Maryland, and raised in Baltimore, where he attended school until the age of 14. He worked for several years in low-paying jobs before joining the Pinkerton National Detectives, where he gathered the detective lore that would be crucial to his later writing. During World War I, he served in the Army (though without leaving the United States) and contracted a case of tuberculosis that would compromise his health for the remainder of his life. In the mid-twenties, Hammett began publishing stories in the pulp magazine *Black Mask*, where the verisimilitude of his detective fiction soon made him the magazine's marquee writer. Leaping to the prestigious publishing house of Alfred A. Knopf, Hammett published four novels in quick succes-

sion: *Red Harvest* and *The Dain Curse* (1929), *The Maltese Falcon* (1930), and *The Glass Key* (1931). Widely praised for their streamlined construction and their coolly dispassionate tone, the novels made Hammett an instant literary celebrity, successful with popular readers and prominent intellectuals alike.

Yet, though he achieved fame during the early thirties and though he influenced writers who would become successful later in the decade, Hammett was not truly a writer shaped by the Depression. His most significant work was done during the late twenties and reflected the attraction to intellectual sophistication prevalent among intellectuals at the time. Emphasizing the professional skill of his detective heroes, Hammett's fiction placed great stress on the values of discipline and expertise and showed consistent doubtfulness about the intelligence of ordinary people. By 1931, his burst of creative energy was drawing to a close. After *The Glass Key*, Hammett published one additional novel, *The Thin Man* (1934), whose renowned wit barely conceals the fears of the novel's playboy detective that he is slipping toward decadence.

For the remainder of the thirties, the bulk of Hammett's energies were devoted to left-wing political activity, to which he and his lover, the playwright Lillian Hellman, were fiercely committed. During World War II, he served as an enlisted man on an Alaskan military base. In 1951, he served six months in federal prison for contempt of court after he refused to disclose the names of contributors to the bail bond fund of the Civil Rights Congress, an organization associated with the Communist Party, of which he was a trustee. Hammett died in 1961.

See Also: HARD-BOILED DETECTIVES; LITERATURE.

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SEAN MCCANN

HANSEN, ALVIN

Alvin Harvey Hansen (August 23, 1887–June 6, 1975) transformed American economics from 1933 to 1945. Born into a Danish family in Viborg, North Dakota, Hansen studied economics at Yankton College and the University of Wisconsin. He taught at Wisconsin and Brown University before joining the University of Minnesota, where he worked from 1919 to 1937. Known for his *Business Cycle Theory* (1927), Hansen advised Social Science Research Council commissions and Secretary of State Cordell Hull on international trade policy. Hansen came to Keynesian economics via orthodox ideas in the work of Knut Wicksell, Arthur Spiethoff, Joseph Schumpeter, Gustav Cassel, and E. H. Robertson. Combining these with his interest in business cycles, Hansen evolved into an advocate of government compensatory spending policy.

In September 1937, Hansen moved to Harvard University to teach the Fiscal Policy Seminar with Dean John H. Williams. Participants included John Kenneth Galbraith, Walter S. Salant, Paul A. Samuelson, and James Tobin. In December 1938 in the presidential address to the American Economic Association, Hansen presented his "secular stagnation thesis." Lagging private investment, consumer credit, and decreased federal spending led to long-term stagnation. As population, land, natural resources, and technological innovation slowed, the economy went through a structural shift with few private investment opportunities. Only more consumer and government spending could spark increased production, consumption, and employment. On May 16, 1939, Hansen testified about his policy ideas before the Temporary National Economic Committee in Congress.

Between 1935 and 1943, Hansen advised the Social Security Board, the National Industrial Conference Board, the Federal Reserve Board, and the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB). When he promoted Keynesian spending policy in NRPB pamphlets during the war, outraged conservatives in Congress demanded abolition of the board. In 1958, he retired from Harvard. Known as the "American Keynes," Hansen helped to educate an entire postwar generation of Keynesians who

changed professional economics into a policy discipline.

See Also: ECONOMISTS.

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PATRICK D. REAGAN

"HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN"

This popular song was written by lyricist Jack Yellen and composer Milton Ager in 1929 for a joyous scene in the MGM motion picture *Chasing Rainbows*, in which American soldiers celebrate the armistice that concluded World War I. When the composer asked the lyricist to suggest a title for a song to fit the celebratory scene, Yellen uttered the first phrase that popped into his head, "Happy Days Are Here Again."

Although the motion picture was not released until 1930, "Happy Days Are Here Again" was pub-

lished in sheet music. George Olsen's society orchestra performed it at New York's Hotel Pennsylvania on October 24, 1929, which was Black Thursday, the day of the stock market crash. Noting the discrepancy between his despondent audience and the ebullient sentiments of the song, Olsen passed out the music to his musicians and told his soloist to "sing it for the corpses." The audience roared with laughter, rose, and danced, shouting the title phrase sardonically with the singer.

The song became an ironic anthem for the Great Depression, a risible counterpart to the grim "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" "Perhaps the success of 'Happy Days Are Here Again,'" Michael Lasser observes in *American Song Lyricists, 1920–1960* (2002), "derives from its directness and naiveté. The brief lyric has only two words of more than one syllable. Its sentiments are as simple as its words . . . Its narrow melodic range, its insistent repetition of the title, and triple rhymes ('here again/ clear again/ cheer again') zip us through the chorus."

In 1932, then-Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt took "Happy Days Are Here Again" as the theme song for his presidential campaign because its optimistic sentiments and rousing melody resonated with his hopes that the New Deal would bring back prosperity. The party used it again for the campaigns of John F. Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey, and other nominees.

The song has become an enduring expression of optimism in the face of dire events, and it has transcended its era to become a familiar standard. In 1963, the American Society of Authors, Composers, and Publishers, the licensing organization that controls performing rights for the songs of the twentieth-century's greatest songwriters, named "Happy Days Are Here Again" as one of sixteen songs on its All-Time Hit Parade, alongside classic songs by such songwriters as George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin, and Cole Porter.

See Also: MUSIC.

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PHILIP FURIA

HARD-BOILED DETECTIVES

The hard-boiled detective story is a genre of popular fiction that reached the height of its creative expression and popular acclaim during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Focusing on the exploits of tough, often cynical detectives who rely on their fists, wits, and the skills of their trade as much as on their intellects, the hard-boiled crime story created a workingman hero especially suited to the industrial city. Pitching him against intractable sources of corruption, the genre tended to convey a populist anger at the abuses of the wealthy and powerful that made it particularly appealing during the Depression.

Hard-boiled detective stories first appeared in pulp magazines of the mid-1920s, especially the renowned *Black Mask*, in which they drew directly on pre-existing conventions of the western and of nineteenth-century urban melodrama. Adapting those conventions to the modern city, such innovative writers as Dashiell Hammett and Carroll John Daly used the genre to explore the anxieties created by the crime wave that accompanied Prohibition. Like the closely related gangster fiction of the period, such as W. R. Burnett's *Little Caesar* (1929), hard-boiled crime fiction portrayed a disordered city in which traditional legal institutions were too corrupt or impotent to secure justice. In novels such as Daly's *The Hidden Hand* (1928) or Hammett's *Red Harvest* (1929), hard-boiled writers depicted their hero's often extra-legal efforts to search out the roots of corruption and to impose order on a lawless environment.

While the genre grew steadily in popularity in the pulps through the 1920s, it came to new prominence during the 1930s as Hammett and later Raymond Chandler brought sophistication and intellectual prestige to the fiction. Chandler, who began his literary career during the mid-1930s, was particularly important in adapting the genre to concerns

raised by the Depression. Abandoning the cool skepticism of Hammett's fiction, Chandler imagined his detective hero as a knight-errant crusading for justice in a corrupt world and driven by sentimental affection for the victims of an unjust society.

In subsequent years, many other writers would follow Chandler and use the genre as a potent vehicle for exploring corruption and social injustice, making the hard-boiled detective story an ever-vital vein of popular mythology. Beginning with John Huston's film adaptation of *The Maltese Falcon* (1940) and Howard Hawks's version of *The Big Sleep* (1946), the hard-boiled story also became a staple of the movies and, from there, of radio and TV.

See Also: CHANDLER, RAYMOND; HAMMETT, DASHIELL; HEROES; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; LITERATURE; *LITTLE CAESAR*.

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SEAN MCCANN

HARLAN COUNTY

Harlan County, Kentucky, is a rural county located in a major coal-mining region in the Appalachian Mountains. The county became nationally famous in 1931 and 1932 when it was the site of one of the earliest and bloodiest labor battles of the decade. The desperation and the courage of the miners of Harlan County, and the violent repression visited upon them by the coal operators of the region when they attempted to organize a union, attracted national attention.

Most of the miners in Harlan County were local people, with deep roots in the Appalachian countryside. By contrast, the coal operators were primarily absentee owners. There was virtually no other

industry in the region. The result was that the coal operators tightly controlled the Appalachian communities. They owned the houses in which the miners lived, the stores from which they bought food, and even the funeral homes that would bury them when they died. The miners, however, shared an intense local culture, giving them a measure of political independence from the coal operators.

When the Great Depression hit the coal fields, the paternalism that had characterized coal town life vanished. Coal operators slashed wages and fired thousands of miners. Workers contacted the United Mine Workers (UMW), which was at that time a fragile organization with low membership, and started to organize. The first mass meetings were held in February and March of 1931. The companies responded harshly, immediately evicting thousands of miners from their homes. In April, 2,800 men, women, and children from Harlan County marched into town and demanded money and food from the company. Strikes spread through the coal fields. On May 5, one hundred armed miners engaged in open warfare with company deputies in a skirmish that left one miner and three company men dead. Hundreds of state troopers arrived to quell the conflict, and the UMW, overwhelmed, declared that the miners were on their own. Even though over 11,000 miners joined the union in the spring organizing drive, the UMW did not have the institutional resources to provide strike relief.

Still seeking to organize, the miners turned to the National Miners' Union, a group that was supported by the Communist Party. The National Miners' Union attempted to organize a strike beginning in the first days of January 1932. On the eve of the strike, two miners were shot and killed, and in the days that followed, organizers were arrested and more people were killed. One 19-year-old organizer who had come from New York was murdered; his body was sent back to New York and thousands of people marched in a funeral procession from Penn Station to Union Square. But under the repression of the coal operators and their deputies, the strike fell apart.

Unionism finally came to Harlan County in May 1933, when section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act recognized the legal right of

workers to organize unions. The UMW organized the coal mines in a matter of months. By autumn of 1933, the workers signed their first collective bargaining agreement with the coal operators.

One of the most important things about Harlan County is that it attracted national attention to the plight of the coal miners, much as the civil rights demonstrations of the early 1960s brought the injustice of segregation to the awareness of the nation. In late 1931, novelist Theodore Dreiser and a team of writers came down to report on (as Dreiser put it) "terrorism in the Kentucky coalfields." And during the strike, writer Waldo Frank organized an "Independent Miners Relief Committee" to bring food to the miners. Busloads of northern college students came South to support the miners, handing out food and copies of the Bill of Rights. Florence Reece's song, "Which Side Are You On?" also served to spread the word about the conflict, and became a lasting favorite of labor and civil rights activists.

For people around the country, the Harlan County uprising of the early 1930s demonstrated the limits of the company paternalism and welfare capitalism of the 1920s. In this way, it helped pave the way for the Wagner Act of 1935, which guaranteed workers the right to organize and created a legal process for attaining union recognition. The northern writers and organizers who told the story of Harlan County to the rest of the country helped to cast union organization as American and democratic, and the actions of the companies as tyrannical, violent, and arbitrary. Finally, the ultimate victory of the miners showed that even under the most difficult conditions, in the most rural communities, workers could organize and win union representation. The mineworkers' union, with its stronghold in Harlan County and Appalachia, would remain a powerful force in the United States throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and the entire postwar era.

See Also: APPALACHIA, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA); "WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?"

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KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

HARLEM RIOT (1935)

On the afternoon of March 19, 1935, Lino Rivera, a 16-year-old Puerto Rican youth, was observed stealing a ten-cent pocket knife from the E. H. Kress store on 125th street in New York's Harlem. When two store employees attempted to detain him, Rivera resisted, biting both of his captors. A police officer was called. To avoid a hostile crowd gathering at the front of the store, the patrolman escorted the suspect from the store through the basement to a rear entrance. Rumors began to circulate that Rivera had been beaten by the police. Soon reports claimed that he had been killed. Police attempted to persuade irate shoppers that no harm had come to the boy, but they refused to be calmed. At 5:30 the store was closed and the crowd spilled out onto the streets. A group of men tried to hold a public meeting to protest the alleged beating, but two speakers were arrested and charged with "unlawful assembly."

The mob spread to 7th Avenue and Lennox Avenue, smashing store windows and looting shops as they went. More than five hundred police officers were summoned to put down the disturbance. They were pelted with rocks and bottles; eight were injured. The *New York Times* reported that one hundred people were treated at local hospitals. Four people, three of them African American, died from injuries suffered during the night of rioting. More than one hundred persons were arrested. Two hundred stores were sacked and property damage was estimated at two million dollars.

The following day, Mayor Fiorello La Guardia claimed that the riot was "instigated and artificially stimulated by a few irresponsible individuals." District Attorney William C. Dodge announced that he was launching a grand jury investigation into Communist influence behind the rioting. Rev. Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., writing in the *New York Post*, discounted charges of radical agitation. He blamed the unrest on "empty stomachs, overcrowded tenements, filthy sanitation, rotten foodstuffs, chiseling landlords and merchants, discrimination in relief, disenfranchisement, and . . . [a] disinterested administration."

The committee of prominent citizens appointed by LaGuardia to investigate the causes of the riot found no evidence that it had been instigated by Communists, terming it a "spontaneous outbreak." Their unpublished report echoed Powell's charges, identifying the riot's causes as "the injustices of discrimination in employment, the aggressions of the police, and the racial segregation." Another factor, not mentioned by the committee, was the "don't buy where you can't work" campaign against white merchants organized by Powell and other community activists.

The Harlem Riot has been identified by sociologist Allen D. Grimshaw, in his work *Racial Violence in the United States* (1969), as the first manifestation of a "modern" form of racial rioting. He cites three distinctive features that set it apart from previous instances of urban racial conflict: (1) violence "directed almost entirely against property," (2) the absence of clashes between racial groups, and (3) "struggles between the lower-class Negro population and the police forces." Previous race riots had been characterized either by mobs of whites attacking blacks or by clashes between groups of both races. Most subsequent racial disturbances would resemble the Harlem riot.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BLACK METROPOLIS; DON'T BUY WHERE YOU CAN'T WORK MOVEMENT; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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PAUL T. MURRAY

HARRISON, BYRON "PAT"

Byron Patton ("Pat") Harrison (August 29, 1881–June 22, 1941) was a United States senator and strategist for major New Deal legislation. He was born in Crystal Springs, Mississippi, to Robert A. Harrison, a Civil War veteran, and Anna Patton Harrison. He was educated in the public schools of Crystal Springs and attended Louisiana State University on a baseball scholarship for two years. Later, while a high school teacher and principal, he studied law in the evenings. After admission to the bar in 1902 he moved rapidly into political office through election for two terms as a state district attorney and then U.S. congressman from 1911 to 1919.

Harrison was an ardent supporter of President Woodrow Wilson, but his reservations about significant aspects of New Freedom legislation suggested that Harrison was not truly committed to progressivism. In 1918, as a strong advocate of Wilson's preparedness program, however, Harrison defeated the obstructionist James K. Vardaman in a campaign for the U.S. Senate. He was reelected three times. During the 1920s, as one of the leaders of the Democratic minority, he was known as an effective and zestful "gadfly."

The ascension of the Democrats to majority control in 1933 placed Harrison as chair of the Finance Committee, where he wielded enormous influence based on congressional longevity and a happy combination of personal qualities that made him perhaps the most popular man in the Senate. He was a consummate legislative broker who succeeded in steering to passage major components of the New Deal: fourteen revenue bills, including the Wealth Tax Act (1935) and the undistributed profits tax (1936); the 1935 Social Security Act and the 1939 amendments; the National Industrial Recovery Act; and the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Acts

of 1934 and 1940. Harrison's support of the early New Deal was based upon his devotion to the Democratic Party and the exigencies of the Great Depression. He differed with President Franklin D. Roosevelt over revenue measures that redistributed wealth and New Deal reform that veered toward social engineering. The president's support for the election of Alben W. Barkley as Senate majority leader in 1937, a contest Harrison lost by one vote, led to an open break. The breach was not healed until Roosevelt turned to Harrison in 1940 to win passage of the Lend-Lease Act. He was voted in 1939 by Washington correspondents as the most influential of all senators. In January 1941, six months before his death due to colon cancer, Harrison became Senate president pro tempore.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

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MARTHA H. SWAIN

HATCH ACT OF 1939

The Hatch Act of 1939 banned federal employees from participating actively in political campaigns or from using their official positions to coerce voters. The Pendleton Act of 1883 and several executive orders had limited partisan political activity by career civil servants. During the 1930s, the number of federal government relief workers ballooned. Conservative Democrats and Republicans hoped to prevent Democratic President Franklin Roosevelt's administration from using relief monies to influence congressional primaries and elections. In 1938, New Deal liberal candidates seeking renomination or to unseat conservative Democrats in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania were accused

of diverting Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds to enhance their electoral prospects. The Senate Campaign Expenditures Committee upheld those accusations in January 1939.

Democratic Senator Carl Hatch of New Mexico complained that several relatives of rival New Mexico Democratic Senator Dennis Chavez had coerced WPA officials. In January 1939 Hatch introduced legislation prohibiting the assessment or solicitation of funds from WPA employees and the removal of any personnel because of refusal to change political affiliation. Section 9 prevented federal officials and workers from using their positions to interfere in presidential or congressional primaries or elections. Enforcement was left to department heads, and violators were subject to a \$1,000 fine or imprisonment for one year.

Hatch Act supporters claimed that a politically neutral civil service would achieve an impartial government and protect federal workers from coercion or threats by superiors. Critics countered that the Hatch Act was vague and overly broad, denied millions of federal employees freedom of speech and association, and discouraged political participation among political activists.

The Senate adopted the Hatch measure in April 1939 and the House followed suit in July. President Roosevelt disliked Section 9, but reluctantly signed the bill into law on August 2. The Hatch Act initially magnified the influence of local bosses, rural legislators, and labor unions. The original law, therefore, was extended in 1940 to include 250,000 state employees paid wholly or partially from federal funds and to require the nonpayment and removal of violators. A 1950 amendment reduced the penalty to 90 days suspension without pay.

Divided Supreme Courts upheld the constitutionality of the Hatch Act in 1947 and 1972, regarding public employment as a privilege subject to reasonable conditions. The Commission on Political Activity of Government Personnel in 1966 recommended relaxing restrictions and penalties. In 1993 Congress adopted the Federal Employees Political Activities Act, which permitted most federal civil servants to run for public office in nonpartisan elections, contribute money to political organizations, and campaign for or against candidates in partisan elections.

See Also: WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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DAVID L. PORTER

HAWKS, HOWARD. *See* GANGSTER FILMS.

HAWLEY-SMOOT TARIFF

The Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act of June 17, 1930, was the final act in a phase begun in the 1860s, during which, with occasional counter movements, duties on imports increased, particularly under Republican administrations. The destabilizing economic effects of World War I led Congress to raise duties substantially via the Fordney-McCumber tariff in 1922 in response to the traditional protectionist pleas from manufacturers in labor-intensive industries. The trigger for renewed tariff debate in 1929 was the crisis in American agriculture. After facing high prices and increasing indebtedness during the wartime expansion, American farmers experienced an abrupt collapse of prices, land values, and incomes in the early 1920s. With increased world production, the terms of trade shifted against primary producers, especially for staples crops. In response, a vocal and more politically organized farm lobby campaigned for various public policies to alleviate their economic problems. New measures attempted to bolster farm credit, but schemes to raise agricultural prices via federal intervention were vetoed by President Calvin Coolidge in 1927 and 1928.

In 1929 President Herbert Hoover called a special session of Congress to consider the agricultural

crisis; one result, fourteen months later, was the Hawley-Smoot Act. The pro-tariff elements among the farming interests included western sugar beet growers, wheat producers, and farmers who were vulnerable to imports from Canada. Once the congressional debate was initiated, these groups formed a coalition with labor-intensive manufacturers; through standard lobbying and political deal-making, the coalition persuaded Congress to extend the scale and scope of the increased duties on agricultural produce and selected manufactured products. In the latter case, the Hawley-Smoot Act built on the 1922 tariff. Overall Hawley-Smoot substantially increased U.S. tariff levels. Indeed, the effective levels of duties, which were fixed in dollar terms, increased steeply as the general level of prices fell during the economic slump. President Hoover had a mixed view of the tariff bill, but was not prepared to veto a measure that was in line with Republican trade policies.

The consequences of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act remain debatable. The early and conventional view was that the higher tariffs were a key step in the downward spiral of protectionism in the early 1930s. This interpretation stressed the decline in imports to the United States and the associated fall in incomes overseas as contributing to the international transmission of the slump. Hawley-Smoot was also associated with a spread of protectionism overseas, either in retaliation or in response to the loss of export earnings. More recently, economic historians have noted that trade was a relatively small sector of the U.S. economy, and duties would have advantaged domestic producers, so Hawley-Smoot was not a major contractionary force domestically. Many European nations had already extended their protection of farmers in the late 1920s, so the American action continued a trend rather than initiating it. Even so, Hawley-Smoot signaled an American emphasis on domestic priorities and a further constraint on flows of trade and finance that compounded the destabilization of the international economy in 1930 and 1931.

See Also: INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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MICHAEL FRENCH

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

The Great Depression was both the cause of increased suffering and a decline in the health status of millions of Americans, and, through the New Deal, the occasion for some of the most innovative and substantive federal reforms in American health care. Ironically, while some historically disadvantaged groups, especially rural Americans, gained greater access to health care than they had had prior to the Depression, this period also marked the beginning of one of the worst scandals in American public health and medical ethics.

The massive unemployment and wage cuts of the early years of the Depression had a conspicuous negative effect on the ability of workers and farmers to take care of their medical needs and assure adequate nutrition for their families. As a result there was a marked decline in the quantity and quality of health care for those in the lower income brackets, a consequent increase in doctors having to provide free consultations, and an increase in free care in clinics and hospitals. Rural areas, especially in the South, were particularly hard hit, with about half of the South's population not capable of paying for medical care. Cities slashed their appropriations for health and sanitation, and some used fear of contagion to justify violence against migrants and the dispossessed who gathered in Hoovervilles within their borders.

Some studies suggest that those on relief were almost twice as likely to endure a chronic disease

as those who made \$3,000 a year (a moderate income), but other studies suggested that those who had fallen from middle-class or strong working-class positions suffered the most because of their unwillingness to take advantage of food and relief programs. One study found, for instance, that in several major cities undernourishment increased noticeably among school children of families who had undergone a dramatic decline in their economic fortunes.

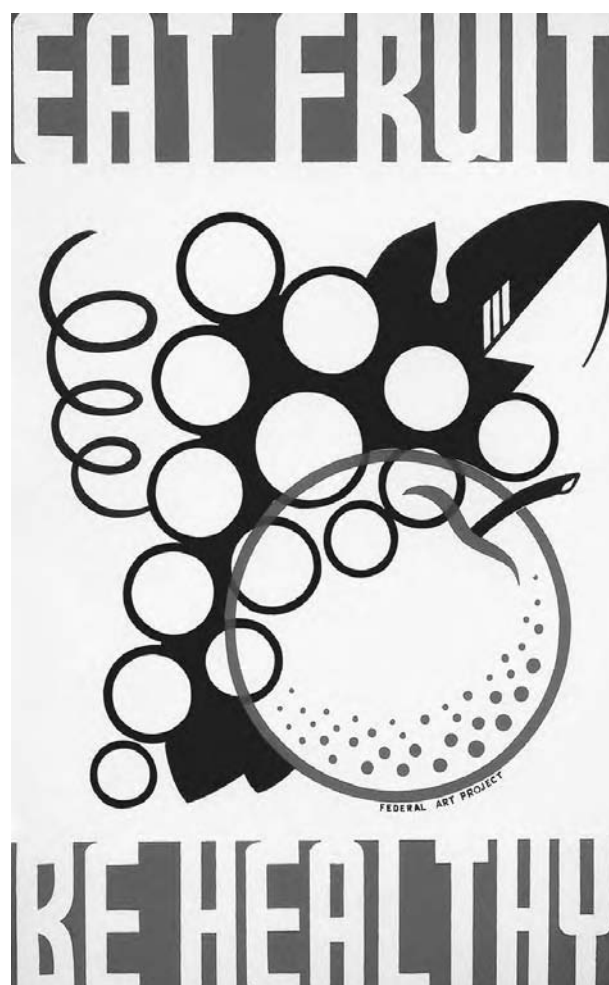
Out of these conditions, cities and states started to provide food and medical care as early as 1930, but these efforts were soon overwhelmed by the massive need, and in 1933 the New Deal's Federal Emergency Relief Administration intervened to provide direct medical care for the indigent. Subsequent programs provided support for states and cities to build and improve hospitals, sanatoria, and medical clinics; hundreds of such buildings were constructed during the New Deal years. The Social Security Act of 1935 appropriated funds for the expansion of institutions for children with various disabilities and the development of health education all over the country.

Probably the most important New Deal health programs were the Resettlement Administration's (1935–1937) efforts to provide medical care for the poor in the South, and later the programs of the Farm Security Administration (FSA, 1937–1946), which, as Michael Grey's *New Deal Medicine* documents, made "medical care delivery a cardinal feature of the New Deal's rural rehabilitation program." Over the course of the next six years, the FSA established medical care cooperatives in one-third of the rural counties in the United States, concentrated in the South and the West. The cooperatives were open to all FSA borrowers and their families and covered ordinary medical care, obstetrical care, emergency surgery, some hospitalizations, and ordinary drugs. FSA leaders involved county and state medical societies in the planning process, ensuring that participation by clients and doctors was voluntary, and allowing a free choice of doctors. While these medical cooperatives were critical to the melioration of rural health care, the FSA's migrant health program was probably the most innovative and pathbreaking New Deal health initia-

tive. Emphasizing health education and prevention, as well as treatment, the migrant health program depended upon nurses (all women) and stretched professional boundaries to give them widespread clinical and administrative responsibility.

The tumultuous economic, political, and social environment of the New Deal was also the occasion for major initiatives in occupational health. Workers who were thrown out of work in what were known as the dusty trades (jobs in mining, construction, foundries, steel mills, etc. that exposed workers to a wide variety of poisonous dusts) argued that industry bore the responsibility for their predicament. They contended that their plight was not the result of individual failing or bad luck, but, rather, was due to the inadequate protection offered them by their employers, and they turned to the courts for redress. Thousands of workers in the dusty trades, laid off during the Depression, brought lawsuits against employers seeking damages for exposure to silica. This led to a broad liability crisis threatening the closing of industrial plants and a vast economic loss. For the first time, the problem of occupational disease moved out of the domain of professionals and a few labor unions into the arenas of politics, public policy, and popular culture, with the result that silicosis (a chronic occupational lung disease caused by the inhalation of finely ground sand) came to be called the “king of occupational disease.” Before the Depression ended, novels, movies, national magazine exposés, and intense media attention forced the issue of industrially caused chronic disease, especially silicosis, onto the national agenda.

The financial crisis was addressed, however inadequately, through the eventual inclusion of silicosis in the various state compensation systems. But the political crisis remained as long as the issue was in the public arena, and during the mid-1930s came the revelation that perhaps as many as 1,500 workers had been killed by exposure to silica dust while working on a tunnel project in Gauley Bridge, West Virginia, an incident that Martin Cherniack describes in *The Hawk's Nest Incident* as “America’s worst industrial disaster.” Newspapers and weeklies all over the country made silicosis a national scandal, telling the story of how workers had died



During the 1930s, posters like this one prepared under the auspices of the Federal Art Project drew attention to pressing issues of health and nutrition. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA POSTER COLLECTION

of acute silicosis and other respiratory diseases while constructing this tunnel for the Union Carbide Company. The two thousand workers were mostly southern rural blacks drawn to the job and away from their families farther south by the promise of steady pay during the Depression. They had been ordered to drill through a mountain that was composed of nearly pure silica, even then known as a substance that destroyed lung tissue, incapacitating and killing its victims. The fact that the workers were primarily poor, black migrants far away from



These New Mexico schoolchildren, photographed in 1941, enjoy lunch supplied by the WPA school lunch program, which paid cooks to prepare healthful meals using food from the surplus commodities program. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

their loved ones led management to believe that they could cover up the deaths.

As a result of the publicity and subsequent congressional hearings, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins sponsored a conference in 1936 that brought together representatives of government, labor, and industry to help resolve the silicosis crisis. The importance of a national approach that gave workers a voice was represented institutionally through the creation of the Division of Labor Standards, which for the first time focused the attention of the federal government on occupational diseases and the need for engineering reforms to protect the work force. Indeed, under the Social Security Act, the Public U.S. Health Service provided

funds to state departments of health for the establishment of industrial hygiene divisions.

The Public Health Service also initiated a variety of programs to improve sanitation and health, especially in rural areas, but it was one project that it began in 1932 and continued for forty years that would overshadow the constructive work that the Public Health Service did during the Depression. In 1972 it was revealed that the Public Health Service had been engaged in a study of the effects of untreated syphilis on black men in Macon County, Alabama. The study involved 399 men who had syphilis, and 201 more who were disease-free and used as controls. Macon County was one of the poorest counties in the South, with an epi-



The FSA agricultural workers camp in Bridgeton, New Jersey, included a clinic, where this child was treated in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

demographic of chronic malnutrition and other serious health problems. Rather than deal with the widespread syphilis among its residents, the Public Health Service chose to study what happened to these men if their syphilis was left untreated. According to Jim Jones's *Bad Blood*, the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male, as it was called, was the longest-running non-therapeutic experiment on human beings in medical history. The Tuskegee study is probably the best-known health-related activity of the Depression era, and it casts a shadow over the government's many positive accomplishments in health and nutrition during the period.

See Also: BREADLINES; CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOMELESSNESS; TUSKEGEE SYPHILIS PROJECT.

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GERALD MARKOWITZ

HEARST, WILLIAM RANDOLPH

William Randolph Hearst (April 29, 1863–August 14, 1951) was from the 1890s until his death the most powerful newspaper publisher in the United States. Born in San Francisco to millionaire miner George Hearst and philanthropist Phoebe Apperson Hearst, William Randolph Hearst, known to his friends and employees as "the Chief," built a media empire that at its height in the late 1920s encompassed twenty-six daily newspapers in eighteen cities; a Sunday supplement; nine magazines, including *Good Housekeeping* and *Cosmopolitan*; newsreel, wire, and syndicated feature services; a film production company; and several radio stations.

When, in October and November of 1929, the stock market crashed, Hearst called for calm, arguing that the American economy was fundamentally sound. Although his personal fortunes were not immediately harmed—his primary investments were in real estate—his media empire, particularly his newspapers, suffered from a fall in advertising revenues. Hearst had borrowed heavily to support his extravagant lifestyle and purchase new media properties, and he could not afford the slightest loss of revenues. In May 1930, to raise funds to pay off

outstanding debts, he incorporated Hearst Consolidated Publications, Inc., and offered preferred stock in the new corporation to the public. While the preferred stock offered a 7 percent dividend, which was paid regularly until mid 1938, it carried no voting rights.

By the late spring of 1931, when it had become apparent that no rapid economic recovery was in store, Hearst urged President Herbert Hoover to authorize the immediate expenditure of \$5 billion to provide public works jobs for the unemployed at prevailing wages. When Hoover declined to follow his advice, Hearst became determined to oppose his bid for reelection. Instead, Hearst endorsed Texas congressman and Speaker of the House John Nance Garner for the Democratic nomination for the presidency in 1932, but Hearst switched his endorsement to Franklin Delano Roosevelt when it became clear that Garner could not win the nomination. Hearst became an enthusiastic supporter of Roosevelt and contributed advice and funds to his campaign. Though the publisher opposed the National Industrial Recovery Act and other New Deal economic measures, he did not turn against the Roosevelt presidency until 1935, when Roosevelt notified Hearst that he was going to raise income taxes in an effort to preserve democracy and capitalism from threats on the left and on the right. Hearst, still deeply in debt from overspending for business and personal purposes, responded that Roosevelt's graduated income tax was "communist" because it redistributed wealth. Hearst promised to oppose the president and the tax increase with all his resources.

Hearst's anti-Communist tirades and his newspapers' attacks on Roosevelt and the New Deal were so vicious, especially during Roosevelt's campaign for a second term in 1936, that many of Hearst's readers were forced to choose between the president and the publisher. When large numbers chose Roosevelt and boycotted the Hearst publications, the resulting circulation and advertising decline pushed the Hearst corporations towards bankruptcy. In 1937, the Hearst corporations went into receivership and Hearst was forced to sell off many of his assets, including significant real estate holdings, portions of his art collections, and several publications.

As newspaper circulations increased during World War II and costs declined with the rationing of newsprint and the printing of smaller issues, the Hearst corporations were able to refinance their outstanding loans. By the middle of the 1940s, William Randolph Hearst had regained control of his publishing empire. He spent the last years of his life in Beverly Hills, and died in August 1951 at age eighty-eight.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; ELECTION OF 1932; ISOLATIONISM.

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DAVID NASAW

HELLMAN, LILLIAN

Lillian Florence Hellman (June 20, 1905–June 30, 1984) was one of the greatest American playwrights of the twentieth century. She is best known for *The Children's Hour* (1934), *The Little Foxes* (1939), *Watch on the Rhine* (1941), and *Toys in the Attic* (1960). Many of her plays have been turned into successful motion pictures. Hellman's focus on the basic human problems of jealousy, greed, cowardice, and ambition give her dramas a weight of emotional depth, while they also shed light on the broader historical and political conflicts of Western society in the middle of the twentieth century. *The Little Foxes*, staged at the end of the Great Depression with Tallullah Bankhead in a starring role, provided a withering indictment of the American capitalist system through its portrayal of a southern family torn apart in the course of haggling over seed money for the construction of a mill. The radical sentiments expressed in the play were a possible

outgrowth of Hellman's peripheral involvement in various Communist front organizations in the 1930s. Though she later claimed to have never belonged to the Communist Party, Hellman also never avoided relationships with those who did. This proximity to possible Communists eventually led to her being called before the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1952, an ordeal that she recounts in one of her famous memoirs, *Scoundrel Time* (1976).

Hellman was born in New Orleans, Louisiana. As a child, she spent half of each year in the South, and half in New York City, where her father did business. Though she preferred the more easygoing lifestyle of New Orleans, she went to college in New York and got a job at a publishing house after leaving school. Her vivacious personality could not endure an office environment for long, however, and when the writer Arthur Krober offered to marry her and take her to California, she jumped at the chance to escape. The working relationship Hellman established with Hollywood lasted much longer than her marriage, and by the early 1930s she was living with mystery writer Dashiell Hammett. The two writers remained close companions until Hammett's death in 1961.

Due to her accomplishments and growth as a writer during the 1930s, Hellman became one of America's foremost public intellectuals. She was never shy about confronting inflammatory topics. For instance, her acclaimed play *The Children's Hour* explored issues of lesbianism while also examining, twenty years before McCarthyism, the damage caused by unsubstantiated public accusations. Other writers often criticized her by calling her a publicity hound, and author Mary McCarthy once said that "everything [Hellman] writes is a lie, including *and* and *the*." But these surly critics rarely matched Hellman's natural ability to be a true public figure. In her later years, Hellman turned to teaching and to the writing of her much-acclaimed memoirs, the first volume of which, *An Unfinished Woman*, was awarded the National Book Award in 1969. Hellman died on Martha's Vineyard in 1984.

See Also: HAMMETT, DASHIELL; HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (HUAC).

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MICHAEL T. VAN DYKE

HENDERSON, LEON

Economist and administrator Leon Henderson (May 26, 1895–October 19, 1986) was born in Millville, New Jersey. He earned a bachelor's degree in economics from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania in 1920, and gained a national reputation as a consumer credit specialist after joining the Russell Sage Foundation in 1925.

Henderson was a prominent critic of the early New Deal's pro-business orientation. To assuage consumer interests, National Recovery Administration (NRA) chief Hugh Johnson appointed Henderson as special adviser in December 1933 and then as director of the NRA's research and planning division in February 1934. However, Henderson remained a persistent critic of the NRA's industry-written Blue Eagle codes, which supported restricted production and high prices. Henderson's research revealed the inequity and inefficiency of the codes, a conclusion presented at the NRA's price hearings in January 1935, which helped to discredit the agency prior to its abolition.

Henderson's ideas influenced the evolution of the New Deal. He believed that strong competition, government enforced if necessary, would generate prosperity and that monopolies and price-fixing by big business deterred competition. Henderson also championed economic planning that empowered the government to make basic decisions about production and prices in major industries. Moreover, the recession of 1937 to 1938 convinced him that increased deficit spending was needed to stimulate consumption and bring recovery. As economic adviser to Works Progress Administration director Harry Hopkins, Henderson helped Federal Reserve chairman Marriner Eccles persuade President Franklin D. Roosevelt to accept this approach in

April 1938. Accordingly, Henderson acted as a bridge between New Dealers who favored a trust-busting solution to America's economic problems and those who advocated an approach that would later be called Keynesianism. Henderson hoped to integrate both elements into a broad liberal agenda with his appointment as first executive secretary of the Congressional Temporary Economic Committee, established in June 1938. Disappointed that its final report in March 1941 focused on antimonopoly concerns, Henderson called for a comprehensive statement of national economic needs and a broad program to meet these needs.

In April 1941 Roosevelt appointed Henderson to head the Office of Price Administration (OPA), which regulated the production, distribution, and price increases of retail goods. Henderson's robust use of government powers to protect consumers increased his unpopularity with business and congressional conservatives. Suffering from ill health and overwork, Henderson left government after the Republicans gained seats in the 1942 congressional elections, in which the OPA was an issue. His vision of a reform agenda that combined the regulatory, planning, and fiscal powers of government went unfulfilled. With the success of wartime deficit spending, it was the more limited Keynesian approach that became the liberal orthodoxy.

See Also: ECONOMISTS; KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD.

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IWAN MORGAN

HERNDON, ANGELO, CASE

During a five-year period in the mid-1930s, the Angelo Herndon case focused national attention on racial inequality within the southern legal system and on the politicized nature of southern justice. The affair began in June 1932, when Angelo Hern-

don, a nineteen-year-old black Communist, helped organize a large interracial demonstration of unemployed workers in Atlanta, Georgia. Fearful that the worsening Depression provided a fertile environment for radical political groups, local authorities arrested Herndon the following month. Utilizing an old law originally enacted to prohibit slave revolts, they charged him with "attempting to incite insurrection" against the state of Georgia, a capital offense.

While in jail Herndon turned for assistance to the International Labor Defense (ILD), a radical legal defense organization. Established by Communists and other leftists in 1925 in order to defend "class war prisoners," the ILD contended that in a capitalistic society most legal prosecutions were politically based. Thus the organization insisted that a proper defense must involve not only skillful courtroom maneuvers but also "mass pressure" outside the courthouse. To defend Herndon the ILD violated deep South racial etiquette by retaining two local African-American attorneys, Benjamin J. Davis and John Geer. At Herndon's controversial trial in January 1933, Davis and Geer challenged the constitutionality of the insurrection law, arguing that it unreasonably restricted free speech. Judge Lee B. Wyatt promptly rejected their motions. Following three days of testimony marked by prosecutors' emotional attacks on Communism and interracial activity, an all-white jury returned a verdict of guilty and sentenced the young organizer to eighteen to twenty years in prison.

The ILD promptly initiated a national campaign on Herndon's behalf, eventually developing the case into a *cause celebre*. After the state supreme court rejected Herndon's appeal, the ILD retained several specialists in constitutional law and took the case to the United States Supreme Court. But in May 1935 the court dismissed the appeal, concluding that the constitutional issues had not been properly raised at the original trial. While the ILD prepared to initiate a new round of legal action back in Georgia, the group sought additional allies for the Herndon campaign. As part of "united front" efforts by Communists to organize a broad political coalition against fascism in Europe, the ILD now sought assistance from non-Communist organiza-

tions that it had previously disdained. The organization eventually formed the Joint Committee to Aid the Herndon Defense, which included the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the American Civil Liberties Union. In December 1935 in Atlanta, Judge Hugh M. Dorsey unexpectedly struck down the insurrection law, but the state supreme court promptly reversed his ruling, setting the stage for another trip to the U.S. Supreme Court. In April 1937 the high court ruled by a vote of five to four in *Herndon v. Lowry* that the insurrection law, as construed and applied, was unconstitutional. Justice Owen J. Roberts wrote that the Georgia statute "amounts merely to a dragnet which may enmesh anyone who agitates for a change of government." The ruling not only freed Herndon but virtually eliminated further prosecutions under the controversial law.

The Herndon case has often been compared to the epic Scottsboro case in Alabama, since both highlighted racial injustice in southern courtrooms. But unlike Scottsboro, the Herndon Case was also an important civil liberties case, one that demonstrated that southern prosecutors and judges were quite willing to violate first amendment rights in order to silence radical political movements. Finally, by vigorously defending Herndon and openly challenging white supremacy in Dixie, the ILD and American Communists earned new respect from African Americans.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE (ILD); SCOTTSBORO CASE.

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CHARLES H. MARTIN

HEROES

Heroes serve a vital function in every culture and every time. They reconcile existing social tensions, affirm community values, and give people symbols to help shape their identities. Heroes are what people imagine them to be, they exist only so long as they are needed, and are transformed according to people's needs and expectations. Such needs were acute during the Depression years when much of what Americans had come to assume about their culture was in a state of disarray and disintegration. New types of heroes emerged to address this confusion. In an age of disorder, heroes defied, embraced, or subverted the chaos. In so doing, they helped the public survive it. Traditional heroes no longer sufficed during the Great Depression, when scarcity and widespread unemployment called into question the traditional middle-class axiom that success followed hard work. As millions were victimized by forces beyond their control, the "self-made men" and Horatio Alger heroes of yesterday gave way to the suffering, outlaw, and trickster heroes of the Great Depression.

Throughout 1930s American culture, victims assumed heroic proportions: the impoverished Joad family of John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath*, the tragically afflicted Lou Gehrig, the resolute Rhett Butler at the end of *Gone with the Wind*, and the migrant workers and union organizers celebrated in the songs of Woody Guthrie. Herbert Hoover, the most famous self-made man in America, had become the chief villain of the Depression, his very name synonymous with misery and hopelessness. Taking his place was a son of wealth and privilege struck unexpectedly by a debilitating disease. Franklin Roosevelt's struggle with polio and his courageous triumph over adversity mirrored how suffering Americans imagined their own plight.

Outlaw heroes, on the other hand, refused to be victimized. Turning the Victorian work ethic

inside-out, they cynically demonstrated the benefits of subverting and assaulting the system. Such Hollywood gangster films as *Scarface* (1932), *Public Enemy* (1931), and *Little Caesar* (1931) mocked immigrant and business success stories with Italian and Irish-American antiheroes who advanced in their "professions" through ruthless ambition, deceit, and murder. The exploits of such real-life bank-robbers as Bonnie and Clyde and John Dillinger excited Americans so much that the authorities felt compelled to remind people that these were criminals and not folk heroes.

Other heroes found it more suitable to simply work around the system. The hard-boiled detectives of pulp fiction and film existed alongside the legal authorities, going places where the police would not and achieving results that they could not by circumventing the law. Pulp and comic book superheroes such as the Shadow, Batman, and even Superman sometimes came into conflict with the police in the course of their own vigilante crusades. At a time when the institutions of power seemed inadequate in the face of social crises, these heroes appealed to the desire for swift and righteous justice.

Sometimes humor is the best response to a bad situation, and Depression-era trickster heroes spoke to that virtue. Building upon the comedic working-class sensibilities of Charlie Chaplin and pioneering in the art of improvised anarchy on film, the Marx Brothers ridiculed the ruling classes even as they dished out self-deprecating humor for the unemployed. Mae West mocked the "important" men in her films and demonstrated the sexual power that women could wield over them. Warner Brothers cartoon characters like Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck provided even more outrageous laughs at the expense of snobs, fat-cats, and blowhards. In such heroes, powerless Americans could see the qualities of resilience, resourcefulness, and wits that would get them through the difficult days. For these were the true heroes of the Great Depression, the common people themselves.

See Also: GANGSTER FILMS; HARD-BOILED DETECTIVES; SUPERMAN.

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BRADFORD W. WRIGHT

HICKOK, LORENA

Lorena Alice Hickok (March 7, 1893–May 3, 1968), Eleanor Roosevelt's trusted confidante, was born in East Troy, Wisconsin. Beaten by a father who moved frequently to find work, Hickok left home at fourteen, and struggled to finish one year of college before joining a Battle Creek, Michigan, newspaper as a personal features writer. In 1915, she returned to Wisconsin to become the society editor for the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. Bored, Hickok convinced her editor to assign her to the city desk, where she developed a reputation as a skilled interviewer. She transferred to the *Minneapolis Tribune* in 1917 where, under the guidance of *Tribune* editor Thomas J. Dillon, Hickok became such a skilled political and sports reporter that in 1928 the Associated Press (AP) hired her as a wire reporter. At the AP, she became so adept at covering politics, the Lindbergh baby kidnapping, and other dramatic assignments that her byline appeared atop her stories.

Hickok, who first met Eleanor Roosevelt in 1928 when Hickok covered the New York Democratic Committee, grew close to Mrs. Roosevelt during the 1932 campaign. The women soon trusted one another, with Mrs. Roosevelt speaking honestly to Hickok about politics, social issues, and her fears about her life should her husband win the election. The two women became so close that Hickok let Mrs. Roosevelt see her stories before she submitted them, and in one case, agreed to Mrs. Roosevelt's request that a story be delayed. Their campaign experience led to a lifetime of devotion to one another.

In 1933, Hickok, who had fallen in love with Mrs. Roosevelt, left the AP because she felt she

could not write objectively about the Roosevelts. The First Lady then recommended that Harry Hopkins hire Hickok to investigate for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) the conditions average Americans confronted during the Depression. From 1933 to 1935, Hickok visited thirty-two states and provided detailed reports on New Deal policy, living conditions, and politics to Franklin D. Roosevelt, Mrs. Roosevelt, and Hopkins. An astute and engaged observer, Hickok assessed the problems a community faced quickly and solicited trenchant comments that helped the Roosevelts and Hopkins see their policies from a citizen's perspective.

Hickok provided invaluable advice to Mrs. Roosevelt as the First Lady struggled to adjust to White House life. Hickok recommended that Mrs. Roosevelt hold press conferences with women reporters and encouraged her to resume writing, most notably the First Lady's monthly column *Mrs. Roosevelt's Page* and her daily column *My Day*. Hickok also edited articles Mrs. Roosevelt submitted for publication, and served as her friend's trusted sounding board, especially after Louis Howe's death in 1935 and the president's death in 1945. Hickok's intense concern for unemployed coal miners spurred Eleanor Roosevelt's interest and helped introduce her to the West Virginia resettlement community later known as Arthurdale. In the early years of the New Deal, the two women vacationed together and Hickok accompanied Mrs. Roosevelt on her official visit to Puerto Rico. When Hickok's FERA assignment ended, the First Lady arranged for Hickok to work for the New York World's Fair from 1937 to 1940, to serve as executive secretary of the women's division of the Democratic National Committee from 1940 and 1945, and to live in the wartime White House.

Hickok's worsening diabetes forced her to leave her job with the Democratic National Committee. In 1947, Eleanor Roosevelt helped her friend secure a job with the New York State Democratic Committee. Hickok's health continued to decline, and in 1954, a frail, partially blind Hickok moved to Hyde Park to be closer to Mrs. Roosevelt. The two women collaborated on *Women of Courage* and Eleanor Roosevelt tried to stabilize Hickok's fi-



Lorena Hickok (far right) with Eleanor Roosevelt (second from left) and friends. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

nances. Hickok would write a biography of Mrs. Roosevelt and six children's biographies before her death in 1968.

See Also: ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR.

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ALLIDA M. BLACK

HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL

Established near Monteagle, Tennessee, in 1932, the Highlander Folk School was an important outpost of labor education and union organizing in the South during the 1930s. Through residential workshops, off-campus extension efforts, and community-based programs, the staff, headed by Myles Horton, simultaneously attempted to educate leaders for a new social order while enriching the cultural values of the southern Appalachian region.

In its initial years, Highlander's objectives usually outpaced its actual achievements. The school involved itself in local strikes that were no more than temporarily successful, and internal differences over policies, curriculum, finances, and ideol-

ogy were almost constant concerns. Highlander's staff members sincerely supported the interests of the working class and the cause of racial integration. But the faculty's participation in socialist-related activities in the early and mid-1930s did little to increase the school's appeal to southern wage earners, and it repeatedly found itself compelled to acquiesce to southern white sentiment and not admit black workers as students.

Nonetheless, in aiding mine, lumber, textile, and relief workers in Tennessee, and in introducing ways to overcome racial prejudice, Highlander anticipated the efforts of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) to form interracial industrial unions in the South. Staff members served as union organizers for the 1937 Textile Workers Organizing Committee campaign and managed the educational component of several other union drives thereafter, assisting locals in maintaining and expanding their activities and teaching workers how to bargain collectively and live successfully under union contracts. Through its fieldwork, the Highlander faculty learned more about the problems facing unionizing southern laborers and used these experiences to improve the school's promotion of the southern labor movement. Indeed, by the late 1930s Highlander was a vital source of labor education in the South, holding semiannual residence terms for men and women representing nearly every labor and progressive organization in the region and experimenting with educational ventures such as music and drama programs, writers' workshops, and junior union camps. It would become fully integrated in 1944.

Such initiatives generated both controversy and support. Attacked on the one hand by southern industrialists, some Tennessee newspapers, and local officials angered by Highlander's mobilization of a labor-led political coalition, and on the other by leftists impatient with the school's refusal to be sufficiently doctrinaire, staff members adhered to a loosely-defined set of democratic principles that they believed offered concrete solutions to the concerns of southern workers. This broad-based commitment led to a decade of close cooperation between Highlander and the CIO.

That relationship soured after World War II, however. Frustrated by what it considered to be the

narrowing of organized labor's agenda, and unable to forge a farmer-labor coalition, the school's leadership resolved that it would not attain its goals until it challenged southern segregation. Highlander subsequently became a significant forum for the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. The center remains committed to ongoing struggles for social justice in Appalachia and the Deep South in the twenty-first century.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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JOHN M. GLEN

HILLMAN, SIDNEY

Sidney "Hilkie" Hillman (March 23, 1887–July 10, 1946) was president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACW), founding member of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), co-director of the federal Office of Production Management (OPM) during World War II, and director of the CIO Political Action Committee. Born in Zagare, Lithuania, to a family of merchants and rabbis, Hillman's intellectual achievements at a young age enabled him to pursue rabbinical studies. At Yeshiva, Hillman chafed under severe restrictions against secular training, and in 1903, he joined the socialist Bund. As a young revolutionary and labor organizer, Hillman fled Russia in late 1906 to avoid the czar's persecution. He immigrated to the United States the following year.

Settling in Chicago, Hillman went to work in the needle trades where he experienced oppressive

labor conditions. He emerged as a local leader of independent immigrant garment workers during the violent Chicago garment strike of 1910, garnering notice from such Progressive leaders as Jane Addams. In 1914 Hillman assumed the presidency of the new Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, an organization devoted to industrial unionism, led largely by socialists, anarchists, and Bundists, and made up predominantly of women and Jewish immigrants—three factors that encouraged the enmity of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and conservative craft unions. Hillman's organizing talents were prodigious: by the end of World War I the ACW represented nearly 50 percent of the nation's garment workers.

In the reactionary 1920s, employers, AFL officials, and government representatives increasingly targeted Hillman for his allegiance to left-labor political organizations, especially his close relationship to supporters of the Russian revolution. Some of the nation's leading attorneys, including Harvard's Felix Frankfurter, rushed to defend Hillman. The 1924 convention of the ACW endorsed the presidential candidacy of Progressive Robert M. La Follette, signaling a moderation in Hillman's socialist activism. For founding ACW cooperative banks and housing programs, and for instituting a union unemployment insurance plan, Hillman was recognized by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* as "the flaming genius of union labor in the U.S." by the late 1920s.

As the Depression worsened in the early 1930s, Hillman's commitment to a workers' vision of "industrial democracy," in which workers' organizations were made more powerful without revolutionary class struggle, led him to endorse a cautious course of action for the ACW, including agreeing to wage cuts, endorsing prohibitions against child labor, and boycotting sweatshop-manufactured goods. He campaigned vigorously for a national unemployment insurance plan. Hillman was well regarded within the Democratic Party of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and he counted among his confidantes such leading New Dealers as Frankfurter, Louis Brandeis, Harold Ickes, and Senator Robert Wagner. Although Hillman held reservations about the labor provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act, he did accept appointment to the Na-

tional Industrial Recovery Board (NIRB) and quickly emerged as labor's most audible voice in the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and in Washington.

Hillman found his service on the NIRB acutely frustrating, though by 1935 the ACW had recovered from its early Depression-era slump and its members had achieved significant wage increases. With the *Schechter* decision, which declared the NRA unconstitutional, Hillman's optimism that government intervention in the economy would lead to economic recovery faded. In response, Hillman turned to the solution of mass industrial unionism. At the 1935 AFL convention, Hillman advocated the right of autoworkers to industrial union representation in a series of floor debates that culminated in a fight between the United Mineworkers' John L. Lewis and the craft-based carpenter's president William Hutcheson. Within days, the Committee for Industrial Organization, later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations, was founded as a federation of industrial unions closely tied to the Democratic Party. Among the unions newly affiliated with the CIO were those in mining, the needle trades, typography, auto, steel, rubber, radio, oil, millinery, and mill and smelting. Initially, the CIO attempted to work within the institutional framework of the AFL, but by mid-1936 the AFL executive council suspended the ten founding unions of the new federation; expulsion of the renegade unions followed in 1937. Hillman served as vice-president of the fledgling organization.

Although considered a labor moderate, Hillman himself had little patience for peacemaking within the AFL; instead, his experience as president of the ACW led him to endorse a "new unionism," incorporating a mass movement for industrial unionism with bureaucratic interventionism of the sort expressed most clearly by Roosevelt's Second New Deal and the expansion of the welfare state. A significant component of the new unionism vision was rationalization within the workplace with the intent of eliminating outmoded work practices and bringing efficiency in production to employers. Roosevelt's secretary of labor, Frances Perkins, called regularly on Hillman for advice. That advice was respected even by Roosevelt, who reportedly

said upon encountering congressional opposition to the 1937 Fair Labor Standards Act, "I will never let Hillman down."

Hillman was so wedded to the Roosevelt administration and the new unionism ideal that by the late 1930s his political opponents within and outside of organized labor questioned his commitment to the CIO rank and file. As a supporter of Roosevelt's reelection to an unprecedented third term, Hillman found himself in opposition to Lewis, the president of the CIO, and to members of the Communist Party. Hillman's support proved key to Roosevelt's reelection in 1940, while the Hillman-Roosevelt coalition secured the election of Philip Murray to the presidency of the CIO in the same year. For his unwavering support, the administration rewarded Hillman with positions on the National Defense Advisory Commission, the Office of Production Management, and in 1942 the War Production Board. Hillman also directed the CIO's Political Action Committee, an organization seen by opponents as too closely tied to the Roosevelt administration.

Troubled by President Harry Truman's unpredictable attitudes toward progressive labor, alarmed by what seemed an impending red scare, and frustrated by failures of the CIO's southern organizing campaign Operation Dixie, Hillman died of heart disease in July 1946.

See Also: AMALGAMATED CLOTHING WORKERS (ACW); AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR.

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NANCY QUAM-WICKHAM



A 1936 photograph by Lewis Hine of a miner's child in the Scotts Run area of West Virginia. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

HINE, LEWIS

Lewis Wickes Hine (September 26, 1874–November 3, 1940) was born in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. After taking extension courses from Frank E. Manning, professor at the Wisconsin Normal School, he attended the University of Chicago for one year in 1900. Manning, just appointed superintendent of New York's Ethical Culture School (ECS), hired Hine in 1901 as an assistant teacher of geography and nature study. Hine used his camera as an educational tool and ran the ECS photography club. After completing his degree in education at New York University, Hine decided to forge a free-lance career in sociological photography. In 1904 he directed his attention to photographing immigrants

arriving at Ellis Island in New York Harbor. In 1907, he began illustrating the six-volume *Pittsburgh Survey* (1909–1914) of steelworkers' working and living conditions. He then gained renown among social reformers when the National Child Labor Committee enlisted him to document the problem of working children in America, a project he pursued from 1908 to 1918. Hine also photographed the aftermath of World War I in France and Belgium for the American Red Cross.

In the early 1920s Hine concluded, "I had done my share of negative," and he decided to turn his lens toward the "intelligent interpretation of the world's workers" through a "new-worker" series of photographs depicting heroic visions of human strength, dignity, and productivity in the context of the machine age. The most important series from this project, published as *Men at Work* (1932), followed laborers during the construction of New York's Empire State Building. Although one critic decried Hine's "exaggerated desire to glorify the working class," Hine insisted that his work was "interpretative" rather than "documentary." He noted, "If I could tell the story with words, I wouldn't need to lug around a camera." He further declared, "I wanted to show the things that had to be corrected . . . that had to be appreciated." Still, he experimented with "art" photography while taking a few commercial assignments. The first major exhibition of his work was held at the Yonkers Art Museum in New York in 1931.

The American Red Cross sent Hine to drought-ridden rural Arkansas and Kentucky in 1931. After the publishing of his portfolio of mill workers, *Through the Loom* (1933), and its exhibition at the 1933 World's Fair, the Tennessee Valley Authority hired Hine to photograph construction of two dams. Roy Stryker, head of the Historical Section of the Farm Security Administration, chose not to hire Hine for the FSA photography staff; although Stryker admired Hine's work, he knew his artistic temperament demanded more control over images than Stryker permitted FSA photographers. However, in 1936 the Works Progress Administration appointed Hine head photographer for the National Research Project studying productivity and technological change for the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

He focused on Civilian Construction Camps, unemployed miners, rural communities, and urban workers, but his work was not completed by 1937 due to poor health.

In 1938, the Columbia Broadcasting Corporation and the British Broadcasting Corporation hired Hine to prepare specials on the working man. *Life* magazine later bought some of his photos, the New York State Museum assembled a permanent collection of his work, and the New York Public Library began collecting it, as did a number of major art museums. The reformist Russell Sage Foundation funded two folios of his images of Ellis Island and child laborers. Applauded for the pioneering quality of his documentary vision, Hine nevertheless struggled financially throughout his career, and he died in near poverty in 1940.

See Also: PHOTOGRAPHY.

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BLANCHE M. G. LINDEN

HISTORY, INTERPRETATION, AND MEMORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

From Franklin Roosevelt through Ronald Reagan, the legacy and memory of the Great Depression shaped American culture and politics, and continue to stand as major interpretive questions for scholars. Because of the Depression and New Deal, generations of Americans supported an active presi-

dency and expansive national government, and insisted that frugality was a virtue, even as they enjoyed economic prosperity. Perhaps the most enduring political legacy of the Great Depression was the Democratic Party's half-century hold on Congress. A coalition crafted by Roosevelt insisted that Social Security, farm commodity price supports, and the regulation of banking, securities, wages, and working hours remained essential duties of the national government. Generations of labor union members voted for the party that secured their right to organize. As direct memories of the Depression receded, Americans' loyalties to particular New Deal programs waned, but most citizens still look to the president and Congress for economic initiatives and leadership in times of crisis, both legacies of the Depression years.

Great Depression scholarship has focused not only on the event's causes, but also on the government's responses to the challenge. Herbert Hoover's presidency was long judged a failure on the grounds that he did little to ameliorate the crisis. By the 1970s a more nuanced version of Hoover appeared, one that emphasized his progressive impulses and recognized that he took unprecedented government action in the face of hard times. Many Americans of the 1930s and later assumed a direct causal relationship between the stock market crash of October 1929 and the Great Depression. Most scholarship (e.g., Robert S. McElvaine) has pointed to the more fundamental problem—that consumer demand could no longer keep up with production—and has emphasized the weakness of the nation's banking system and relatively unregulated securities markets of the 1920s. Historians and economists continue to debate the roots of American economic conditions of the 1930s, although practically all agree that the phenomenon was international rather than strictly American in character. Such interpretations trace the Depression to the unstable international economic situation created by post-World War I tariff barriers and war reparations.

From the 1930s through the 1960s Roosevelt himself stood as the central figure in most accounts of the Great Depression. The image of Roosevelt as master pragmatist and unparalleled politician

reached its zenith in Arthur Schlesinger's *Age of Roosevelt* trilogy (1957–1960). By the 1960s some historians viewed the Depression less as the occasion for the emergence of Rooseveltian consensus than as the crisis of liberal capitalism; the New Deal thus became not a triumph of moderate reform, but a successful maneuver by capitalists to save the old order (e.g., Barton Bernstein). By the 1970s and the 1980s, historians continued to produce a rich literature on the Depression years, assessing the particular impact of the Depression on minorities and women (e.g., Harvard Sitkoff and Susan Ware), for instance, and exploring the social and cultural history of the Depression (e.g., Richard Pells). Recent scholarship on Depression-era politics has emphasized not the boldness and initiatives of the New Deal, but the relatively limited bureaucratic capacity of the American government.

Representations of the Depression have appeared regularly in American culture from the 1930s to the present. In the 1930s, comic strips such as *Dick Tracy* and *Little Orphan Annie* noted the country's hard times, sometimes excoriating the rich, but always assuring Americans that their institutions were sound. Films such as William Wellman's *The Public Enemy* (1931) and Frank Capra's *Meet John Doe* (1941) attempted to explain the Depression. John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and John Ford's 1940 film adaptation provided the most enduring representation of Dust Bowl poverty. Economic hard times also appeared in popular songs, such as "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" However, most music painted a rosier picture; "Happy Days Are Here Again" became the Democratic Party theme song until the Clinton years. During the prosperous years of the 1950s and 1960s fewer writers and artists gave their works a Depression setting, perhaps because some 1930s communitarian responses to the Depression appeared suspect in the context of the Cold War, but also because of a changed focus on civil rights and other contemporary struggles. By the 1970s some television series, such as *The Waltons* (1972–1981), rediscovered the Depression. But such images were tinged by nostalgic longing for home and community bonds rather than an anxious memory of systemic economic failure. The musical and movie *Annie* (1982) emphasized grit, individualism, and

luck. Studs Terkel's oral history of the Depression reminded readers that for millions of Americans the 1930s were not the good old days, but hard times. Nostalgia for World War II during the late 1990s and early 2000s again focused popular attention on the generation that weathered the Depression, although the lessons drawn emphasized individual character rather than the need for bold, large-scale government responses to common national problems.

See Also: ALLEN, FREDERICK LEWIS; CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; HOOVER, HERBERT; NEW DEAL; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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TRENT A. WATTS

HITLER, ADOLF

Adolf Hitler (April 20, 1889–April 30, 1945) was a founding member and leader of the National So-

cialist Party of Germany (NSDAP, Nazi Party) from 1922. He became chancellor of Germany on January 30, 1933, a post he held until taking his own life as the victorious Allied powers marched on Berlin in April 1945.

BEGINNINGS

Hitler was born into lower-middle-class respectability in the small Austrian town Braunau am Inn near the border with Germany. Unsuccessful and unhappy at school, he left at the age of sixteen to pursue a career as a painter in the imperial capital but twice was rejected by the Academy of Graphic Arts in Vienna. The rejection was a serious blow to his pride, and he spent the years from 1907 to 1913 in Vienna, eking out an impoverished existence by selling his paintings and sleeping in flophouses. Life in Vienna played a crucial role in shaping Hitler's anti-Semitism, which was to become his guiding principle in NSDAP policies. Moreover, his decision to join a Bavarian infantry regiment in 1914 (he was rejected as unfit by the Austrian army) helped to cement his prejudices and his determination to right the wrongs that, he believed, had brought on Germany's World War I defeat and the Treaty of Versailles, the peace agreement signed at the palace of Versailles in June 1919. Hitler believed this treaty humiliated the German people.

Twice decorated with the Iron Cross by the German Imperial government, Hitler nonetheless failed to rise above the lowly rank of lance-corporal during the war because he was deemed to lack the right qualities to make him an effective leader. Injured in combat, he was employed by the German army to collect intelligence against extremist political groups operating in Munich. In September 1919 the work brought him into contact with the German Workers' Party, a small group consisting of no more than forty members. By July 1921 Hitler had become leader of the party, demonstrating his particular skills as an orator who was both appealing and charismatic while articulating bigoted views and woolly promises. He now exuded the self-confidence of a man who believed his destiny was to lead the German people. Hitler experienced a short period of notoriety as leader of an attempted putsch against the regional government in Bavaria

and the national government in Weimar—the small town in the state of Thuringia that was home to Germany’s first republican government—in November 1923, which landed him in jail for less than a year. It took the following five years for the NSDAP or Nazi Party to begin making political inroads in the Weimar Republic.

THE ROAD TO POWER

Hitler used the years from 1924 to 1928 to strengthen the party and his grip on it, while the early half-baked policies of the NSDAP developed into a cohesive ideology. The Nazi Party’s first political victory came in May 1928 when the town of Coburg in Bavaria gave the NSDAP a majority in local elections. The timing of the Nazis first electoral success coincided with early signs that German economic performance was stalling: industrial output had dropped for the first time since 1924, levels of foreign investment had fallen, and the number of people employed had begun to slide downward. By the following year, Germany was in the midst of a full-blown economic crisis. Declining levels of foreign investment and rules governing monetary policy imposed on the German government and the central bank, the Reichsbank, meant that government at every level, local, regional, and national, found itself desperately short of funds to pay for even the most basic of services.

The rules governing membership in the gold standard meant that the successive German governments found it almost impossible to formulate an effective policy to combat the crisis. In order to regain the foreign investment they had lost, the Reichsbank raised interest rates, while the minority government of the “Hunger Chancellor” Heinrich Brüning, which took office in March 1930, adhered to the principles of economic orthodoxy by raising interest rates and acting to limit government spending. Germany had become very dependent on foreign investment, and Brüning believed he had to go along with what the bankers wanted—gold standard orthodoxy—if he were to regain foreign investment in Germany. However, this strategy lay in tatters in the wake of the banking crisis that gripped Germany in the summer of 1931.

Brüning’s inability to offer the German electorate any real solutions to the second major economic



Adolf Hitler (standing in car) salutes parading troops in Nuremberg in 1935. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

crisis to grip the country in less than ten years reflected the widespread failure of all politicians in the center of German politics to offer either viable or appealing solutions to the economic collapse. Instead, it was the extremist political parties, the German Communist Party (KPD) and the Nazi Party, which were the political beneficiaries. The crisis provided Hitler with the opportunity to capture the support of more than one-third of the voting population. Hitler became chancellor on January 30, 1933, because of a potent combination of well-organized party activism (the NSDAP was successful in capturing the support of farmers by combining party political rallies with practical agricultural advice for example), winning slogans, and the collusion of leading political figures who, while not Nazis, supported Hitler’s rise to power because they believed he would prevent Germany’s slide into civil war. The Nazis also made enthusiastic use of political violence, particularly against the Com-

munists. But the NSDAP made it clear that Jews, Poles, and other groups whom they considered socially undesirable were their enemies too. After January 1933 these groups were to become Nazism's first victims.

The first big electoral breakthrough came on September 14, 1930, when the NSDAP became the second-largest party in the German parliament, the Reichstag. By July 1932 Hitler had run Germany's aging president and war hero Paul von Hindenburg a close race in presidential elections, and Hitler's position in the Reichstag was strengthened by elections in which the NSDAP gained 37.3 percent of the vote, making it the largest party in the Reichstag. Although the Nazi vote fell by some four percent in the November elections of 1932, the machinations of power-brokers in the German state, such as former Director of the Reichsbank Hjalmar Schacht and ex-Chancellor Franz von Papen, ensured that the chancellorship was delivered into Nazi hands. Although at first in a cabinet dominated by conservatives, by March 1933 the Nazis had succeeded in suspending civil rights in Germany, arrested their leading left-wing opponents, and with the passage of the Enabling Act on March 23, 1933, secured comprehensive law-making powers and unprecedented control of German society.

THE NAZI RECOVERY

Part of the Nazis' electoral appeal lay in their bold prescriptions for economic recovery. They promised to reorganize the economy to serve the interests of the nation and not the greedy demands of foreign bankers; they proposed new schemes to generate employment and to value the "ordinary German." But they skillfully avoided any talk of redistributing wealth, so as not to put off middle-class supporters, including big business groups. The Nazis intended to exploit capitalism, not destroy it.

The measures put in place to quell the German banking crisis of 1931 provided the foundation for Nazi economics. In September 1934, Schacht, now restored as director of the Reichsbank, issued the "New Plan," which turned the 1931 exchange controls into a complex system of monetary and trade restrictions. All imports had to be authorized by the German government, and German capital could

not be moved abroad freely. (Of course, this action had implications for Jews and other groups who were trying to escape the country.) Germany became increasingly detached from the international economy, signing only bilateral trading agreements with countries that either sold essential commodities or whose governments were central to German diplomatic ambitions.

Under the Nazis, state policy came to control prices, wages, private investment banks, and all other aspects of investment. Despite all the hype, however, not all Nazi public works schemes were as effective as they claimed to be in soaking up unemployment or generating recovery more broadly. The most effective schemes centered on public building and construction programs that involved renovating houses and building new roads. From 1935, the state's management of the domestic economy took a sinister turn as public investment in rearmament replaced civilian job creation as the basis for continued economic expansion—a move cemented by the introduction of the Four-Year Plan under the control of Nazi Minister and Chief Commander of the Luftwaffe (airforce) Hermann Göring. Aircraft production, for example, now leaped from its 1935 level of around three thousand aircraft a year to an annual average well in excess of five thousand. But this emphasis on military output also meant that consumables like clothing and household goods became a poor second in Nazi priorities.

Nazi spending policies were also used as a lever to extend the party's control over German society. Trade unions were destroyed; the government controlled wage rates (between 1933 and 1938 they dropped by around seven percent) and introduced compulsory labor service for some 400,000 men between 1933 and 1935. The drop in German unemployment from a level of more than six million in 1932 to less than a million by 1937 was spectacular, but the cost to civil liberties in Germany was incalculable. In 1933 the Nazi publication the *Völkischer Beobachter* was proud to claim that Franklin Roosevelt had adopted the policies of Hitler and Mussolini. There were parallels, albeit superficial ones, between, for example, U.S. and German public-works schemes and the declared ambitions of the Reich Labor Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps.

But the curtailment of individual and corporate freedoms in Germany was the clearest indication that U.S. and German recovery policies differed fundamentally from one another.

See Also: DICTATORSHIP; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; KRISTALLNACHT; MUSSOLINI, BENITO; STALIN, JOSEPH; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION.

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PATRICIA CLAVIN

HOLC. *See* HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION.

HOLIDAY, BILLIE

One of the most innovative jazz singers of all time, Billie Holiday (April 7, 1915–July 17, 1959) began her legendary singing career in Harlem nightclubs at the height of the Great Depression, catching the public's attention with her unique diction, phrasing, and emotive vocals.

Born Eleanora Fagan Gough in 1915 to teenage parents, Holiday spent her early years in poverty in

Baltimore, Maryland. Her father, a jazz guitarist with Fletcher Henderson's band, never supported his family. Young Holiday dropped out of school in the fifth grade to run errands for a brothel. In 1927, she and her mother moved to New York City. Desperate for money, she auditioned as a dancer in a Harlem speakeasy, Pod and Jerry's Log Cabin, but was hired as a singer instead. Growing up imitating Louis Armstrong and Bessie Smith, singing came naturally to Holiday.

In 1933, jazz writer and producer John Hammond heard Holiday perform. Impressed with her bluesy renditions of jazz standards, he signed her to Columbia Records. The Depression created financial and racial difficulties for many African Americans, but black artists prospered during the 1930s because New Deal legislation established the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935, providing unemployed artists and writers with work. The WPA contributed to the flourishing cultural scene in Harlem, in which Holiday was an integral figure. She spent much of the 1930s performing and touring with jazz legends Count Basie, Benny Goodman, and Duke Ellington, but it was her collaboration with saxophonist Lester Young, who nicknamed her "Lady Day," that highlighted her unique vocal talents, jumpstarting her recording career. Between 1935 and 1938, she released approximately eighty songs marketed for the black jukebox audience. In 1935, she made her first of many appearances at Harlem's Apollo Theater, and in 1939 she became the first black performer to integrate Artie Shaw's band.

The same year, she performed her trademark song "Strange Fruit," a powerful condemnation of lynching, to an integrated audience at the Café Society, a New York nightclub. The song came to represent the black artist's experience with racism. Increasing racial hostilities slowed Holiday's touring and hindered her commercial success. She spent the majority of the 1940s in New York performing and recording hit songs for Decca Records to avoid the violence of the South. In 1946, she appeared alongside Louis Armstrong in the film *New Orleans*, but expressed anger over having to portray a domestic. Her popularity as a singer afforded her little protection from the racial discrimination of the era.

Although a success professionally, addiction and abusive relationships marred her personal life. She died in 1959 of complications from drug addiction. Despite poverty, racism, and sexism, Holiday remains one of the most influential American singers of all time.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ELLINGTON, DUKE; JAZZ; MUSIC.

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MARY L. NASH

HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY

Motion pictures had already occupied a central place in American entertainment for nearly thirty years prior to the onset of the Great Depression. But during the ensuing decade, the Hollywood film industry assumed a new level of importance in the lives of Americans and in the shaping of a national culture. Movies offered needed escape for Depression-weary audiences, and they created powerful myths to reconcile social tensions and affirm traditional values. Indeed, by the time the nation went to war, the products of Hollywood had become virtually synonymous with America itself.

SOCIAL DISORDER IN THE MOVIES, 1930–1934

The stock market crash of 1929 came at a particularly difficult moment for Hollywood movie studios caught in the process of financing the transition from silent to talking pictures. Initially, the popular novelty of sound was enough to keep audiences coming to the movies, and moviegoers in

1930 actually outnumbered those in 1929. But by 1931 attendance had dropped, and Hollywood lost millions of dollars over the next several years. The movie industry cut salaries and production costs, lowered admission prices, and closed up to a third of the nation's theaters. Despite the steady popular demand for entertainment and escape, Hollywood appeared far from Depression-proof. Desperate to lure audiences back into theaters, the motion picture industry experimented with new genres, themes, and subject matter. Hollywood's own financial depression had largely ended by 1934, but not before the industry had tested the boundaries of cultural acceptability in its drive to win over moviegoers wracked by social dislocation.

Certainly the most controversial films to emerge from this era were the gangster pictures. Director Mervyn LeRoy's *Little Caesar* (1930), starring Edward G. Robinson as the Al Capone-inspired nemesis, established the basic elements of the genre. An ethnic criminal protagonist would climb his way to the top of the mob, leaving a path of bullet-riddled corpses behind him, only to meet his fatal comeuppance in a hail of police gunfire at the end. The recent introduction of sound allowed for gunshots, screams, and squealing tires to amplify the unprecedented violence central to all these films. The *Public Enemy* (1931) included an unforgettable scene of Jimmy Cagney's gangster character shoving a grapefruit into Mae Clarke's face. Director Howard Hawk's *Scarface* (1932), starring Paul Muni, featured characters and situations so disturbing that it was almost too explosive for its time.

While there are many ways to interpret such films, it seems clear that Depression-era audiences must have experienced a vicarious thrill by seeing nihilistic gangster antiheroes shoot their way through a society in chaos, for such disorder paralleled the lives of millions of suffering and frustrated Americans. Gangster pictures also reflected a cynical view of society, in which the Victorian middle-class success ethic had been perverted into a drive fueled by merciless and ultimately self-destructive ambition—a suitable metaphor for the causes of the Depression itself.

Some movies spoke even more directly to the theme of common Americans victimized by cruel



Eleanor Roosevelt with Shirley Temple, one of the most popular movie stars of the Depression era, in 1938. FRANKLIN DELANO

ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

economic and social forces. In LeRoy's powerful *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* (1932), Paul Muni plays an unemployed war veteran wrongly implicated in a robbery and sentenced to hard labor in a brutal Southern prison. After escaping, he establishes a new life as a respected engineer, but is sent back to prison after his vengeful wife betrays his identity to the authorities. He escapes once again, but only to the life of a fugitive, running from shadows and stealing to survive. An unjust society thus forces a good man to become a criminal.

Comedies of the early 1930s also captured the prevailing mood of disorientation. The Marx Brothers (Groucho, Chico, Harpo, and Zeppo) developed an inimitable style of lightning-quick improvisation

and anarchic humor that sometimes left even their supporting cast confused but had audiences literally rolling in the aisles. In such films as *Animal Crackers* (1930), *Horse Feathers* (1932), and *A Night at the Opera* (1935) the Marx Brothers typically played the role of unemployed charlatans who mocked the pretensions and snobbery of the upper class. In *Duck Soup* (1933) Groucho satirized a "reforming" national leader who was in fact out for himself. At a time when much of the nation was pinning their hopes on Franklin D. Roosevelt, the film was not as well received as it was to be in later years. Mae West became the most influential female comedian of her time by subverting middle-class norms of sexual propriety and male dominance with smirking

double entendres. W. C. Fields sharply satirized family life in *The Man on the Flying Trapeze* (1935) and established a funny, yet vaguely unsettling, screen character deeply at odds with civilization.

The search for a winning formula to get audiences into the theaters led some studios to exploit the fantastic, the bizarre, and the grotesque. Universal Pictures found a youthful market for horror with such films as *Dracula* (1931), *Frankenstein* (1931), and *The Mummy* (1932). RKO's *King Kong* (1933) employed pioneering special effects to tell the story of a gigantic ape captured from his tropical island home and brought to New York City by greedy promoters. After escaping, rampaging through the city, and scaling the Empire State Building with his captive woman, Kong is killed by American fighter planes, and the audience is left oddly ambivalent about the justice in his tragic fate.

The Depression era also saw the birth of the exploitation film. Certainly the most bizarre stab at winning an audience through shock was *Freaks* (1932), which documented the underworld of actual deformed sideshow performers. Not for the squeamish, this oddity has since become a cult favorite, but it is doubtful whether many contemporary moviegoers were ready for it. The remarkably lurid and inept *Reefer Madness* (1938) purported to be an expose of the demented marijuana subculture. Its effect, however, was probably more likely to titillate and inspire curiosity in the "devil weed."

While most of Hollywood's output during the early Depression years remained well within the bounds of mainstream social acceptability, the attention generated by the most lurid, violent, and sexually provocative films supplied new ammunition to those calling for greater censorship. Since the earliest days of the motion picture industry, such interest groups as the Catholic Legion of Decency had worked to restrain the cultural influence of movies and control their content, but the studios had so far resisted most outside pressure. Confronted with diminishing profits and the uncertainties of a Depression-wracked market, however, Hollywood capitulated. In 1934 the industry appointed Joseph Breen to supervise the Motion Picture Production Code Administration. When Martin Quigley, a Catholic layman and motion picture

trade publisher, first prepared the Production Code in 1930, moviemakers had treated it mainly as a public relations tool. But now Breen would have the absolute authority to approve, censor, or reject any Hollywood movie subject to the code. The code prohibited a whole range of actions and expressions, including the kind of suggestive sexuality that had recently made its way into the movies. It also dictated that all "bad" acts had to be followed by sure punishment or rehabilitation, and insisted on no ambiguity between good and evil. The enforcement of the Production Code effectively ended Hollywood's brief era of adventurism in the early 1930s.

THE RETURN TO ORDER, 1935–1940

The films of the second half of the decade reflected both the influence of the code and the desire of leading moviemakers to shift the artistic focus of their industry. Top Hollywood producers like Darryl Zanuck at Twentieth Century Fox and MGM's Irving Thalberg and David O. Selznick decided that there was greater prestige and profit to be gained from more conservative and dignified pictures that appealed to the ideals, dreams, and traditional values of moviegoers. As a result, the films of the later Depression years tended to reinforce and reaffirm the social order, rather than challenge or disrupt it.

One could see the changes, for example, in the new style of comedy. Gone was the edgy and subversive humor of the early 1930s, and in its place were such lighthearted "screwball" comedies as *My Man Godfrey* (1936), *Topper* (1937), and *The Philadelphia Story* (1940). Although these films sometimes played with social conventions, they ultimately affirmed the sanctity of marriage, accepted class divisions, and upheld the status quo. Mae West, W. C. Fields, and the Marx Brothers continued to make movies, but only with their wilder impulses tamed into more insipid vehicles that traded on past glories. The most anarchic and irreverent humor in film could no longer be found in live-action features, but survived in the madcap animated shorts directed by Leon Schlesinger and Chuck Jones at Warner Brothers and by Tex Avery at MGM.

The later Depression years also saw the steady release of big-budget films based on classic novels

and respectable best-sellers. Such pictures as *Mutiny on the Bounty* (1935), *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), and the biggest film of the decade, *Gone with the Wind* (1939) provided high-quality entertainment couched within conservative morality: respect authority, cherish small-town communities, and persevere with individual courage in the face of adversity. Likewise, Walt Disney produced dazzling animated films adapted from classic fairy tales and children's stories like *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Pinocchio* (1940), each of which extolled respect for traditional values.

Two of the most important directors of the decade, Frank Capra and John Ford, produced films that aimed to reconcile traditional Jeffersonian values with the new reality of big government interventionism in the New Deal era. Americans would prevail in these hard times, so assured the movies, because of their intrinsic morality and simple integrity. Capra celebrated the decency of the common man and praised the virtues of small-town America in films like *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* (1939), which pitted the plainspoken idealist Jefferson Smith, played by Jimmy Stewart, against corrupt senators presiding over an ineffectual U.S. government. Ford reinvented the Western film as cinematic art and a symbol of patriotic regeneration with *Stagecoach* (1939), featuring a star-making performance by John Wayne. He then went on to direct the greatest of all motion pictures about the Depression, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940). While acknowledging the positive role played by federal New Deal agencies, the true heroes in Ford's adaptation of John Steinbeck's novel are the Joad family themselves, who maintain their heartland spirit and noble dignity throughout a grim exodus from the Oklahoma Dust Bowl to the wretched migrant camps of California. As Tom Joad, actor Henry Fonda delivered the film's definitive speech, promising his mother as he bids her farewell, "I'll be all around . . . Wherever there's a fight so hungry people can eat . . . Wherever there's a cop beating a guy, I'll be there . . . And when the people are eatin' the stuff they raise and livin' in the houses they build, I'll be there too." In further affirmation, his mother closes the film with another rallying speech, "Can't wipe us out. Can't lick us. We'll go on forever. 'Cause we're the people."

With few exceptions, Hollywood's image of the "common man" did not include a place for black Americans. Aside from a few roles allotted for servants and slaves, such as Hattie McDaniel's character in *Gone with the Wind* and Paul Robeson's singing performance in *Showboat* (1936), blacks found expression primarily in independently-produced "race movies." Oscar Micheaux, the pioneering black filmmaker of the silent era, directed several films during the 1930s. And the gangster genre lived on in black films like *Am I Guilty* (1940) years after the Production Code effectively killed it in Hollywood.

Various political winds blew through the motion picture industry during the 1930s, some with a far-lasting impact. Frightened by the 1934 California gubernatorial campaign of socialist Upton Sinclair, the studios distributed to theaters reels of what amounted to campaign attack ads that helped to foil his election bid. But the film industry as a whole tilted toward liberal causes. In 1936, despite wide mainstream isolationist sentiment, the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League organized to highlight the menace of international fascism and champion the Loyalist cause in the Spanish Civil War. The leftist politics of the Popular Front attracted idealists within Hollywood, and the film industry also became a base for Communist Party organizers, who successfully recruited a number of movie workers. Within a decade many of these leftist writers, directors, and actors would find themselves under attack and sometimes even blacklisted for their Depression-era politics, as Hollywood succumbed to the red-baiting of the Cold War.

See Also: CAGNEY, JAMES; CAPRA, FRANK; CHAPLIN, CHARLIE; DISNEY, WALT; FORD, JOHN; FREAKS; GABRIEL OVER THE WHITE HOUSE; GANGSTER FILMS; GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933; GONE WITH THE WIND; I AM A FUGITIVE FROM A CHAIN GANG; LITTLE CAESAR; MARX BROTHERS; MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON; OUR DAILY BREAD; PRODUCTION CODE ADMINISTRATION (HAYS OFFICE); SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS; WELLES, ORSON; WEST, MAE; WIZARD OF OZ.

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BRADFORD W. WRIGHT

HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL, JR.

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. (March 8, 1841–March 6, 1935) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. His fa-

ther was a physician and literary figure; his mother, Amelia Lee Jackson, a prominent society leader active in charitable causes. Holmes's mother, to whom the future Supreme Court justice bore a close physical resemblance, was the daughter of a prominent Boston lawyer and judge. Holmes attended private schools and Harvard but he benefited especially from the strong intellectual influence of his parents, whose visitors regularly included major writers and thinkers of the day.

A student at Harvard when the nation erupted in civil war, Holmes promptly enlisted in the infantry, graduated from college, and was given a commission as a second lieutenant. As a member of the Army of the Potomac, he developed an impressive record and was injured in combat on three occasions. When his injuries forced his resignation from the service in 1864, he held the rank of captain.

On returning to Boston, Holmes attended Harvard Law School, then toured Great Britain and the continent of Europe to complete his education. A clerkship in Boston and admission to the bar in 1867 followed. In 1872, Holmes married his childhood friend Fanny Dixwell and joined a Boston firm specializing in commercial and admiralty law. But he also had an enduring interest in legal scholarship, and in 1881, a few days before his fortieth birthday, his Lowell Lectures in Boston were published as a book. *The Common Law* would become one of the most influential studies of its kind, exerting a major impact on the development of the sociological and legal realist schools of jurisprudence.

Following publication of *The Common Law*, Holmes taught a semester at Harvard University, then accepted an appointment as a justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, on which he served twenty years, becoming its chief justice in 1899.

In 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Holmes to a seat on the United States Supreme Court. In his scholarly writings, Holmes had stressed the degree to which judges' life experiences, rather than logic, guided their decisions. As a justice, however, he generally opposed judicial interference with legislative judgments, especially in regulatory cases. Dissenting in *Lochner v. New York* (1905) and related cases, striking down maximum

hour (*Lochner*), minimum wage, and other state and federal regulations, he attacked the Court's use of substantive due process as a weapon against economic legislation. Personally, he was skeptical of government efforts to control the economy. But in his view such decisions rested with legislators and the electorate, not with the courts.

Holmes usually gave non-economic substantive guarantees a narrow reading as well, refusing to equate laws forbidding tenant farmers to break their labor contracts with involuntary servitude. But the version of the clear and present danger test he ultimately embraced in *Abrams v. United States* (1919) and other World War I dissents was clearly more protective of free speech than the majority interpretation of the First Amendment in that era. He also joined Justice Louis Brandeis's dissent in *Olmsstead v. United States* (1928), declaring that wiretapping should be subjected to Fourth Amendment requirements.

When Chief Justice William Howard Taft resigned from the bench in 1930, Holmes thrived in his brief role as acting chief justice. He also continued to challenge the Court's growing body of rulings restricting federal and state regulatory authority. When a majority, in *Farmers Loan and Trust Co. v. Minnesota* (1930), overturned his opinion generously construing state tax power in *Blackstone v. Miller* (1903), the justice dissented, expressing his "anxiety" over the Court's further encroachment on "the Constitutional rights of the States."

After Holmes' beloved wife Fanny died in 1929, however, his own health had begun to decline, as had his ability to keep abreast of the Court's work. In 1932, Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes visited his home, explaining that a majority of the Court had asked Hughes to suggest that Holmes resign. Without apparent opposition or resentment, Holmes complied, sending the president his retirement letter on January 12, 1932. In 1935, he died at his home in Washington. He had served thirty years on the bench, under four chief justices. He is remembered as one of the Court's most outstanding jurists.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; DOUGLAS, WILLIAM O.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; HUGHES, CHARLES EVANS; SUPREME COURT.

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TINSLEY E. YARBROUGH

HOMELESSNESS

Poor people without permanent shelter have always had a presence in the United States, and the homeless were much noticed on the edges of growing cities or riding the railroads during the nineteenth century. But Hooverville shantytowns and migrant Okie families driving West during the Depression brought unprecedented national attention and federal intervention to the problem of homelessness. Even during the Depression years, however, the experience of the homeless was not uniform and aid programs were far from comprehensive. Public response to the homeless alternated between antagonism and empathy.

In the late 1920s there were already increasing numbers of homeless people in community shelters. When the Depression hit, many of the newly unemployed headed to cities looking for jobs, overwhelming municipal lodging houses and private agencies. In 1931, for example, the number of homeless using shelters in Minneapolis increased fourfold over the previous year. Local and regional response was mixed, but certain patterns emerged. Cities could be more or less lenient in enforcing settlement laws, which mandated prior residency for relief and the return of potential public charges to their state of legal residence. In practice, though, few cities offered more than a night's shelter and a meal for nonresidents. In the Deep South, transients could be arrested and sent to work on chain gangs, and the few cities that had municipal shelters for the local poor excluded African Americans from them. Chicago expanded separate services for



Homeless people lived in shacks under the arches of the D Street Bridge in Marysville, California. Photographed by Dorothea Lange in February 1940, there were about twenty-eight shacks under the bridge, mostly housing single men. NATIVE ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

the homeless of both races, and a 1931 protest of the homeless in New York City led to improvements at the municipal lodging house. Still, much of the additional shelter was provided by private organizations like the Salvation Army. Religious missions provided shelter regardless of residency status, though they required that the homeless attend religious services. Small charities started soup kitchens and breadlines for anyone who was hungry.

Contemporary depictions of the homeless portrayed those waiting in breadlines as iconic victims of the nation's economic ruin. Though single women were frequently absent from the lines and rarely represented, they made up an increasing,

though still small, percentage of the conservatively estimated 1.25 million unattached (i.e., not in families) homeless tallied in a 1933 census of 765 cities. The standard social work policy was to send transient women back to the residence of their families or husbands, so some homeless women avoided urban aid agencies. Many traveled on trains dressed in men's clothes, though this did not insure their safety. As "Boxcar" Bertha Thompson recalled, female hobos, like their male counterparts, took to the road for lack of money and the desire for freedom.

More visible was the increasing number of beggars. It became untenable to enforce anti-begging laws when some poor people deliberately tried to

get arrested for the shelter of a lockup and when the increasing number of newly unemployed semi-skilled and white-collar workers elicited public sympathy. Most visible, perhaps, were the homeless who rode in boxcars and set up hobo camps or “jungles” at junctions and in cities. In 1932, World War I veterans traveled by train to Washington, D.C., and set up a large shantytown that swelled with those who supported their demand for advance payment of war bonuses. When President Herbert Hoover sent the U.S. Army to route this “bonus army” of the country’s “worthiest” poor, public opinion turned even more against him.

The increasing number of homeless children—an estimated one-fifth of the homeless population was nineteen or younger—also attracted the attention of advocates. Many of these youngsters left home so as not to burden their families, which often were already disrupted or on relief. In 1932 a coalition of welfare advocates urged the Senate to pass a federal homeless program that would, in providing relief for the transient homeless, save the character of America’s children.

In May 1933, President Roosevelt established the Federal Transient Service (FTS) as part of the Federal Emergency Relief Act. FTS was designed to provide aid for homeless people who were ineligible for local relief because they had not lived in any given state for more than the year required for settlement status. FTS eventually established programs in every state except Vermont. The service allotted the most money to California, which, with 4.7 percent of the nation’s population, handled 14 percent of the nation’s transients. FTS ran shelters that provided food, clothing, and medical care to residents, as well as work training and education programs to some who stayed for long periods. FTS also started camps in rural areas where homeless men were assigned public work and conservation projects, such as flood control and park improvement. Many camps and centers were partly self-governed and staffed by residents. FTS also paid for rooms in boarding houses or YMCAs to accommodate transient women, and the agency allotted apartments and relief payments to families; as Harry Hopkins, director of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, wrote, “shelter care for fami-



Many sharecroppers, like these living along the highway in New Madrid county, Missouri, in 1939, became homeless when they were evicted from their farms after drought caused their crops to fail. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

lies was taboo.” FTS left the issue of integration and equality up to local practice. Many urban FTS centers were segregated, and in the South separate black shelters were, according to a 1934 FTS report, “not quite equal to those provided for the whites.”

In 1935, FTS was phased out because, according to Hopkins, transients had “to be recognized as being no different from the rest of the unemployed.” The end of FTS marked a general shift away from direct relief and toward work-related and constituency-specific New Deal programs. However, only about 20 percent of the unemployed transients formerly housed by FTS were able to get jobs with the Works Progress Administration; few young transients were eligible for the Civilian Con-



Homeless men take shelter in the local homeless men's bureau dormitory in Sioux City, Iowa, in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

servation Corps, and the Resettlement Administration's forty-five camps for migratory workers could not meet demand. Meanwhile, the number of homeless people increased in the latter half of the decade as factories closed and tenant farmers were displaced. Moreover, between January 1938 and October 1939, eight states increased residency requirements for relief. Few states allowed settlement status to carry over until acquired in another state so that typically those who moved were ineligible for aid. In most cities, overwhelmed private shelters and police stations led to increased hostility towards transients. Some communities, especially in the South and West, used extralegal means, such as border patrols, forced removals, and unwarranted arrests, to keep the homeless out.

John Steinbeck's portrayal of a transient farm family's struggle for survival in *The Grapes of Wrath*

(1939) raised public sympathy for the homeless, though it did not address the majority of the homeless population, which lived in cities, and the disproportionate number of homeless African Americans and Mexican seasonal workers. A month after the premier of John Ford's 1940 film version of Steinbeck's story, a House committee began hearings on interstate migration of the destitute, but the advent of World War II shifted its focus to an investigation of defense migration. As many of the homeless joined the army and found employment in war industries, relief programs were reduced and city shelters closed; those homeless who remained were left to the missions, casual employment agencies, and skid row hotels. It was not until 1969 that the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the residency requirements for benefit eligibility. Homelessness would not recapture the national attention it had during the Depression until the late

1970s, when it was thrust to the fore as a result of deindustrialization and urban renewal.

See Also: BONUS ARMY/BONUS MARCH; BREADLINES; CHARITY; CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; SOUP KITCHENS; TRANSIENTS.

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Yael Schacher

HOME OWNERS LOAN CORPORATION (HOLC)

Diminished wages, widespread unemployment, and few, if any, refinancing options made it difficult for home owners to meet monthly mortgage payments during the Great Depression. By the spring of 1933, with almost a thousand foreclosures a day, President Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Congress on April 13, 1933, for "legislation to protect small home owners from foreclosure." Lawmakers responded by creating the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) on June 13, 1933.

The HOLC, which was under the supervision of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, did not actually lend money to home owners. Instead, the agency purchased and refinanced mortgages in default or foreclosure from financial institutions (lenders). In exchange for mortgages, the HOLC gave lenders government bonds paying 4 percent interest (later reduced to 3 percent). Capitalized with \$200 million from the U.S. Treasury, the HOLC was authorized to issue \$2 billion in bonds, an amount eventually increased to \$4.75 billion. During a peak period in the spring of 1934, it processed over 35,000 loan applications per week and employed almost 21,000 people in 458 offices throughout the country. The law authorizing the HOLC's lending activities expired on June 12, 1936. By that time, the HOLC had made 1,021,587 loans, making it the owner of approximately one-sixth of the urban home mortgage debt in the United States. The HOLC's operations were not officially terminated until February 3, 1954.

The Roosevelt administration credited the HOLC with a restoration of economic morale, a reduction of foreclosure rates, and payment of almost \$250 million in delinquent taxes to state and municipal governments. Subsequent scholars have generally agreed with this positive evaluation, asserting that the HOLC was significant because it introduced the long-term, self-amortizing mortgage. Indeed, with HOLC mortgages refinanced at 5 percent interest over fifteen years, home ownership became feasible for those who had been previously unable to afford short-term mortgages at high interest rates.

Some commentators, however, criticized the HOLC's practice of indirectly assisting home owners through programs that directly aided mortgage lenders. The urban reformer Charles Abrams pointed out that, on average, the HOLC refinanced the mortgages it purchased for only 7 percent less than the previous, admittedly inflated, value of the property in question (the value of residential real estate had risen appreciably during the 1920s). The HOLC, for example, might refinance a \$10,000 mortgage as if the initial amount loaned to the home owner had been \$9,300, but that figure—\$9,300—could still be significantly higher than the

current deflated market value of the property. Under this arrangement, lenders only had to forego a small part of their capital, plus they received government-backed bonds in place of frozen mortgages. On the other hand, by propping up the face values of its refinanced mortgages, the HOLC compelled home owners to repay inflated 1920s mortgage loans with deflated 1930s wages.

The HOLC also developed a neighborhood mortgage rating system. The lowest rated neighborhoods—those with high concentrations of racial minorities—were “redlined” by the HOLC, a term denoting an area considered too risky for government mortgage assistance. Redlining was adopted not only by private lenders, but also by public agencies, most notably the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), which was part of the National Housing Act of 1934. The FHA, by extending mortgage insurance to lenders, encouraged banks to liberalize financing terms for potential homeowners. Thus, while the HOLC and the FHA assisted some Americans in keeping their homes or in purchasing new ones, they both used redlining to prevent minority groups, especially African Americans, from doing likewise. This practice helped perpetuate and extend the pattern of segregated neighborhoods and suburbs throughout America.

See Also: FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); HOUSING; NATIONAL HOUSING ACT OF 1934.

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A. SCOTT HENDERSON

HOOVER, HERBERT

Herbert Clark Hoover (August 10, 1874–October 20, 1964) was an engineer, financier, humanitarian, public servant, president of the United States, and elder statesman. Born in West Branch, Iowa, he was the second of three children of Jesse Clark Hoover, a blacksmith, inventor, and seller of farm implements, and his wife, Huldah Minthorn, a minister of the Society of Friends. Both parents died before “Bertie” was ten. He spent his adolescence in Oregon in the household of his maternal uncle and attended the Quaker academy his uncle superintended before going to work as an office boy in his uncle’s land development office.

At age seventeen, Hoover became the youngest member of the “pioneer class” of Leland Stanford Junior University in Palo Alto, California. He studied geology, engaged in campus politics as an anti-fraternity “barbarian,” was elected treasurer, introduced fiscal responsibility in the football program, and met his future wife, Lou Henry, a fellow Iowan. He graduated in May 1895, not yet twenty-one years old. Always a loyal alumnus and generous contributor, in 1912 Hoover began half a century of service on Stanford’s board of trustees. His benefactions included the Stanford Union, the Food Research Institute, and the Graduate School of Business. In 1919, he founded at Stanford the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, a vast archive of records relating to political events of the early and mid-twentieth century.

Hoover worked briefly as a common miner before joining a prestigious San Francisco engineering firm. In 1897, Bewick, Moreing and Company of London hired him as an “inspecting engineer” to find and develop new properties in Australia, the most spectacular of which was the Sons of Gwalia mine. Success led to an assignment to China as technical consultant to the director-general of mines in Chihli province, at a substantial increase in salary. En route, Hoover stopped in Monterey, California, to marry Lou Henry. In Tientsin, they came under fire during the Boxer Rebellion. Again, success earned promotion, a partnership in Bewick, Moreing, which lasted until he established his own firm in 1908. As an engineer and financier, Hoover

became known as the “doctor of sick mines,” traveling around the world five times with his wife and two sons. In addition, Hoover and his wife collaborated in the translation of a sixteenth-century Latin mining text, *De Re Metallica*, by Georg Bauer (known as Agricola). Hoover also published extensively in mining journals and lectured at the Columbia School of Mines. By 1914, he had made a considerable fortune and was looking for a way to enter public life, perhaps as the publisher of an American newspaper.

FOOD RELIEF DURING WORLD WAR I

When war broke out in Europe in August 1914, both Hoovers aided the repatriation of stranded Americans. Herbert Hoover next established the Commission for Relief in Belgium, which provided millions of tons of food to starving people in Belgium and France from 1914 until the American declaration of war in 1917. Hoover then returned to the United States as food administrator in the Wilson administration. Orchestrating a massive but decentralized campaign for voluntary cooperation in food conservation to support the war effort, Hoover became a master of public relations as well as a valued member of Wilson’s war cabinet. At the end of the war, he resumed international food relief with the American Relief Administration, which combined humanitarian aid with major contributions to the economic reconstruction of Europe.

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE

Although briefly considered by both parties as a presidential nominee in 1920, Hoover became secretary of commerce in the cabinet of Warren G. Harding, remaining in that post through most of the administration of Calvin Coolidge as well.

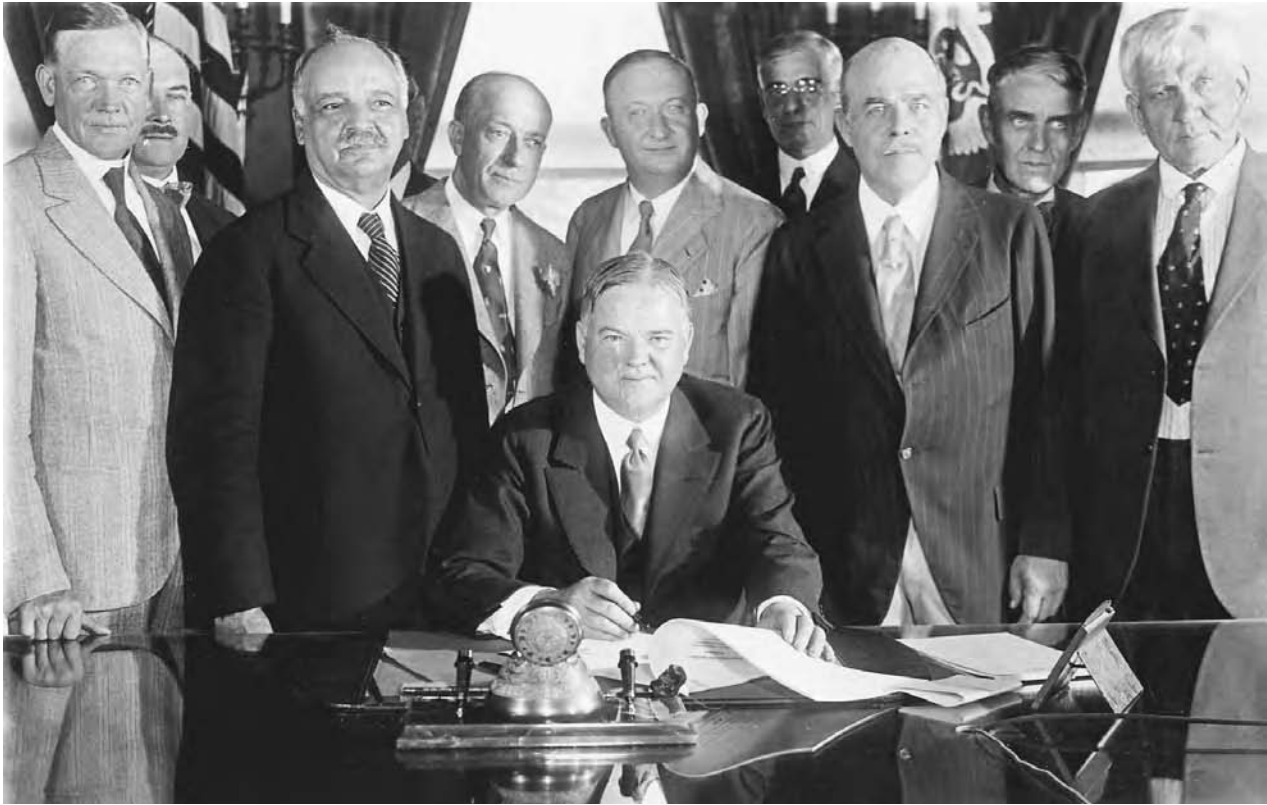
Hoover energetically reorganized and expanded the Department of Commerce from a minor agency into a complex organization with far-sweeping domestic and international influence. Major divisions dealt with industry, trade, and transportation. A new bureau collected and distributed statistics, consistent with Hoover’s belief that business efficiency depended on accurate and shared information. The Bureau of Standards encouraged systematization of industrial technology.



Herbert Hoover (left) and Secretary of Labor James J. Davis outside the White House in the early 1920s, when Hoover was secretary of commerce. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

Appropriations for the Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce increased by nearly half, its branch offices at home and abroad doubled, and personnel grew five-fold. The workforce was racially desegregated. New divisions supervised aviation, radio, and housing.

With an engineer’s concern for efficiency and a progressive’s dedication to community responsibility, Hoover advocated a form of capitalism based on associationalism and cooperation. Believing that waste, selfishness, and destructive competition led to inefficiency and unemployment, he sought to make government a servant of self-regulating economic units. He favored diversification of stock ownership, attacked the twelve-hour workday in the steel industry, and encouraged trade associations and individual firms to standardize products and processes to eliminate waste. The Department of Commerce undertook massive educational cam-



President Herbert Hoover (seated) signs the farm relief bill in June 1929. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

paigns to convince business leaders and the public to embrace fact-based planning, voluntary cooperation, and community responsibility. More than two hundred conferences addressed topics ranging from unemployment to highway safety, housing, conservation, and child health. Experts highlighted conditions, disseminated information, and rallied public support for already-developed solutions.

In 1927 when the Mississippi River flooded a 20,000 square mile area, leaving 600,000 people homeless, Hoover took personal charge, mobilizing local and state resources, the Red Cross, the Army Corps of Engineers, the Coast Guard, and countless volunteers to evacuate, shelter, and feed flood victims; to provide sanitation and combat epidemics; and to finance low-cost rehabilitation loans. In another example of federal, local, and private partnership, he negotiated an interstate agreement for access to the waters of the Colorado River and federal construction of a dam in Boulder Canyon that would provide hydroelectric power to municipal

and private distributors. He advocated a network of waterways that eventually became the Saint Lawrence Seaway.

Hoover articulated his philosophy of “American Individualism” in a small book published in 1922. A unique combination of individual enterprise and community obligation, it called for education, competition, individual liberties, and “voluntary organizational cooperation for the common good.”

PRESIDENCY

When Calvin Coolidge did not “choose to run” for another term as president in 1928, Hoover rode “Republican prosperity” to an easy victory over Alfred E. Smith, who also suffered the political liabilities of being a Roman Catholic and an opponent of prohibition. The president-elect then made a “good neighbor” tour of eleven Latin American countries.



President Hoover (left) and President-elect Franklin D. Roosevelt, on the way to Roosevelt's inauguration in Washington, D.C., on March 4, 1933. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Hoover hoped for a presidency in which American individualism, associationalism, expertise, and technology would bring greater rationality, efficiency, humanity, and more widespread prosperity to the American people. As he had during his years as secretary of commerce, he recruited experts and commissioned extensive research, expecting that their data and analysis would form the basis for enlightened public policy. The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection produced a nineteen-point Children's Charter as well as a 35-volume report that influenced social workers for many years and inspired much local legislation. Ironically, a major set of findings, published in 1933 as *Recent Social Trends* documented the extraordi-

nary modernization of the United States at precisely the time when public belief in the "American dream" was at its lowest.

Events forced Hoover's administration to focus primarily on the domestic economy rather than foreign affairs. He welcomed the London Treaty of 1930, which reduced all categories of naval armaments, but he failed to obtain abolition of offensive weapons, such as bombers and chemical warfare, by participants at the World Disarmament Conference in Geneva in 1932. In Latin America, he renounced dollar diplomacy, repudiated the Roosevelt Corollary, removed the Marines from their twenty-year occupation of Nicaragua, and prepared for withdrawal of U.S. troops from Haiti. When

Japan invaded China, Hoover's belief in voluntary international cooperation, collective persuasion, and moral force led him to insist on a doctrine of nonrecognition of territorial acquisitions obtained by force in violation of treaty rights.

As one of the few who had recognized economic imbalances and warned about a runaway stock market in the 1920s, Hoover anticipated that he would have to oversee remedies and corrections. To combat the long-standing agricultural depression, the Federal Farm Board encouraged creation of farmers' organizations to withhold surpluses until prices became more favorable. The stock market crash of 1929 revealed serious structural weaknesses in the domestic and international economies. Depressed farm incomes, values, and purchasing power led to failures of country banks that gradually expanded to undermine larger financial institutions. Sales declined; manufacturers stockpiled inventories of durable goods. Overproduction in industries like automobiles had an impact on collateral production, such as steel. Building stagnated. European financial dependence on the United States required an increase in exports or a decrease in debt, but the Hawley-Smoot tariff proved an insurmountable obstacle.

Hoover struggled to persuade industrial, labor, agricultural, utility, and financial leaders to maintain wages, hence purchasing power, and plan for renewed business progress. Believing that the nation suffered from a crisis in confidence, he worked tirelessly to restore faith in the spiritual and economic strength of the country. He appealed to the traditions of voluntary cooperation, private charity, and community responsibility to combat human suffering and launched an anti-hoarding campaign to encourage Americans to spend their way out of the Depression. His efforts failed. Employers furloughed first a few and then more workers. Bankers refused to risk loans without full collateral. Relief needs outstripped the resources of private and local relief agencies. And frightened Americans hid cash they might soon need if conditions worsened. Hoover's own optimistic statements rang hollow in the face of mounting unemployment. A devastating drought in the summer of 1930 accelerated farm problems and rural bank closings. Hoover resisted

demands for direct federal relief because he feared undermining the character of independent, self-reliant Americans. He hoped that construction of public works that would eventually pay for themselves would provide employment until the economy revived. He left direct relief to local and state governments, but their resources proved insufficient to stem the tide of economic decline and human suffering.

Hoover traced the origins of America's Depression to Europe. American loans, German reparations, and Allied war debts formed a vicious cycle. Federal Reserve manipulation of credit to aid European countries had created too-easy money in the United States during the 1920s. And, beginning in 1931, a series of European financial debacles marched inexorably toward the United States. French withdrawals from Central European banks brought them to the verge of collapse. Hoover countered with a one-year moratorium on intergovernmental debts and reparations to provide a respite for retrenchment. That September, however, Britain was forced to abandon the gold standard, and the gold drain shifted to New York. The Glass-Steagall Act of 1932 shored up American currency, but bank failures escalated.

At this point, Hoover substantially modified his resistance to federal government intervention. To stem the tide of bank failures, he first encouraged private bankers to form the National Credit Corporation to make loans to industrial concerns and banks. When their efforts proved perfunctory and problems increased, he proposed the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), primarily funded by the Treasury, for the same purposes. RFC loans significantly reduced the number of bank failures in 1932. He would soon support RFC financing of public works and loans to states for direct relief.

But Hoover labored under serious political handicaps. He had never run for public office before winning the presidency. His previous experiences with public persuasion had been fueled by wartime patriotism or 1920s optimism. During his presidency, however, even when the Republicans controlled both houses of Congress in the first two years, he proved too progressive for the conservatives and too conservative for the progressives. The 1930 in-

terim election brought about a Democratic-controlled House of Representatives, where presidential hopeful John Nance Garner presided as speaker. Garner obstructed the Hoover administration whenever possible, most particularly by delaying passage of the Relief and Reconstruction Act until July 1932. Although Hoover's analysts claimed that the Depression was coming to an end that summer, it would take six months for the impact to "trickle down" to the ordinary citizen. The presidential election was four months away.

By summer 1932, in an effort to boost prices, farmers were using roadblocks to prevent delivery of milk and livestock to markets. Cities such as Detroit saw hunger marches and demonstrations demanding half-wages for those laid off. The destitute lived in tarpaper shacks in "Hooverilles" and existed on handouts or scraps from garbage cans. Veterans journeyed to Washington to demand early payment of a war service bonus but were routed by the army commanded by General Douglas MacArthur. Hoover received the blame. Meanwhile, Democratic Party publicist Charles Michaelson orchestrated a highly effective smear campaign against Hoover. The 1932 election was less a victory for Franklin D. Roosevelt than a resounding defeat for Hoover.

The lame-duck administration remained in office for nearly four months, an interregnum that was nearly as calamitous as that in 1860 to 1861. Hoover tried to tie his successor to his repudiated policies. Roosevelt avoided that contamination, while appearing ignorant of economics and the international situation. European countries defaulted on their World War I debts in December. Publication of RFC loans, at the initiative of Speaker and Vice President-elect Garner, precipitated new and disastrous runs on the banks in January. Revelations before the Senate Banking and Currency Committee in February uncovered gross improprieties by major banks and bankers during the 1920s that further undermined public morale. Roosevelt first ignored and then rejected Hoover's proposal of a joint statement to bolster public confidence. On March 3, 1933, the eve of the inauguration, even the biggest New York and Chicago banks were in peril. Despite pleas from the Federal Reserve Board and

others, Hoover refused to act without an endorsement from Roosevelt, which the president-elect refused to give. The governors of New York and Illinois declared bank holidays, bringing to thirty-four the number of states that had closed their banks rather than face ruin. Roosevelt subsequently declared a national bank holiday and holdovers from Hoover's administration crafted the plans for reopening the banks.

POST-PRESIDENTIAL YEARS

After he left office on March 4, 1933, Hoover remained publicly silent for eighteen months, primarily out of concern that his criticism of the new administration's policies might be blamed for impeding economic recovery. During this time, however, he arranged for publication of collections of public papers to demonstrate the effectiveness of the policies of his presidency. In the fall of 1934, he broke his silence with the publication of *The Challenge to Liberty*. Originally conceived as an updated reissue of *American Individualism*, *The Challenge* reaffirmed Hoover's belief in American liberalism and expressed his alarm at the social and economic changes he perceived in "National Regimentation" in fascist regimes abroad and, by implication, in the New Deal at home. Liberty, liberalism, and the sanctity of the United States Constitution became recurring themes as Hoover spoke out during the 1930s. He became a major critic of the New Deal, arguing that it failed to bring the United States out of the Great Depression while undermining both the capitalist economic system and the independent initiative of American citizens.

Simultaneously, Hoover pursued his own reentry into the political arena, unsuccessfully seeking the 1936 and 1940 Republican presidential nominations. Hoping to persuade Republicans to vindicate his anti-Depression activities as president and to affirm his political philosophy, he tried to persuade the party to initiate a new "interim convention" in 1938 to craft a platform for the next national contest that would shape the choice of a candidate in 1940. The party resisted transformation according to the Hoover model. Meanwhile, the Democrats established a pattern of running against Hoover in every presidential election from 1932 on-

wards, while Republican candidates did their best to avoid association with him.

Facing continued rejection at home, Hoover returned to Europe in 1938, his first visit since Versailles. Lauded by governments and those he had fed, he also received a first-hand education in European politics. He returned home convinced that another great war was coming and that the United States should stand aside from the conflagration. He devoted himself to that position from the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939 until the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Hoover loyally supported the declaration of war and hoped that he might be of service. Ignored again, he and his longtime associate, former ambassador Hugh Gibson, were among the many prominent persons who published plans for a framework of postwar peace.

The new war produced new human suffering, and Hoover tried to recreate his feeding activities of the 1914 to 1917 period, but he failed in the face of resistance by Roosevelt and Winston Churchill. Hoover would have to wait for Roosevelt's successor to recall him to national service. In 1946, President Harry Truman dispatched the "Great Humanitarian" on a worldwide mission to assess the needs of the hungry and the capabilities of food-producing nations to contribute to postwar relief. The following year, he went abroad again to address hunger in Germany and Austria. His reports also contributed to the mitigation of harsh postwar treatment of defeated Germany.

Truman, and his successor, Dwight Eisenhower, also drafted Hoover to address the enormous growth of federal bureaucracy resulting from the New Deal and the war. In both cases, the Commission on Organization of the Executive Branch of the Government, known as the Hoover Commission, concluded in 1949 and in 1955 with recommendations for increasing efficiency, streamlining federal bureaucracy, and rolling back New Deal encroachments. Some of its proposals, such as the creation of a Department of Defense, were enacted.

After his presidency, Hoover devoted himself to the preservation and propagation of the historical record of his public life. Virtually every speech and public statement between 1933 and 1960 was reprinted in eight volumes called *Addresses upon the*

American Road. He published three volumes of memoirs and edited several collections of documents, ranging from *The Ordeal of Woodrow Wilson* about Versailles to *An American Epic*, a four-volume annotated collection of papers from his long career in international relief. At the end of his life, he had completed a volume tentatively entitled *Freedom Betrayed*, as yet unpublished, dealing with the foreign policy of the Roosevelt administration.

Hoover also devoted himself to gentler subjects. As chairman of the Boys' Clubs of America, he took particular pleasure in establishing clubs for a million of those he described as "pavement boys." He published a collection of his correspondence with children under the title *On Growing Up*. He wrote a slim volume of his observations on angling, called *Fishing for Fun and to Wash Your Soul*. He was the force behind the creation of the humanitarian organization CARE and the United Nations agency UNICEF.

Herbert Hoover— orphan boy from West Branch, self-made millionaire, public servant more than politician— personified the American dream. If his presidency was blighted by the crisis of that dream in the Great Depression, he lived long enough to be acknowledged as both an elder statesman and a world humanitarian.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1932; HOOVER, LOU HENRY; PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT (PECE); PRESIDENT'S ORGANIZATION FOR UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF (POUR); REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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SUSAN ESTABROOK KENNEDY



J. Edgar Hoover, circa 1950. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

HOOVER, J. EDGAR

John Edgar Hoover (January 1, 1895–May 2, 1972) was appointed director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 1924 and served until his death forty-eight years later. Founded in 1908 as the Bureau of Investigation (the word *Federal* was added in 1935), the FBI blossomed under Hoover during the Great Depression and particularly during the New Deal years.

A lifelong resident of Washington, D.C., Hoover worked in the Library of Congress while studying law at George Washington University. He joined the Department of Justice in 1917, working in the Alien Enemies Bureau. Appointed chief of the General Intelligence Division in 1919, Hoover helped organize the notorious Palmer Raids that rounded up aliens suspected of radicalism. Five years later, Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone appointed the 29-year-old Hoover director of the

Bureau of Investigation. In the wake of Teapot Dome and other Warren G. Harding administration scandals, the new director had a mandate to terminate all domestic political surveillance and confine all investigations to violations of federal law.

Having quickly purged the FBI of corrupt agents, Hoover had little to do because there were few federal criminal statutes on the books. He filled the time, in direct defiance of Stone's order, by dabbling in surveillance. This was especially true after the Great Depression commenced. The FBI opened files on such things as Communist Party involvement in the Scottsboro Boys rape case and occasionally provided political intelligence to the Herbert Hoover White House. For the Depression's first four years, however, the director's bureaucracy remained a tiny and relatively insignificant part of the federal government.

Things began to change in 1933 with the Depression era's creeping nationalization of crime control. In effect, the FBI emerged as one of the New Deal's alphabet agencies with a mission to investigate a rapidly expanding list of federal crimes. This included spectacular combat against John Dillinger and other high-profile bank robbers. For example, the New Deal's Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) provided the wherewithal for the FBI to investigate any robbery of a bank insured by the FDIC. The Roosevelt administration also helped Hoover with a massive media campaign to portray G-men as heroic defenders of public life and limb, property and virtue. A public relations genius in his own right, Hoover tilted this campaign to construct what might best be described, with only a hint of exaggeration, as a cult of personality.

Pumped up into a formidable crime fighting force as the Great Depression wound down in the late 1930s, Hoover's FBI moved on to exploit a cautious Roosevelt administration mandate to revive political surveillance under the rubric of "subversive activities." If the White House was principally concerned with native fascism as the nation reluctantly prepared for the possibility of war with Germany and Japan, Hoover was principally concerned with domestic Communist activities. In one of the Depression era's greater ironies, the director defined subversive activities on the left broadly enough to

encompass the very New Deal liberals who had rescued the FBI from oblivion. Another irony is that the director did so while successfully cultivating what several cabinet officials described as a close personal relationship with the president. Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, for one, claimed that Roosevelt believed that Hoover was devoted to him personally.

In the wake of the Great Depression and World War II, Hoover and his FBI went on to help shape the history of McCarthyism and the modern civil rights movement. The latter included not only extensive surveillance of Martin Luther King, Jr. (e.g., wiretaps), but systematic harassment pursued with a startling ferocity. The pressures of the Depression had simply reinforced the things Hoover had learned as a young man, in the aftermath of World War I, on his old Alien Enemies and General Intelligence desks. The pressures of the 1960s would do the same. By the time of his death, Hoover had, in his own way in both cases, enforced the law and spied on law abiding citizens in seven different decades.

See Also: CRIME; LAW ENFORCEMENT; PROHIBITION.

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KENNETH O'REILLY

HOOVER, LOU HENRY

Best known as the wife of Depression-era president Herbert Hoover, Lou Henry Hoover (March 29,

1874–January 7, 1944) was also actively involved in organizations that promoted independence and health for girls and women. Born in Waterloo, Iowa, the elder of two daughters of a banker who encouraged her independence and love of the outdoors, she moved with her family to Whittier, California, and later to Monterey. After completing normal school, she earned a degree in geology at Stanford University, where she met Herbert Hoover. They married in 1899 and immediately sailed for China, where they survived the Boxer Rebellion. Many more journeys took them and their two sons around the world several times in the first decade of the twentieth century, while Herbert prospered as a consulting engineer and financier. An accomplished linguist, Lou Hoover, with assistance from her husband, also translated from Latin and privately published *De Re Metallica*, a sixteenth-century mining text.

With the outbreak of war in Europe in 1914, both Hoovers assisted Americans stranded abroad and later headed relief organizations for starving Europeans. Lou Hoover became an effective speaker and fundraiser in the United States. America's declaration of war in 1917 brought the couple to Washington, D.C., he as food administrator and she to engage in civic works, including creating living and eating facilities for the growing number of young women in war agencies. A quiet philanthropist throughout her life, Lou Hoover "lent" college tuition money to young people but did not cash their repayment checks.

When Herbert Hoover became secretary of commerce, Lou embraced the Girl Scouts as an ideal organization to foster education, recreation, and independence of young women. She served the organization as national commissioner, national president from 1922 to 1925, vice president and chairman of the national board of commissioners, and, after she became first lady, honorary president. During the 1920s, she focused on organization and emphasized recruitment and training of leaders, obtaining grants to support these activities. In the 1930s, she was again named national Girl Scout president and she became a more public voice, travelling extensively on Girl Scout business. Meanwhile she was an early supporter of the National

Amateur Athletic Federation and served as president of its women's division. She encouraged women to pursue careers as well as marriage and motherhood.

During Herbert Hoover's term as president of the United States from 1929 to 1933, the first lady attended to social obligations and also arranged the first extensive inventory and history of White House furnishings. She was severely criticized for entertaining the wife of the only black member of Congress. She promulgated her husband's voluntary approaches to the Great Depression with women's groups and the Girl Scouts. Hiring her own staff, she became a clearinghouse for relief appeals.

After leaving the White House, Hoover supported the Friends of Music at Stanford, the Salvation Army, and Republican organizations. When her husband crusaded for relief of the "small democracies" at the start of World War II, she again supported his efforts. In all her activities, Lou Henry Hoover lived by two mottoes: "don't forget joy" and "lead from behind."

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT.

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SUSAN ESTABROOK KENNEDY

HOPKINS, HARRY

Harry Lloyd Hopkins (August 17, 1890–January 29, 1946) was a progressive-era social worker, federal



Harry Hopkins (right, at microphone) speaks at the dedication of the Louisiana State University Stadium, a WPA construction project, in November 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

relief administrator during the Great Depression, and wartime presidential advisor who carved out a unique niche for himself in Franklin D. Roosevelt's administrations. Hopkins and Roosevelt developed a close relationship based on mutual trust and admiration, a position that afforded Hopkins a considerable amount of power. From 1933 to 1938, Hopkins played a crucial role in the development of social policies and legislation devised by the administration to counteract the devastating effects of the Depression. In this sense, Hopkins became one of the major architects of the American welfare system. Beginning in 1939, Roosevelt educated Hopkins in international affairs, and during the war years, Hopkins served as the president's unofficial

wartime emissary to Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, as administrator of war production, and as an advisor at most of the major conferences.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Harry Hopkins was born in 1890 in Sioux City, Iowa, the fourth child of David Aldona (Al) Hopkins and Anna Pickett Hopkins. The family, always struggling financially, moved numerous times around the Midwest before finally settling in Grinnell, Iowa, in 1901, a town selected by Anna mainly because Grinnell College was located there. During Hopkins's four years at Grinnell, where he was a mediocre student but a first-rate athlete and student leader, he absorbed a blend of the Social Gos-

pel and the practical workings of the American republic as taught in his political science and applied Christianity courses. In addition, Hopkins's professors impressed upon him a reverence for democracy and a dedication to public service.

Soon after his graduation in 1912, Hopkins left rural Iowa to pursue a career as a social worker at Christodora Settlement House in New York City's Lower East Side, where he quickly became attuned to the squalid conditions in the urban slum and the destitution that so often accompanied the instability of waged labor in industrial centers. His first job there was as a counselor for the settlement house's summer camp for boys in Bound Brook, New Jersey. He later served as head of boys' activities at the settlement house on Avenue B. There he met and married his first wife, fellow settlement worker and suffragist Ethel Gross, who initiated Hopkins into the exciting reform environment of lower Manhattan. This work in progressive-era New York City had a profound effect on Hopkins. He began to formulate a secular view of poverty and came to understand that there were profound consequences to unemployment, that most people wanted to be self-sufficient, and that the dole took away a person's pride.

In 1913, in the midst of an economic recession, Hopkins accepted a position with New York City's Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP), a private charitable agency dedicated to both relieving poverty and reforming the individual. Hopkins joined the agency first as a friendly visitor, but soon, having demonstrated his capabilities as an observant and efficient social worker, he was appointed superintendent of the Association's Employment Bureau. His mandate was to suggest ways to eliminate unemployment, which was seen by the AICP as the second most frequent cause of poverty, illness being the first. Hopkins went into the tenements of the largely immigrant population of the Lower East Side and saw firsthand the degrading effects of poverty, a condition he agreed was caused largely by unemployment. During this phase of his career, he began to develop a set of convictions concerning poverty and unemployment that came to define the relief policies he later proposed to the Roosevelt administration in the midst

of the Great Depression, according to which those who wanted to work and, for whatever reason, could not find employment would be provided jobs by the government; those unable to work would be provided government assistance.

In 1915, Hopkins and an AICP colleague, William Matthews, worked creatively to try to solve the problem of increasing unemployment in New York City. When they learned that the Bronx Zoological Park had received a generous donation of land but could not afford to develop it for use, Hopkins and Matthews proposed a solution by devising what was likely the first work relief program in New York. The two social workers offered to provide unemployed men to clear the land, and, moreover, raise enough money from private sources to pay their wages if the Bronx Zoo would provide the staff to supervise the work. This Bronx Zoo project (even though privately funded) provided a loose prototype for future public work programs.

Another main cause of poverty during this period was single motherhood. The New York state legislature, encouraged by social workers and progressive reformers, addressed that issue by passing the 1915 Mothers' Assistance Act, which allocated local public funds to support poor but deserving single mothers. New York Mayor John Purroy Mitchell appointed Hopkins as head of the Board of Child Welfare (BCW), the agency established to administer this program. From 1915 to 1917 Hopkins administered what was called the widows' pension to women considered worthy of help. This work reflected some of the most important political issues of the era, especially the value placed on home life that had been articulated at the 1909 White House Conference on Children—no child should be removed from the home for reasons of poverty alone. Furthermore, the enabling legislation that allotted money for such programs established the legitimacy of public outdoor relief, that is, using state money to assist the needy outside of institutions. This experience reinforced Hopkins's belief that it was the responsibility of the government, through agencies such as the BCW, to devise effective, state-funded programs to help the deserving needy.

WORLD WAR I AND THE 1920s

With America's entrance into World War I, Hopkins (ineligible for the draft because of poor eyesight) joined the American Red Cross, first in New Orleans (Gulf Division) working in the Civilian Relief Division. Also called Home Service, this division was central to the Red Cross because it aided families of servicemen, as well as wounded and demobilized soldiers and sailors. During this time, because the South lacked both an established network of trained social workers and an integrated group of agencies, Hopkins had the opportunity to create an organization from the ground up. He consequently built Civilian Relief into a smoothly operating service agency for military families experiencing hardships because of the war. To accomplish this, Hopkins initiated an array of educational programs in order to train social workers in the South. Hopkins and his staff of about two hundred workers served approximately ten to fifteen thousand families each month. To further professionalize the work he and his colleagues were engaged in, he joined with other social workers to draft the charter for the American Association of Social Workers in June of 1920. When the Red Cross Gulf Division merged with the Southwestern Division after the war, Hopkins went to Atlanta as general manager in 1921. Through his work in the American Red Cross, Hopkins became nationally known and entered into the upper ranks of the social work profession.

In 1922, Hopkins returned to New York City with his family. He worked for the AICP until 1923 when he took a job as general director of the New York Tuberculosis Association and directed his energies toward public health issues. For him, illness resulting from an unfriendly and unhealthy environment was merely another form of social injustice and a preventable cause of poverty. During his tenure with the Tuberculosis Association, Hopkins expanded the agency by absorbing the New York Heart Association. True to his liberal, progressive social work background, he cared little for the bottom line and was often criticized for his free-spending style. When he joined the association it had a surplus of \$90,000; when he left it seven years later, it carried a deficit of \$40,000. Still, everyone

close to the association was delighted with Hopkins's work there.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION YEARS

With the onset of the Great Depression, Hopkins drew on his previous experiences to address the problems brought about by the high levels of unemployment. The crisis reinforced his belief that public works programs, federally funded and rationally planned, could be used to mitigate the effects of widespread unemployment. In 1931, New York State governor Franklin D. Roosevelt called on Hopkins to run the first state relief organization, the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA), which provided both direct relief and work relief to the state's unemployed. The TERA was the first instance of a state accepting responsibility for citizens suffering from the effects of the Depression.

In 1933, President Roosevelt named Hopkins as federal relief administrator. Convinced that jobs were the antidote to poverty, Hopkins used his growing influence with the president to push for government-sponsored jobs programs that would put money immediately into the pockets of newly-employed workers. These programs included the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the Civil Works Administration (CWA), and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The progressive-era notion that the industrial system lay at the heart of the economic ills threatening the nation shaped Hopkins's early New Deal policies and programs. With an original allocation of \$500 million, the FERA provided the states with matching grants, one federal dollar for every three they raised, in order to provide relief for the unemployed. While direct relief (known as the dole) proved crucial for the survival of many families, recipients also received FERA jobs in exchange for needs-based relief payments. For Hopkins the important element of a jobs program was that it would ensure that American workers could retain their dignity as the breadwinners. Under the more radical and short-lived Civil Works Administration (CWA), the unemployed got a job and did not have to undergo any investigation to ascertain need. Under this program, one did not have to be on relief to get a job

and wages were based not on need but on the work performed. The CWA reflected Hopkins's firm conviction that most people simply wanted to work and that jobs were always the best antidote to poverty. The issues that shaped relief policy during the First New Deal continued to define the much debated relationship between relief and recovery and between citizens and the government that plagued the administration for the next several years. Much of this debate had to do with the widespread fear that continued government relief, even in the form of jobs, would foster dependency.

Early in 1934, Harry Hopkins began formulating a new program for the nation's unemployed that emphasized the importance of work, not only as a relief measure but as an integral part of the national recovery effort. The unemployed needed the opportunity to work for wages and industry needed consumer dollars in order to survive. Hopkins became convinced that a permanent national program of employment assurance, working in concert with unemployment insurance, would not only lead to economic recovery for the nation, but would ensure real security for American families and preserve the nation's democratic values. Hopkins and other New Deal liberals believed that underconsumption was retarding the nation's economic recovery. The solution lay in cooperation between the government and private industry to insure that the American worker earned a sufficient wage to afford a decent standard of living.

In late 1934, Roosevelt named Hopkins to the cabinet-level committee for economic security directed to write legislation that would protect American citizens from the vagaries of life in a modern industrial society. The Social Security Act, passed in August 1935, laid the foundations for the American welfare system by enacting legislation that established old-age pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to dependent children. This legislation built the foundation of the American welfare system that defined American social policy until 1996. However, the act contained no permanent program for unemployment. Instead, with the president's vigorous encouragement, Congress passed the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act, which gave Roosevelt the broad authority to create the National Emergency

Council on May 6, 1935, out of which emerged the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Roosevelt named Hopkins as WPA director, with the mandate to find government-funded jobs for the vast army of unemployed workers on relief. Despite critics who castigated the WPA and its director as being either too liberal or too political, the WPA was enormously successful. In 1938, Hopkins presented to Roosevelt a report that listed an impressive array of 158,000 projects undertaken by approximately five million WPA workers earning an average of \$52 a month. Although 80 percent of WPA funds were spent on construction projects, including roads, bridges, parks, playgrounds, air landing fields, and public buildings, there were also numerous non-construction jobs available. Sewing, educational, health, and clerical projects abounded; WPA workers provided disaster relief, did scientific research, restored historic sites, and engaged in conservation programs. Over the course of seven years, the WPA generated more than three million jobs each year, at a total cost of \$10.7 billion.

Despite the overwhelming number of unemployed men seeking relief, women formed a critical portion of the unemployed in 1935. Therefore, Hopkins, with the wholehearted support of Eleanor Roosevelt, established a Women's and Professional Division within the WPA, headed by Ellen Woodward. In addition, Hopkins extended aid to the artistic community and received a great deal of criticism when he developed the WPA Federal Arts Project, known as Federal One. This program had roots in FERA and CWA programs to help the country's thousands of unemployed artists, musicians, actors, and writers. The Federal Music Project provided work for musicians under the directorship of Nikolai Sokoloff. The Federal Theatre Project, under the direction of former Grinnellian Hallie Flanagan, brought live theater to about a million people each month in forty cities and twenty-two states. Holger Cahill directed the Federal Artists' Project, which provided work for thousands of unemployed muralists, easel painters, sculptors, and art teachers. The main program of the Federal Writers' Project, under the leadership of Henry Alsberg, was the production of the American Guide series, which included volumes providing detailed information on various states.

In late 1938, Roosevelt appointed Hopkins as Secretary of Commerce, thinking that this would set him up as a viable liberal candidate for president in 1940. However, the public perception of Hopkins's tax and spend and elect policy proved to be too much of a political liability. In addition, his increasingly poor health kept him out of the presidential race.

AFTER THE DEPRESSION

During World War II, Hopkins acted as Roosevelt's unofficial assistant and advisor. In 1941, at the president's request, Hopkins traveled to England and Russia on diplomatic missions to ascertain the allies' defense needs. On his return, Roosevelt directed Hopkins to oversee the massive buildup of war production after the passage of the legislation establishing the Lend-Lease plan. After Pearl Harbor was attacked in December 1941, Hopkins became a central figure in the nation's mobilization and a trusted confidante to the president. The worldwide attention that Hopkins received as Roosevelt's wartime advisor and emissary to Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, as administrator of Lend-Lease and mastermind of war production, and as the shadowy figure behind Roosevelt at the war conferences has somewhat subsumed his role as an architect of the American welfare system. Yet Hopkins always took great pride that he was able to marshal the resources of the federal government to champion the rights of the poorest one-third of the nation.

Hopkins died in early 1946 as a result of long-term digestive illness and complications relating to stomach cancer.

See Also: CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION (CWA); FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA); WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JUNE HOPKINS

HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (HUAC)

Between 1938 and 1968, the House of Representatives maintained a committee with a remit to investigate "subversive and un-American propaganda," a mission that it often and controversially pursued with indiscriminate enthusiasm. Samuel Dickstein, a New York congressman of Russian Jewish descent, had long been concerned about the behavior of fascistic and anti-Semitic groups during the Depression, and in January 1937 he introduced a resolution in the House calling for an investigation of organizations promoting "un-American propaganda." The resolution was tabled, but soon after, Texas Democrat Martin Dies introduced a similar motion. The anti-labor Texan's targets were on the left, but the two congressmen cooperated and secured a majority for the proposal in May 1938, with the tacit support of the House leadership and Vice President John Nance Garner, and HUAC was established as a temporary special committee. Contradicting Dickstein's original intent, HUAC focused less on Nazi groups and more on Communists, who were said to have penetrated New Deal agencies. Dies became the committee chair, and Dickstein was excluded.

HUAC was the product of the conservative coalition of Republicans and rural and southern Democrats who had turned against the New Deal and had become the dominant political force in the lower House. The committee won the blessings of radio priest Father Charles Coughlin, patriotic groups such as the Paul Reveres, right-wing columnists such as George Sokolsky, and anticommunist leaders of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). It was largely guided by its head of research, Dr. J. B. Matthews, who, after a career as a prominent fellow traveller (a term mainly applied to intellectuals sympathetic to the Communist cause but not party members), had turned on his former associates

with an apostate's zeal. With the American Communist Party reaching its heyday, war looming in Europe, and fears growing of fifth column activities in the United States, HUAC secured broad public approval.

Under Dies, HUAC was a vehicle for attacking the New Deal and its labor and popular front allies, some of which were Communist fronts. It paid some attention to fascist groups such as the German-American Bund, but its principal targets were New Deal agencies such as the Works Progress Administration (especially its suspect Federal Theater Project), New Deal allies such as the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), and such popular front groups as the American League for Peace and Democracy. HUAC initially relied on voluntary witnesses, often drawn from anticommunist groups eager to denounce the left. John P. Frey of the AFL testified that Communists were operating through the CIO, and Walter Steele, head of the American Coalition of Patriotic Societies, which represented over a hundred patriotic organizations, named hundreds of other organizations as subject to communist influence. Early on, HUAC acquired a reputation for biased proceedings. One target in 1938 was the CIO-Democratic Party alliance in Michigan, which was identified with the celebrated 1937 sit-down strikes at General Motors in Flint. The strikers had been afforded the protection of the National Guard by the New Deal governor Frank Murphy, who was running for re-election in the fall of 1938. In October HUAC visited Detroit as part of a series of hearings into the labor movement. Witnesses attributed the sit-down strikes to Communists, whom they recklessly linked to Murphy. A furious Franklin Roosevelt made his first public assault on HUAC, but Murphy, a major symbol of the New Deal, lost re-election, apparently the victim of red-baiting.

With the midterm elections over, HUAC became a bit less energetic. Criticized for its preoccupation with Communist and front groups, it made some effort to investigate anti-Semitic and Nazi groups in 1939 and 1940, particularly after the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 and the outbreak of war in Europe. But resident aliens and the Communist Party and its alleged New Deal links remained fa-

vorite targets, and Dies relished harassing the Roosevelt administration. With Dies warning of subversion in the defense industries as German armies swept across Europe, the committee rose in public estimation and its appropriation was increased. But beginning in 1941, when the United States entered the war as an ally of the Soviet Union and American communists became enthusiastic supporters of the war effort, the "little red scare" faded. Thereafter, HUAC rarely held public hearings, and its activities consisted of little more than the cavortings of the chairman, who mostly used his office to release the names of federal employees he thought should be dismissed for their alleged front associations. HUAC might have redeemed itself in 1943 when it investigated the internment of Japanese Americans, but it used the occasion to encourage scare stories about Japanese subversion. By that time HUAC was being accused of hindering the war effort and its public support had diminished; in 1944 Martin Dies decided not to seek re-election to Congress. In January 1945, in a skilful parliamentary maneuver, Representative John Rankin of Mississippi secured a resolution making HUAC a permanent committee. It would re-emerge powerfully in the Cold War era.

See Also: ANTICOMMUNISM; COMMUNIST PARTY.

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M. J. HEALE

HOUSING

The devastating effects of the Great Depression on both the U. S. home-building industry and the homeowner were immediately visible. Residential home building and home repair came to a near standstill, contributing to unemployment in thousands of related industries ranging from lumber to real estate. Historian Kenneth Jackson calculated that between 1928 and 1933 new home construction dropped 95 percent and expenditures on home maintenance fell 90 percent. By early 1933 half of the nation's homeowners were in default on their mortgages.

In his famous oral history of the Great Depression, *Hard Times* (1970), Studs Terkel recounted how Americans blamed themselves or other family members for the humiliation of repossession. The nation's foremost symbol of individualism and security was revealed to be just another commodity subject to seizure. In a typical account, Slim Collier recalled how his father, a tool and die maker, responded to the loss of his real estate with "anger and frustration [that] colored my whole life." A decade earlier, local bankers and businessmen probably applauded the real estate investments made by Collier's father as a sound strategy to improve his economic and class standings.

Families who could not afford to pay their mortgages or rents had few options. In order to avoid the public humiliation of eviction, most moved in with other family members or friends before legal proceedings were instituted. In both rural and urban areas, some families remained as squatters in their own houses or apartments or in homes vacated by others who had been evicted by banks or landlords. A small minority sought shelter or housing assistance from religious or private charitable organizations. Homeless families gathered in makeshift communities called Hoovervilles, devoid of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. Automobiles, railroad cars, grain bins, barns, sheds, and shacks also provided shelter for members of the peaceful army of the dispossessed.

The devastation of the home-building industry and the dissolution of the American Dream of home ownership destroyed any vestiges of a

laissez-faire approach to the housing market. Seemingly moved by the plight of the millions of families who suffered the social and economic indignities of eviction, deferred ordinary home maintenance, or abandoned hope of purchasing a home, Congress and the administrations of Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt passed a plethora of housing bills. Both administrations and Congress considered the revitalization of the home construction, real estate, and home finance sectors of the economy to be paramount in solving the housing problems faced by ordinary Americans.

Seeking to maintain the status quo, the 1931 President's National Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership downplayed calls for the creation of a federally financed public housing program. Instead, it promoted housing legislation and policy that encouraged suburban growth and urban decline—trends that had emerged a decade earlier with the rise of automobile ownership and road construction. The first piece of housing legislation supported by President Hoover, the Federal Home Loan Bank Act (1932), increased the amount of capital available to banks to lend to home builders. The Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Act, passed in 1932 with support of Hoover, authorized the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to offer loans to limited-dividend housing corporations for the construction of urban housing. The only project instituted under the program was New York City's Knickerbocker Village—New York was the only state that had the necessary enabling legislation.

Under President Roosevelt's New Deal, the number, scope, and effectiveness of federal housing programs increased dramatically. As historian Gail Radford observed in 1996, under Roosevelt, a "bifurcated" federal housing policy emerged that . . . provided broad political and financial support for housing agencies that aided upper- and middle-income families, such as the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC), established in April 1933, and the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), created in June 1933. By contrast, programs that assisted families who could not afford to purchase or rent a home on the private market, such as those created under the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works Administration (PWA) in 1933



This dark hallway in a Chicago rooming house was typical of the living conditions facing many poor urban Americans during the Depression. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION



These dilapidated buildings stood on the Georgia State Capitol Homes site in Atlanta, Georgia, before the U.S. Housing Authority demolished them and began a construction project on the site during the late 1930s. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

and the United States Housing Authority (USHA) in 1937, were poorly funded and subject to political attack.

The HOLC and the FHA did not directly spur economic recovery, but they did help to preserve the economic and social value of home ownership among wage-earning families. According to one estimate, the HOLC refinanced approximately one-tenth of the nation's nonfarm residences between 1933 and 1935. At the same time, the policies adopted by these agencies supported informal practices of racial and social class residential segregation and urban divestment. Through its sale of affordable home mortgage insurance and its creation of minimal construction standards, the FHA en-

couraged the growth of outlying suburban areas, which were usually segregated by race and class, and discouraged investment in older, urban neighborhoods where greater racial, ethnic and religious diversity often existed.

Ironically perhaps, the New Deal agencies that helped to preserve the commercial housing market, such as the FHA, are less celebrated than two other Roosevelt administration initiatives that frequently are portrayed as political failures—the federally subsidized, low-income public housing program and the model community programs. In 1933 and 1934 the PWA's Division of Housing offered low-interest loans to several limited-dividend housing corporations for the construction of urban housing.



The Georgia State Capitol Homes site in Atlanta in the early 1940s after completion of the U.S. Housing Authority construction project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Catherine Bauer, author of the classic 1934 study *Modern Housing*, regarded Philadelphia's PWA-financed Carl Mackley Houses as a model community, partly because of the way architects Alfred Katsner and Oscar Stonorov used architectural design and community planning to foster resident interaction. The optimism Bauer and other reformers expressed in the early days of the public housing movement began to erode when the PWA discontinued the loan program in 1934 and began to build public housing directly. Although a few PWA-built public housing developments, such as Atlanta's Techwood Homes, featured sleek international-style architecture, civic art, and community facilities, inadequate funding resulted in the elimination

from most developments of the amenities advocated by reform-minded planners.

The USHA inherited the public housing program from the PWA in 1937 upon the passage of the United States Housing Act, commonly known as the Wagner-Steagall Act. The USHA provided long-term, low-interest loans to local public housing authorities for the construction of public housing developments, and then it subsidized their operation. Strict per-unit construction cost limits inserted into the Wagner-Steagall Act by the political allies of the home-building, real estate, and banking sectors resulted in housing that was frequently inferior in terms of location and appear-

ance, and its inhabitants were economically and socially stigmatized.

In 1937 the Farm Security Administration was assigned responsibility for the Greenbelt Town and Subsistence Homestead programs started three years earlier. Originally under the direction of Roosevelt braintruster Rexford G. Tugwell, the three Greenbelt towns—Greenbelt, Maryland; Greendale, Wisconsin; and Greenhills, Ohio—demonstrated the social and economic value of comprehensive community planning and the merit of alternatives to commercial housing. Subsistence Homesteads such as Arthurdale, West Virginia, which combined subsistence agriculture and industrial labor shared at least two characteristics with the low-income, public housing program: Both were woefully underfunded, and both were highly vulnerable to political attack. Neither the low-income public housing developments nor the experimental communities built under the New Deal excited sufficient interest to muster the political and economic power necessary to bring about a fundamental shift in patterns of housing development and ownership.

The Great Depression threatened the American Dream of homeownership, practically extinguished the demand for new residential home building, and dramatically curtailed home improvements. Unwilling to accept the political consequences of a further reduction in housing standards, Congress and Presidents Hoover and Roosevelt assembled the funds necessary to shore up the declining private fortunes of the home-building industry and validate the sanctity of home ownership. But the United States's housing woes did not end with the Great Depression: mobilization for World War II only worsened the problem wage-earning families in rural and urban areas encountered during the Depression—a scarcity of affordable housing. Despite massive federal government intervention, the United States remained one-third poorly housed throughout the Great Depression.

See Also: BAUER, CATHERINE; CITIES AND SUBURBS; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); FEDERAL NATIONAL MORTGAGE ASSOCIATION (FNMA); FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN INSURANCE CORPORATION (FSLIC);

GREENBELT TOWNS; HOMELESSNESS; REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

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KRISTIN M. SZYLVIAN

HOUSTON, CHARLES

Charles Hamilton Houston (1895–1950), law professor, litigator, and civil rights legal strategist,

played a principal role in conceptualizing, defining and setting the pace of the legal phase of the African-American struggle against racial discrimination and segregation in education from the 1930s to 1950. His work was pivotal in the education of African-American lawyers; the development of a legal strategy to destroy the constitutional underpinnings of racial segregation; the litigation of suits challenging racial discrimination in education, employment, and housing; and the incorporation of an activist philosophy of social engineering into the jurisprudential matrix of the United States.

Born Charles Hamilton Houston in Washington, D.C., on September 3, 1895, to William LePre Houston, a lawyer, and Mary Ethel Hamilton Houston, a hairdresser and former teacher, Houston attended racially segregated public schools until his graduation from M Street High School in 1911. He graduated with honors from Amherst College in Massachusetts in 1915. After teaching briefly at Howard University and serving as an officer in the segregated armed forces during World War I, Houston attended Harvard Law School. There he became the first African-American editor of the *Harvard Law Review* (in 1921) and earned both his LL.B. with honors (1922) and the Doctorate in Juridical Science (1923). He was admitted to the District of Columbia bar in 1924 and joined his father to form a law practice, Houston and Houston.

During the Great Depression and the New Deal era, Houston practiced and taught law. As the chief academic officer and Vice Dean of Howard University's Law School, Houston not only instituted new procedures and standards, but also re-allocated funds to satisfy the requirements for the law school's approval by the American Bar Association and accreditation by the Association of American Law Schools. As a professor of law, Houston introduced to Howard's students a non-traditional philosophy of law he called social engineering. The principal concepts of Houston's philosophy of social engineering were two: first, the propriety of creative and strategic use of the legal system by lawyers to bring about just results and equal protection of the law; second, the duty of lawyers in the United States to use law as an instrument of social change, democratic advancement, and racial justice. Beyond

that, he challenged African-American lawyers to serve as interpreters and proponents of the race's rights and aspirations. Practicing lawyers and Howard's students, among them Thurgood Marshall and Oliver Hill, were further challenged to work for African Americans' full citizenship rights and equality under the law.

As the first salaried special counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) from 1934 to 1950, Houston conceptualized and implemented, with Thurgood Marshall as his assistant special counsel, a protracted litigation campaign to have racial segregation in public education declared illegal. Taking into account institutionalized racism and the Supreme Court's reliance upon precedent, the campaign's scores of skilled and committed lawyers affiliated nationally and locally with the NAACP and its separately incorporated legal defense and educational fund focused on gradually but systematically invalidating the controlling precedent for racial segregation—the "separate but equal" doctrine set forth in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896)—and on establishing new precedents for interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause. These lawyers included, but were not limited to Marshall, Hill, Robert Carter, William Hastie, Z. Alexander Looby, James Nabrit, Constance Baker Motley, Conrad Pearson, Louis Redding and Arthur Shores. With Houston's direction during the latter 1930s and his advice to Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP's Legal Defense Fund, and cooperating attorneys throughout the 1940s, test cases were argued until adequate precedents had been established to launch in 1950 a direct attack on the legality of racially segregated schools in the states and the District of Columbia. This final phase of the litigation campaign culminated in the 1954 *Brown v. Board and Bolling v. Sharpe* rulings of the U.S. Supreme Court, that declared racially segregated public schools illegal.

Although serving as a consultant-legal counsel to the NAACP and its Legal Defense Fund after returning to private practice in 1940, Houston focused his practice on racial discrimination in employment and housing. With Joseph Waddy, Spottswood Robinson III and other attorneys, Houston won

precedent-setting cases before the U.S. Supreme Court concerning the duty of fair representation of workers and African Americans seeking to purchase homes. In 1944, efforts to protect African American railroad workers against discriminatory treatment and racially-motivated violence culminated in two cases before the U.S. Supreme Court, *William Steele v. Louisville & Nashville Railroad* and *Tom Tunstall v. Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen*. Agreeing with Charles Houston's argument, Supreme Court justices handed down an opinion in *Steele* and *Tunstall* that established the duty of statutory bargaining agents to represent fairly and impartially all workers whose interest by statute they were designated to represent in negotiations with employers. In *Hurd v. Hodge* and *Urciolo v. Hodge*, Houston successfully argued against judicial enforcement of racially restrictive covenants to purchase agreements in the District of Columbia and in 1948 the U.S. Supreme Court prohibited court enforcement of covenants to housing contracts that restricted by race the sale of homes.

On April 20, 1950, Charles Houston succumbed to a heart attack in Washington, D.C. Although best known as Thurgood Marshall's mentor-teacher, Houston's lasting legacy includes his transformation of Howard University's law school during the Great Depression and his training of civil rights lawyers, his articulation of a jurisprudence of social engineering, and his contributions as legal architect and strategist of the legal phase of the early civil rights movement.

See Also: CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; HOWARD UNIVERSITY; NATURAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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GENNA RAE MCNEIL

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Howard University was founded in 1867 by an act of Congress and was named for General Oliver Otis Howard, former head of the Freedmen's Bureau. Howard's leadership was exclusively white until 1926, when Reverend Mordecai Johnson became its first black president. Virtually coinciding with Johnson's arrival was a pledge by Congress to provide an annual appropriation to support the university's endowment. Congress's financial support allowed Johnson to implement his plan to improve the academic quality of the school. (When Johnson arrived, only the medical and dental schools—out of ten professional and graduate schools—were accredited.) Johnson made his first move with the law school. He hired Charles Houston as the new dean and gave him the mandate to secure accreditation. Houston, who would become the first legal counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and one of the architects of the NAACP's civil rights legal strategies, hired William Hastie and James Nabrit, among others. In 1931, Howard's law school was accredited and, more importantly, became nationally recognized for its leadership in civil rights law. Civil rights pioneers Thurgood Marshall and Robert Carter graduated in 1933 and 1940, respectively. Furthermore, Nabrit, who participated in virtually every civil rights brief from 1927 to 1954, created the nation's first civil rights law class in 1938.

Howard's academic prominence was not limited to the law school. Scientists like zoologist Ernest Everet Just, chemist Percy Julian, anthropologist Montague Cobb, and the medical school's Charles

Drew were all leaders in their disciplines. Alain Locke, whose anthology *The New Negro* gave form to the Harlem Renaissance, taught philosophy at Howard. Poet and literary critic Sterling Brown was also on the faculty, as were pioneering historians Charles H. Wesley and Rayford Logan, actor Todd Duncan, economist Abram Harris, political scientist Ralph Bunche, sociologist E. Franklin Frazier, and education specialists Dorothy Porter Wesley, Charles Thompson, and Doxey Wilkerson.

Many leading education philanthropists added to the government's support, thus providing financial security for Howard throughout the Great Depression. With its concentration of academic talent, Johnson's accreditation and building campaign, and secure finances, Howard was the most successful black academic center in the country. Fisk University in Tennessee and Atlanta University in Georgia were Howard's only competitors, but their resources paled in comparison.

This privileged position, however, did not translate into a peaceful existence. During the 1930s Howard undergraduates led marches against segregation in the House of Representatives' dining room, protested a national crime conference that ignored lynching, held peace rallies, and helped lead economic boycotts of local white merchants who refused to hire black workers. Faculty members arranged conferences that attacked New Deal policies, led community pickets, and organized a teachers' union that aligned itself with national labor causes and protested local segregation policies. Even Mordecai Johnson's actions occasionally inspired calls for his ouster: Because he thought the economic experiment in the Soviet Union was worth further study and because he defended the freedom of speech of even his most radical faculty, several congressmen were convinced that Johnson was a Communist, that he supported Communist teachings on campus, and that he harbored Communists. Federal investigations into Howard's affairs and teaching practices, however, failed to turn up sufficient evidence to fire Johnson or end financial support for the university.

When Howard attained academic excellence in the late 1920s it became the seed ground for several generations of intellectual and political activists. Al-

though its popularity among federal officials was not unanimous during the Depression, it enjoyed public support from such prominent figures as Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes. This support continued even despite strong faculty criticism of the New Deal. It is likely that Roosevelt believed that the symbolic importance of a national Negro university far outweighed the significance of any critiques that came from its campus.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BUNCHE, RALPH; EDUCATION; HOUSTON, CHARLES.

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JONATHAN SCOTT HOLLOWAY

HOWE, LOUIS MCHENRY

Louis McHenry Howe (1871–1936) was Franklin D. Roosevelt's close friend and chief political aide from 1912 until his death at the end of the president's first term. Born in Indianapolis, Howe grew up in Saratoga Springs, New York. After high school he worked for his family's weekly newspaper and part-time for New York City papers during the Saratoga horse racing season and the Albany legislative session. He wrote speeches and ran campaigns for various upstate Democratic politicians. When Roosevelt arrived in Albany as a state senator in 1911, both he and Howe were identified with the anti-Tammany Democratic League's commitment to conservation of resources and clean government.



Louis McHenry Howe (seated second from left) with Franklin D. Roosevelt and others in Hyde Park, New York, in July 1932.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Desperately ill during his 1912 state senate re-election bid, Roosevelt hired Howe to run his campaign. They won. Roosevelt soon learned that the country newsman was a skilled tactician, building networks, writing speeches, and planting favorable news stories. Roosevelt the public figure and Howe the private manipulator complemented each other. In 1913 Roosevelt became assistant secretary of the Navy and Howe became his chief aide. His principal assignment was to manage patronage and influence to make his boss the state's chief representative in the Wilson administration. They never displaced Tammany, but in 1920 Roosevelt was nominated for vice president on a ticket headed by Ohio's Governor James Cox. They lost, and Roosevelt returned to a business career.

When Roosevelt fell victim to polio in 1921 Howe shared responsibility for his care with Eleanor Roosevelt and moved into the Roosevelt's New York City house. While Roosevelt concentrated on regaining the use of his paralyzed legs, Howe focused on rebuilding his boss's political strength in New York and reassuring Roosevelt that he could still be a major national figure. Roosevelt relied heavily on Howe, but made his own major decisions. In 1928, as Alfred E. Smith sought the presidency, he allowed himself to be drafted for governor, a move that Howe strongly opposed. He won the governorship; Smith lost the presidency.

Roosevelt, Howe, and James A. Farley managed Roosevelt's successful 1932 campaign for the

presidency, using a team of scholars—a brain trust they had assembled during Roosevelt’s governorship—to develop issues and legislation. They were pioneering an approach that later, in Washington, would create a substantial network of staff and special offices—a fourth branch of government. Howe went to Washington as secretary to the president and lived in the White House with unlimited personal access to his old friend. He had helped to build the brain trust, but he had to fight for power with its members. He died on April 16, 1936. Howe is buried in Fall River, Massachusetts, where his grave is marked by a monument that is a smaller copy of Roosevelt’s at Hyde Park.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1932; ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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ALFRED B. ROLLINS, JR.

HUAC. *See* HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE.

HUGHES, CHARLES EVANS

Jurist and statesman Charles Evans Hughes (April 11, 1862–August 27, 1948) was born in Glen Falls, New York, the only child of David Charles Hughes, an evangelical minister, and Mary Catherine Connelly, a schoolteacher. His father’s calling carried the family to a number of New York and New Jersey communities during Charles’s youth. A precocious child, he studied at home until age nine, attended three years of public school in Newark and another year in Manhattan before entering college at Colgate (then Madison University). After two years at Colgate, he transferred to Brown University, finishing third in his class.

After graduating first in his Columbia law class, Hughes passed the New York bar with a record high score and joined a New York firm in 1884. He became a partner three years later and married the daughter of the firm’s senior partner the next year. Overcome by work and poor health, he left private practice briefly for a teaching position at Cornell Law School, but he soon returned to the firm, becoming a prominent figure in commercial law.

Hughes would also become active in public service and politics. As counsel to committees of the New York legislature, he led inquiries into corruption and mismanagement of the state’s gas, electric, and insurance industries. A reluctant but winning candidate for governor on the Republican ticket in 1906 and 1908, he pushed successfully for creation of two utility regulatory commissions and the first significant workman’s compensation program in the nation.

Although Theodore Roosevelt had backed Hughes in his two gubernatorial races, the future justice’s distaste for the give and take of politics caused strains in their relationship. In 1910, however, President William Howard Taft appointed Hughes to a seat on the United States Supreme Court, where he served with distinction until resigning in 1916 to make a losing bid for the White House against President Woodrow Wilson. Following the election, he returned to private practice in New York, then served as secretary of state in the Warren Harding administration.

In 1930, President Herbert Hoover brought Hughes back to the Supreme Court, this time as chief justice. Hughes held the Court’s center seat during one of the most tumultuous periods in its—and the nation’s—history. Although never as committed to the laissez faire philosophy of the Court’s “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” which critics had dubbed the most conservative justices of the period, Hughes wrote or joined a number of decisions rejecting New Deal programs and state legislation designed to pull the country out of the depths of the Depression. He spoke for the Court, for example, in *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. United States* (1935), invalidating provisions of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). But he also authored *Home Building & Loan v. Blaisdell* (1934),

substantially narrowing the scope of the contract clause as a restriction on state power. And when the Court began dismantling its laissez faire precedents during the 1937 court-packing episode, Hughes wrote the first two opinions signaling an end to that era: *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish* (1937), upholding a state minimum wage law for women virtually identical to one the Court had struck down the previous year; and *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin* (1937), upholding federal regulation of labor-management relations. Chief Justice Hughes retired from the Court in 1941 and died at age eight-six in 1948.

See Also: BLACK, HUGO; DOUGLAS, WILLIAM O.; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; HOLMES, OLIVER WENDELL, JR.; SUPREME COURT; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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TINSLEY E. YARBROUGH

HUGHES, LANGSTON

Langston Hughes (February 1, 1902–May 22, 1967), poet, dramatist, fiction writer, journalist, and lyricist, was perhaps the most versatile of African-American writers and, especially as a poet, the most beloved. Born in Joplin, Missouri, he grew up in Lawrence, Kansas, and Cleveland, Ohio, where he attended high school from 1916 to 1920. In Kansas, his maternal grandmother, an ardent abolitionist whose first husband had died at Harpers Ferry in 1859 as a member of John Brown's band, taught Hughes to revere the cause of social justice. In high school, Hughes was further influenced by his classmates, many of whom were the children of immigrants from eastern Europe. His first books, *The Weary Blues* (1926) and *Fine Clothes to the Jew*

(1927), were volumes of poetry that reflected both his lively social conscience and his commitment to the vernacular culture of black America, especially its music. A landmark essay, "The Negro Artist and the Racial Mountain" (published in the June 23, 1926, issue of *The Nation*), in which Hughes called on younger blacks to be proud of their ethnic heritage even as they insisted on artistic freedom, helped establish him as a key figure of the flourishing Harlem Renaissance. By 1930, however, Hughes began to sense the coming economic disaster. "New York began to be not so pleasant that winter," he would write in his 1940 autobiography, *The Big Sea*. "People were sleeping in subways or on newspapers in office doors, because they had no homes. And in every block a beggar appeared."

In 1931 and 1932 Hughes toured the South and the West by car, consciously trying to take his poetry to the people; he also publicly protested the treatment of the Scottsboro Boys. In 1932, he went to the Soviet Union to help make a film about race relations in the United States; when that venture collapsed, he stayed on for a year. About this time, Hughes, although never a Communist, wrote his most radical poems, including "Good Morning Revolution," "Goodbye Christ," and "One more 'S' in the U.S.A." (to make it Soviet). In 1933 and 1934, living in Carmel, California, he wrote the often bitter short stories that comprise *The Ways of White Folks* (1934). While there, he also worked on a play (never produced) about labor unrest in agricultural California. In 1935, his tragedy *Mulatto* opened on Broadway, but Hughes saw little of its profits because of the hostility of its producer, a white man. Disillusioned, he wrote "Let America Be America Again," a long poem intended as an anthem for the nation during the Depression.

In 1937, he spent three months in Spain as a war correspondent for the *Baltimore Afro-American* newspaper. Returning to America, he founded the Harlem Suitcase Theatre. Its first production, *Don't You Want to Be Free?* (1938), was a loosely constructed play-with-music that culminates in a rousing call for the unity of black and white workers. That year, 1938, the Communist International Workers Order published *A New Song*, a collection of Hughes's radical poems. However, he soon an-

gered the left by working on a Hollywood film, *Way Down South* (1939), that employed many movie stereotypes about black folk in Dixie. Although Hughes pleaded truthfully that he was destitute, certain critics lambasted him. A greater threat came from the right. In 1940, just before a gala book luncheon in California to mark the appearance of *The Big Sea*, supporters of an evangelist attacked in Hughes's "Goodbye Christ" forced its organizers to cancel the event. Retreating, Hughes issued a statement renouncing the poem. His role as a major literary commentator on the ills of capitalism in America was over, just as the Depression itself approached its end.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LITERATURE; WRIGHT, RICHARD.

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ARNOLD RAMPERSAD

HULL, CORDELL

Cordell Hull (October 2, 1871–July 23, 1955) was the longest serving secretary of state in U.S. history. Hull was born in a rented log cabin in Overton County, Tennessee, in the foothills of the Cumberland Mountains. He was the third of five sons born to William and Elizabeth Riley Hull. Of humble background, Hull was educated by his mother and by an itinerant tutor who would spend two to three months during the winter teaching Hull and other neighborhood children. At fourteen, Hull enrolled at the Montvale Institute in Celina, Tennessee. This was followed by a stint in university and eventually law school, which Hull finished in 1891.

Hull's association with politics began at the age of nineteen when he was elected chairman of the



Langston Hughes, photographed by Gordon Parks in 1943.

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Democratic Party for his county. At twenty-one, Hull entered the state legislature. He then served for a time as a judge, and in 1906 was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. Hull kept this seat until 1920, when, along with many of his fellow Democrats, he fell victim to the anti-Wilsonian sentiment that followed World War I and Wilson's drive to involve the United States in the League of Nations. Without a place in Congress, Hull took up the chairmanship of the Democratic National Committee, a post that he kept until 1924. This gave Hull his first real national exposure, which he used to regain his congressional seat in the 1922 election. For a time, Hull entertained the hope that he might become his party's nominee for president in the 1928 election, but he eventually dropped the idea, resolving instead to run successfully for the Senate two years later.

Hull enjoyed a good reputation among his congressional colleagues, and was widely regarded as a moderate, cautious, and hardworking Democrat who had a knack for bringing antagonists together in a spirit of cooperation. With the exception of his persistent advocacy of free trade, Hull rarely took a stand on controversial issues and in general sought to avoid confrontation. Hull's critics have argued that these characteristics meant that Hull left no real mark as a legislator, and much the same charge was laid against him as secretary of state. But Hull's moderation (particularly his moderate internationalism) and the broad public and party support he enjoyed made him a political asset. Franklin D. Roosevelt recognized this, and when he decided to run for president in 1932, he sought Hull's support. Hull campaigned vigorously for Roosevelt, and was rewarded for his loyalty with a seat in the cabinet as secretary of state, a post he would retain until November 1944.

Hull's memoirs, published in 1948, are littered with references to his frustration over Roosevelt's tendency to act as his own secretary of state, and there is no question that on a wide range of issues, Roosevelt often chose to ignore or bypass Hull. This tendency became even more pronounced during World War II. Hull played little role, for example, in the intimate and almost continuous communication between British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Roosevelt. Hull also remained largely outside the summit diplomacy that became the hallmark of the Grand Alliance led by Churchill, Roosevelt, and Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin. But in other areas, Hull did have an impact. During the 1930s, for example, Hull played a significant role in the development of the Good Neighbor Policy, and he is largely responsible for the passage of the 1934 Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act, which led to a significant expansion of U.S. trade in the mid to late 1930s. During the war, Hull also became intimately involved in the negotiation of the 1942 Lend-Lease Consideration Agreement, which was designed to obtain trade and other economic concessions from the British as a quid pro quo for Lend-Lease aide, and later he was involved in postwar planning and preparation. With Roosevelt's encouragement, Hull helped engineer U.S. commitment to postwar internationalism and the establishment of the United

Nations through his effective involvement in the 1943 Foreign Ministers Conference in Moscow, the 1944 Dumbarton Oaks Conference in Washington, and the 1945 San Francisco Conference, where the United Nations was officially born. In recognition of his key role in the establishment of the UN, Hull was awarded the Nobel Prize for peace in 1945.

See Also: GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY;
ISOLATIONISM.

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DAVID B. WOOLNER

HUMOR

Sigmund Freud's astute observation about the design of humor broadly refracted the tone of laughter throughout the Great Depression: "Humour is not resigned, it is rebellious. It signifies the triumph not only of the ego, but also of the pleasure principle, which is strong enough to assert itself here in the face of the adverse real circumstances."

From the earliest settlements in the seventeenth century, humor has been axial in American culture, a rebellious, rallying, and ribald dynamic. Pinpointing its enduring relevance, Constance

Rourke noted in *American Humor: A Study of the National Character* (1931) that “Humor has been a fashioning instrument in America, cleaving its way through the national life, holding tenaciously to the spread elements of that life. . . .” Its ultimate objective, Rourke asserted, was uniting “the unconscious objective of a disunited people . . . and the rounded completion of an American type.”

Salient motifs of humor, a melange of resistance and rebellion, irony and nonsense, coursed through the travails of the Great Depression, as they had during previous domestic crises. The articulation of humor mirrored and uplifted people in their attempt to cope with events that were confusing, contradictory, and seemingly incessant: “We’ll hold the distinction of being the only country in the history of the world that ever went to the poor house in an automobile,” offered Will Rogers, the popular crackerbarrel wit in the early decades of the twentieth century.

The comical is often a spirited interplay with incongruity. Initially, the stock market convulsion and swift economic decline recorded instant disbelief. Theatrical comedian Ed Wynn, playing the classic fool in Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart’s *Simple Simon* (1930), would lay flat on his back on the stage and insist that business was looking up. As financial adversity mounted, the urge to retaliate against the power elite, the Wall Street bankers, investment brokers, and corporate managers, assumed robust comic proportions. Will Rogers cracked that “every international banker ought to have printed over his office door, ‘Alive today by the grace of a nation that has a sense of humor.’”

At the same time, distrust of political and economic institutions loomed large. The memorable song, “Whatever It Is, I’m Against It,” rendered by Groucho Marx in *Horsefeathers* (1932), summed up the pervasive, anarchistic feeling that nothing was going right and everything deserved condemnation. Several films spoofed the state outright. The public’s rebellious resentments could be scene in the Marx Brothers’ *Duck Soup* (1933) and W. C. Fields’s *Million Dollar Legs* (1932), both set in fictitious countries beset with chaotic economic conditions and corrupt politicians. As the president of “Freedonia,” Groucho Marx sings “If you think this

country’s bad off now, wait till I get through with it,” while W. C. Fields, head of “Klopstockia,” manages to remain in office as long as he triumphs at arm wrestling.

Virtually every major segment of media, including the stage, novels, magazines, cinema, and radio, sought in humor a means of expressing people’s desire to escape from the economic distress while grappling with its tangled meaning. Reaching the largest audience throughout the decade was the comic film. Across the regions, an astonishing sixty to seventy-five million persons, approximately 61 percent of the population, went to the movie theaters each week.

Several themes infused the early films. The comedy of pathos, of irony and frustration, in the early years gave way to the humor of aggression and an expression of hope later in the decade. The major film figures of the 1920s were small, wiry, and resilient. Against the antagonistic environs of the modern city, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton, Harold Lloyd, and Harry Langston survived with classical, comedic dignity. The Great Depression forced a shift from the comedy of individual poignancy to the comedy of resilience and retaliation. W. C. Fields, the Marx Brothers, Mae West, Carol Lombard—as well as the radio comedians, Fred Allen, Jack Benny, George Burns, and Gracie Allen—used their comedy as a buffer against the economic harshness. On occasion, their routines plunged deep into working-class hostility.

A prominent cinematic take-off of the theatrical comedy of manners was the screwball comedy: In addition to *Duck Soup*, *Horse Feathers*, and *Million Dollar Legs*, these include *Bringing up Baby* (1938), *It Happened One Night* (1934), *My Man Godfrey* (1936), and *You Can’t Take It with You* (1938). This farcical leitmotif satirized the harsh realities of economic plight and lampooned the upper class, their negative impact and banal life style. Invoking the homeless in *My Man Godfrey* (1936)—particularly “the forgotten man” emphasized in President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s speech—was a scene of men in a Hooverville shelter by a city dump that dramatically contrasted the woeful condition of the unemployed against the asinine game of a scavenger hunt of the wealthy elite.

Concomitantly, the application of the "Production Code" in 1934 that promulgated "the moral importance of entertainment" altered the language and plot of comedy films. Eschewing the amoral, dark, and surreal comedy that had formed the keystone of farcical routines early in the 1930s, the Production Code led to a rollicking, subversive sexual humor, an imaginative comedy that suggested but never exposed sexual antics. Mae West, whose comedic fare had incited the Code, wrote, directed, and starred in films where her sexual innuendoes became repeatable rejoinders: *Night after Night* (1932), *She Done Him Wrong* (1933), and *My Little Chickadee* (1940). Entering a speakeasy in *Night after Night*, for example, West replies to a hatcheck girl who exclaims, "Goodness, what lovely diamonds," that "Goodness had nothin' do with it, dearie."

Additionally, radio comedy was a coalescing comedic force that extended through the difficult times of World War II. The most popular shows featured Jack Benny, *Amos 'n Andy* (Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll), Fred Allen, George Burns and Gracie Allen, *Fibber McGee and Molly* (Jim and Marian Jordan), Eddie Cantor, Bob Hope, and Edgar Bergen and Charlie McCarthy, plus a comedy panel, audience-participation program, *Can You Top This?*

Writers, poets, novelists, and essayists fashioned comic plots that directly or obliquely spanned the economic rupturing: James Thurber, E. B. White, S. J. Perelman, Langston Hughes, H. L. Mencken, and Stephen Leacock. Cartoonists in the preeminent literary magazine, *The New Yorker*, offered sharp social criticism together with a sardonic look at the crumbling conditions, as well as changes in social mores shaped by the Depression.

In sum, the vast resource of rebellious humor was in full play as the populace confronted the enormous distress and mystery engendered by the Great Depression.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; LEISURE; MARX BROTHERS; RADIO; ROGERS, WILL; WEST, MAE.

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JOSEPH BOSKIN

HUNDRED DAYS

On March 4, 1933, Franklin Roosevelt returned to the White House after his inaugural, and Mrs. Roosevelt served hot dogs for the lunch guests. The president then reviewed the inauguration parade, giving pride of place on the stand to Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and the surviving members of the Wilson administration. While the band played the "Franklin D. Roosevelt Inauguration March," composed by the new secretary of the treasury, William Woodin, the incoming attorney general, Homer Cummings, studied the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917. He decided that it could be used to close the banks and to halt the shipment of gold out of the country. Holdover Republican officials closeted with Roosevelt's advisers worked round the clock to find some method of reopening the nation's banks. The country's banking system had come to a halt when the governors of New York and Illinois had bowed to the inevitable and closed their state's banks in the early morning of inauguration day. On Sunday evening, Roosevelt signed proclamations closing the banks and called Congress into special session. By early Tuesday morning Woodin and Ray Moley had agreed that they

should implement the plans outlined by departing Republican officials for reopening and reorganizing the banks, that they should make a “tremendous gesture” for economy in government, and that Roosevelt should make a “man to man appeal” for public confidence.

REOPENING THE BANKS

By the time Congress came into session on Thursday, March 9, the chairman of the House Banking Committee only had one copy of the bill that had finally been drafted at 3:00 that morning. He “came down the center aisle of the House waving this thing. ‘Here is this bill, let’s pass it.’” And the House passed it in forty minutes. The Senate was more deliberate but had still passed it by 8:30 that evening. Two days later the House voted to give the president the power he asked for to cut and to reform veterans’ benefits and to cut federal salaries. On Sunday Roosevelt gave his first fireside chat explaining the banking crisis and how banks would reopen. The next day the first ones did.

Roosevelt had not originally intended that Congress should stay in session past the ten days that it took to reopen the banks. But by the time Congress assembled he had been persuaded to take advantage of Congress’s presence and ask for farm legislation and unemployment relief. The opportunity to develop recovery and reform legislation as quickly as possible was irresistible. By the time Congress finally adjourned on June 16, the first one hundred days of the Roosevelt administration had produced sixteen major pieces of legislation. The cantankerous Congress, which had been gridlocked in bitter recrimination with the outgoing president, responded enthusiastically to the appeals of the new president. The politicians laid aside previous divisions, discarded long-held principles, and both grasped for themselves and gave to the executive vast, often unspecified powers, unheard of in peacetime. The federal government was given the power to decide which banks should reopen, to regulate the stock exchange, to determine the gold value of the dollar, to prescribe minimum wages and prices, to pay farmers not to produce, to pay money to the unemployed, to plan and regenerate a whole river basin across six states, to spend bil-

ions of dollars on public works, and to underwrite credit for bankers, homeowners, and farmers.

These first “Hundred Days” of the New Deal have served as a model for future presidents of bold leadership and executive legislative harmony. Jimmy Carter’s adviser Stuart Eizenstat noted that since Roosevelt “the first hundred days of an administration have been closely watched as a sign of what can be expected over the course of the entire administration.” Richard Nixon, conscious that the “dam against criticism” would come crashing down after a hundred days, created a “100 days group” that would push departments to bring in legislative proposals by the twelve-week deadline so that a “First Quarter Report” could be produced to show that the administration had met the hundred-day “test.” But Arthur Schlesinger warned of the hundred-day “trap.” “Roosevelt’s 100 days was,” he said “a unique episode which grew out of a unique crisis.” What were the particular circumstances that enabled Roosevelt, but not subsequent presidents, to exercise such bold leadership and to command such congressional support?

ECONOMIC CRISIS AND CONSTITUENCY PRESSURE

The unprecedented scale of the economic catastrophe faced by the United States led many to equate the position with war and to turn to the model of 1917, when the federal government had exercised vast emergency powers to mobilize men and resources to fight a European war. The passage in Roosevelt’s inaugural address that drew the most sustained applause was his promise that if Congress did not act, he would ask Congress for “broad executive power to wage 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.” Roosevelt and his advisers turned to old wartime statutes to handle the new crisis. They consciously modeled new action agencies, such as the National Recovery Administration (NRA), on wartime predecessors. They used the emergency as the constitutional rationale for bold new powers. Men and women who had had their first taste of public life running those wartime agencies returned to Washington in 1933 from private life to sign on for the duration.

This need for action in an emergency and the willingness to contemplate dictatorial powers for a president certainly infused Congress in the first days of the Roosevelt administration. Republican minority leader Bertrand Snell said of the banking bill, "The house is burning down and the president of the United States says this is the way to put out the fire. And to me, at this time, there is only one way to answer that question and that is to give the president what he demands and says is necessary to meet the situation."

But more conventional politics also assisted the president. The Democrats enjoyed healthy majorities in both houses of Congress: 311 to 116 in the House, 60 to 35 in the Senate. They also confronted a Republican opposition that was split between a progressive wing prepared to support many New Deal measures, particularly those assisting farmers, and a stand-pat conservative faction for whom the New Deal was anathema. Many members of Congress had been elected for the first time in 1932, but congressional leadership was in the hands of skilled and experienced southern Democrats. They were loyal party men, particularly comfortable with measures, such as financial regulation, that they could interpret as the legacy of Wilsonian reform. They were anxious to build a legislative record, and they were personally friendly to Roosevelt, whose nomination most of them had supported in opposition to the hated Al Smith. From his time in Washington under Wilson to his stays at Warm Springs, Roosevelt had, in turn, established a warm and personal rapport with these congressmen, and he never underestimated their almost limitless susceptibility to presidential flattery. In addition, the traditional patronage available to any new administration was vastly increased by the proliferation of emergency agencies. The prospect of these jobs kept many congressmen in line, especially since most of them were not filled until the end of the Hundred Days.

But constituency pressure pushed Congress into line with the legislation of the Hundred Days. The desperate unemployed and farmers and homeowners threatened with eviction demanded help. Roosevelt quickly demonstrated his ability to inspire ordinary Americans. He cultivated the press. He held the first of 377 press conferences on March

8. The relaxed and informal gathering in his office was in stark contrast to the suspicion and distance created by Herbert Hoover. As one journalist noted, "in that first sitting . . . the new president gave the correspondents more sensational news than some of his predecessors had handed out in four years." The hardboiled newsmen were bowled over and spontaneously applauded. Roosevelt's first fireside chat on March 12 even more effectively spoke over the heads of Washington politicians directly to the American people. The president took great care to make his case to an audience he envisaged sitting round the fireside. His preparations were meticulous: the right angle of the microphone, a false tooth to close a gap in his two lower front teeth, the speed of delivery (about one hundred words a minute), and the language (over three quarters of the words were among the thousand most commonly used). The people responded: Over 450,000 wrote to the White House in the first week.

Congress however was not browbeaten into blanket submission to Roosevelt. In the first place, there was no presidential masterplan for the Hundred Days. Much was piecemeal and opportunistic: seeking the repeal of prohibition, for example, to soften the unpopularity of the Economy Act. Much was inserted by Congress: inflationary measures in the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the federal insurance of bank deposits. The great National Industrial Recovery Act was prompted by the likely passage of the Black thirty-hour bill, which Roosevelt considered unworkable. Roosevelt set his advisers on the task of pulling together existing recovery proposals into an administration proposal. The great recovery measures in agriculture and industry were largely enabling measures: The farm act and the recovery act laid out sometimes contradictory policy options. Which options would be adopted would depend on the administrators. Other more presidentially inspired measures, such as the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), were hurried onto the statute book to take advantage of the favorable political climate.

The passage of legislation was certainly helped by the relative weakness of organized interest groups. Labor was enfeebled, farmers were divided,

and businessmen, especially bankers, were discredited. Roosevelt faced down the veterans' lobby with Republican support. It is difficult to think that a regional authority like the TVA could have been created if the individual southern states had not been in such a weak position. Nevertheless, the vast powers given to the federal government were circumscribed. The federal government simply lacked the "state capacity" to implement coercive centralized measures; it lacked both the bureaucracy and the information to drive through top-down programs. Bankers would have to provide advice on which banks could be reopened; farmers would have to administer the production control programs; businessmen would have to staff the NRA code authorities; and the states would have to administer the relief program.

Some of the prominent figures in the Hundred Days—Harry Hopkins, Henry Wallace, and Harold Ickes—would still be central figures in the Roosevelt government when the president died in 1945. Others who survived, like Henry Morgenthau, Jr., and Frances Perkins, played a relatively minor role in the early months of the New Deal. By contrast, some key players in the Hundred Days would quickly pass from the stage or from the good graces of the administration: Brains Truster Ray Moley; the advocate of rigid economy Lewis Douglas; the protégé of Bernard Baruch Hugh Johnson; the Wilsonian warhorse Daniel Roper—all were influential in 1933 but played little role afterwards.

In a similar vein, the Hundred Days bought relief for the unemployed, the protection of labor standards, farm price supports, liberalized credit for homeowners and farmers, public works spending, securities regulation, and the TVA. But they also bought measures designed to slash government spending, to increase the tax burden through regressive excise taxes, and to foster business-government cooperation. It was unclear at the end of the Hundred Days whether the former or the latter would be the force of the New Deal future.

See Also: FIRESIDE CHATS; NEW DEAL; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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TONY BADGER

HUNGER MARCHES

When the Great Depression began, the Communist International called for unified protests by the unemployed on a single day. In the United States, the Communist Party and allied organizations publicized International Unemployment Day in their newspapers, in leaflets, and in preparatory demonstrations and meetings. Hundreds of thousands of unemployed people turned out in cities across the country on March 6, 1930, for militant protests for "Work or Wages," to which the police responded harshly. The Communist movement then organized Unemployed Councils, neighborhood organizations of the unemployed that fought evictions and put pressure on governmental authorities to provide assistance. Major protests were often dubbed "hunger marches."

In 1931 there were local hunger marches and marches on state capitols in about a dozen states, often with marchers converging from different parts of the state to demand relief and unemployment insurance. The first national hunger march took place on December 7, 1931, timed to coincide with the opening of Congress. The demands of the march included unemployment insurance and a social insurance system to cover maternity care, illness, accidents, and old age. There were local demonstrations and conferences to select 1,670 delegates who converged on Washington from four separate columns. The marchers were unsuccessful in their attempts to address Congress or meet with the president, but they held mass meetings on their return homeward and brought public attention to the plight of the jobless.

The most famous of the hunger marches was the March 7, 1932, Ford Hunger March. Three thousand marchers gathered in Detroit with the

goal of presenting demands at the Ford employment office in the suburb of Dearborn, a company town where Ford's main complex was located. Police used tear gas to stop the marchers from entering Dearborn. In response, some marchers threw stones. When the marchers reached the plant, the police opened fire, killing five. Authorities initially blamed Communists for what they called a riot, sought to arrest Communist leader William Z. Foster, and launched raids against left-wing organizations reminiscent of the hysteria following the Chicago Haymarket bombing of 1886. The massive funeral march of thirty thousand and the growth of left-wing organizations after the march indicated that repression would not break up the movement. Even within the company town of Dearborn, the Unemployed Council developed a significant base.

The second national hunger march in December 1932 had about twice as many delegates (3,200) as the first march. Delegations this time were able to meet with the presiding officers of the House and the Senate to present demands for cash winter relief, unemployment insurance, an end to military spending, and the taxing of corporations. Some members of Congress visited the hunger marchers' encampment.

Three months later, Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal established federal support for state relief efforts and jobs programs for the unemployed, but the organizations of the unemployed continued their activity. They provided sustained grassroots and leftward pressure on the administration. The hunger march tactic was still employed and a combination of repressive measures against demonstrators, as well as concessions by the authorities, likewise continued.

Hunger marches were interracial events both in their composition and their attention to the issue of racial injustice. Marchers emphasized the higher rate of black unemployment, racial discrimination in relief programs, and the heavier repression of the African-American unemployed. Delegations of hunger marches conducted street meetings to explain the Scottsboro case and marchers protested segregated eating and sleeping facilities on the route to the nation's capital. African Americans were prominent in the leadership of the movement.

Although the Communist-led Unemployed Councils were the principal organizers of hunger marches, Socialists and followers of A. J. Muste also created substantial organizations of the unemployed. The Socialists emphasized lobbying, hearings, and conferences, while the Musteites focused on self-help groups, but both movements also conducted demonstrations and helped individuals with their grievances. The three unemployed movements united in 1935 into one organization, the Workers Alliance, which lobbied for relief funds and unemployment insurance, negotiated with relief agencies and the Works Progress Administration on behalf of recipients and relief workers, conducted public demonstrations, and supported trade unions.

In conducting hunger marches, fighting against evictions, helping to solve grievances, and speaking out for racial equality, activists in the unemployed movement developed as class-conscious workers while they helped to inspire a new moral vision of caring among a large section of the public. Many of these class-conscious workers went on to lead unionization campaigns, helped along by the sympathetic public opinion and worker hopefulness that the unemployed movement did so much to develop.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; UNEMPLOYED COUNCILS.

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MARTIN HALPERN

HURSTON, ZORA NEALE

Zora Neale Hurston (January 7, 1891–January 28, 1960) was a folklorist, fiction writer, playwright, and essayist. She was a central figure in the African-American cultural movement known as the Harlem Renaissance. Her gravestone in Fort Pierce, Florida, bears an inscription coined by the writer Alice Walker, “A Genius of the South.” The epitaph sums up not only the formidable nature of Hurston’s accomplishments, but also the symbolic importance that she and her work claim in the annals of African-American cultural history.

More myths have circulated about Zora Neale Hurston than perhaps any other African-American woman writer. Recently, scholars have revealed her birthplace as Notasulga, Alabama, but for years historians and biographers believed that Hurston was born in Eatonville, Florida, the country’s first incorporated all-black town. Hurston spent most of her childhood in Eatonville, whence she drew much of her literary inspiration. Hurston contributed to the illusions that continue to dominate popular stories about her life by fabricating details of her personal history, such as her date of birth, which was misidentified for many years as 1901. In *Wrapped in Rainbows: The Life of Zora Neale Hurston* (2002), author Valerie Boyd speculates that Hurston began revising her birth date in 1917, when she subtracted ten years in order to qualify for free schooling.

Hurston attended Howard University in Washington, D.C., sporadically between 1919 and 1925, and published her first short story, “John Redding Goes to Sea,” in *Stylus*, the university literary magazine. By 1925, the Harlem Renaissance was in full swing, and Hurston moved to New York, where she collected prizes for her fiction and drama, and studied anthropology with Franz Boas at Columbia University. Hurston graduated from Barnard College with a bachelor’s degree in 1928.

The Great Depression was particularly disastrous for African-Americans, and the economic



Zora Neale Hurston, 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

devastation caused by the Depression extinguished the better part of the Harlem Renaissance. Zora Neale Hurston thrived in the 1930s, however, finding success in the literary arena and beyond. During the 1930s, she did anthropological fieldwork in Haiti, Jamaica, the Bahamas, South Carolina, and the Florida Everglades. Her books on folklore, *Mules and Men* (1935) and *Tell My Horse* (1938), reflect the depth and breadth of her research. Hurston’s father inspired her first book, *Jonah’s Gourd Vine* (1934), a novel. She wrote her second and most influential novel, *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), in Haiti in seven weeks. The novel is a lyrical exploration of a black woman’s search for romantic love and self-definition. Her third novel, *Moses, Man of the Mountain* (1939), is a retelling of the biblical story of Exodus. Hurston’s final novel, *Seraph on the Suwanee* (1948), breaks convention with its focus on white characters. Her final pub-

lished work was *Dust Tracks on the Road* (1942), an autobiography whose inconsistencies have led many critics to treat it more like fiction than fact. Hurston's productivity did not result in financial security, however, and she would always scramble for work to support her creative ambitions. She died in 1960 of hypertensive heart disease in Fort Pierce, Florida.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LITERATURE.

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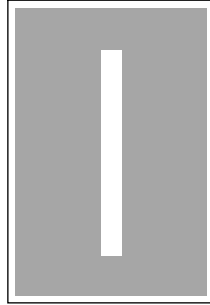
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EMILY BERNARD



I AM A FUGITIVE FROM A CHAIN GANG

The year 1932 was probably the most desperate faced by the American people since the end of the Civil War. With the nation mired in an economic depression for which there was no end in sight, unemployment growing to ever more unprecedented levels, and a government that seemed totally unable to make any effective response to the disaster, it was a bleak time indeed.

Rarely has the mood of a year been so accurately reflected in a feature film as the hopelessness of 1932 was in director Mervyn LeRoy's *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. Based on the story of a man, Robert Elliot Burns, who had escaped from a Georgia chain gang, the movie is a forceful expose of the brutal conditions on southern chain gangs. Screenings were banned in Georgia, and the state unsuccessfully sued Warner Brothers for libel. But this powerful film turned out to be much more: a mirror held up to a nation's outlook at the depth of the Great Depression. In it, a veteran of World War I with great ambition, James Allen (Paul Muni), returns from the war and finds an ungrateful nation and no suitable work. He drifts around the country and is wrongly arrested in a robbery in a southern state that is not named. Put on a chain gang, Allen is harshly treated. Eventually, with the assistance of

a black prisoner, Allen escapes from the hell of lashings and total dehumanization.

During the prosperous 1920s, Allen James, as he now calls himself, achieves great success as an architect—the sort of “man’s job,” building something, that he had originally said he wanted. He becomes a pillar of the community, but he is betrayed by an evil woman who learns his secret, blackmails him into marrying her, cheats on him, and finally exposes him.

Jim voluntarily returns to the state where he experienced a living hell because the authorities assure him he’ll only have to do a few months of “easy time.” Instead, the state authorities send him back to the chain gang. In a memorable statement reflective of widespread public attitudes toward government in the last year of the Herbert Hoover administration, Allen complains bitterly, “The state’s promise didn’t mean anything. It was all lies!”

The protagonist escapes again, but this time, as a hunted man, he has to subsist in ways similar to those to which many Depression victims resorted. In the unforgettable closing scene, Muni’s character, hovering in the shadows and seeming animalistic, answers the question “How do you live?” with a desperate, hopeless: “I steal!” Such a situation was all too understandable in much of America in 1932.

See Also: GANGSTER FILMS; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; LAW ENFORCEMENT; VALUES, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

ICKES, HAROLD

Harold LeClaire Ickes (March 15, 1874–February 3, 1952) was a political activist, social reformer, author, and New Deal administrator who actively sought to help minorities, preserve America's natural resources, use the federal government to promote the general welfare, and loyally promoted and supported Franklin D. Roosevelt and what he stood for in his New Deal.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

Born on a farm in Frankstown Township near Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania, Harold Ickes was the son of Jesse Boone Williams and Matilda McCune Ickes. Raised by his aunt and uncle after his mother's death when he was sixteen years old, Ickes graduated from Englewood high school at the top of his class. From there, he went to the University of Chicago, where he received his undergraduate degree in 1897. During his college days, Ickes made money teaching English to immigrants.

Ickes started his career as a newspaper reporter in Chicago, where in 1900 he covered the Democratic and Republican conventions for the *Chicago Record*. Never totally satisfied with this life, he returned to the University of Chicago in 1904, and in 1907 he received his law degree. Even before completing his legal studies, Ickes's political inclina-

tions began to take shape. He started working in political campaigns, and managed John Harlan's 1903 mayoralty race. Working with Donald Richberg as a partner in their Chicago law firm, Ickes became more and more involved in progressive politics. By 1911, Ickes was well-known in Chicago circles as a reformer. This reputation contributed to his marriage to a college classmate and the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer of gas fixtures, Anna Wilmarth Thompson. Anna herself was politically active, eventually serving several terms in the Illinois General Assembly. She and Ickes had a son who would be raised by his father after Anna died in a car accident in 1935. Ickes later would remarry and have two more children.

Ickes continued his political career by serving as the Cook County campaign manager for Theodore Roosevelt's Bull Moose Party in 1912. In 1916, Ickes supported Charles Evans Hughes for the presidency. During World War I, Ickes went abroad and served in the YMCA. In 1920, he attended the Republican national convention as a delegate who worked against the nomination of Warren G. Harding.

During the 1920s Ickes took on a number of legal cases (some *gratis*) involving civil liberties, anti-utility campaigns, and municipal reform. He also worked at Hull House, a Chicago settlement house run by Jane Addams, helping immigrants obtain citizenship. A reformer by nature, Ickes was appalled by the policies of Chicago mayor "Big" Bill Thompson, and consistently spoke out against him. He had a similar dislike for Samuel Insull, the municipal utilities emperor of the 1920s.

NEW DEAL ADMINISTRATOR

As the 1932 presidential election approached, Ickes became more interested in the reform programs of New York governor Franklin D. Roosevelt. Heading a Western Independent Republican committee for Roosevelt, Ickes worked to secure his victory against Herbert Hoover. Having been a tireless reformer and a strong advocate for minorities, Ickes thought that the president-elect might reward him with a position in his administration, perhaps commissioner of Indian affairs.

Ickes openly campaigned for the secretaryship of the Department of the Interior after Roosevelt in-



Franklin D. Roosevelt (seated, third from right) in August 1933 with (left to right) Paul Malone, Louis McHenry Howe, Harold Ickes, Robert Fechner, Henry Wallace, and Rexford Tugwell at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

vited him to attend a conference in February 1933 to discuss general economic problems. Given Ickes's background, his commitment to conservation, and his deep-seated feelings for Native Americans and other minorities, his decision to seek the Interior position made sense. Roosevelt agreed and Ickes was appointed secretary of the Interior. Ickes would serve in this capacity throughout the entire Roosevelt presidency and into the administration of Harry Truman.

In terms of personality, Ickes was a difficult individual. Describing himself as a curmudgeon, he was moody, short-tempered, stubborn, and always concerned that people were trying to take things

from him. But Ickes was also an emotionally driven man who wanted very much to help others and who believed that the federal government should do its part in promoting the welfare of Americans. Personally honest, Ickes took his Interior department responsibilities seriously. He spent taxpayers' monies wisely for projects benefiting the general welfare. Nicknamed Honest Harold, Irascible Harold, and Harold the Curmudgeon, Ickes went to work in 1933 determined to make a difference. He took charge of a department that had more than thirty thousand employees and controlled the National Park Service, America's public lands and abundant natural resources, and all territories, in-

cluding Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Alaska. In addition, the secretary of the Interior was responsible for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Geological Survey. With all of this already on his plate, Ickes took on more.

Working with Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace and other New Dealers, Ickes helped set up the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which was designed to put young men to work under the jurisdiction of the War Department. Ickes's most important appointment came when Roosevelt placed him in charge of the Public Works Administration (PWA). Created by the National Industrial Recovery Act in 1933, the PWA expended over \$5 billion on sewage systems, bridges, highways, dams, and other major projects. In projects involving electrical power and dams, the PWA completed the Boulder Dam and built the Bonneville and Grand Coulee dams. Under Ickes's direction, the PWA also helped local governments develop their own utility systems, despite the protests of private utility companies. Ickes's PWA even delved into low-cost housing projects. All of the PWA's work was completed slowly and methodically, but it was also completed with a minimum of administrative costs and no corruption. "Honest Harold" proved himself a good agency administrator who got things done.

Given Ickes's personality and Roosevelt's inclination to let subordinates step over one another, it was inevitable that conflicts would develop. Ickes clashed especially with Harry Hopkins, who headed the Civil Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration, as well as with Henry Wallace in the Department of Agriculture. Other conflicts arose, many of them stemming from Ickes's fear that people were encroaching on his turf, although in most cases, no such activity was occurring.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO CIVIL RIGHTS AND CONSERVATION

Other accomplishments by Ickes stand out. He was committed to helping black Americans by demanding that they be given equal pay for government jobs and by permitting no discrimination in hiring. Working with the National Association for

the Advancement of Colored People, Ickes tried hard to implement these policies in whatever agency he directed. In 1939 he helped Eleanor Roosevelt arrange for the black contralto Marian Anderson to sing at the Lincoln Memorial after the Daughters of the American Revolution denied her the use of Constitution Hall.

Ickes was also committed to helping Native Americans. Living in deplorable conditions on reservations, as evidenced by the Meriam Report of the 1920s, and disinherited of their lands under the assimilationist policies of the Dawes Act of 1887, Indians were burdened by many injustices, and Ickes worked to correct them. Fully supporting the Wheeler-Howard Act, which unraveled the Dawes allotment provisions, Ickes appointed John Collier to head the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Collier's commitment to the Indian New Deal was so strong that he worked hard to implement all the provisions of the Wheeler-Howard Act and, in so doing, he began to lay the groundwork for later Indian self-determination policies of the 1980s and 1990s.

Finally, Ickes's commitment to conservation was genuine. During his tenure in the Department of the Interior, the Soil Conservation Service was set up, the idea of wilderness areas in the National Park System was developed, and several major national parks were established. In some respects, Ickes's commitment to conservation explained his attacks on big business and the wealthy. He railed against businessmen and wealthy individuals for only thinking about themselves, for not caring about protecting and preserving America's natural wealth, and for refusing to help those in need.

As World War II approached, Ickes turned his attention more and more to what was happening in the world. A midwestern isolationist almost by nature, Ickes underwent a transformation in the 1930s. He was one of the first New Dealers to openly condemn Nazism and fascism. His attacks were so noteworthy that even Nazi leaders came to know who Ickes was. In addition, Ickes was the first New Dealer to realize the importance of maintaining presidential leadership as world politics became increasingly tense. He strongly supported Roosevelt's bid for a third term in 1940, while he himself considered running for the mayoralty of Chicago.

AFTER THE DEPRESSION

As the United State was drawn into world conflict, Ickes was named the head of the Petroleum Administration. During the war, Ickes held sixteen separate positions within the Roosevelt administration. He was the virtual czar of the production and distribution of petroleum products in the United States. A pragmatist by nature, Ickes put aside his former ideas and hostilities towards petroleum industry executives and worked so well with industry representatives that they tried to convince Roosevelt not to transfer Ickes to any other department or agency.

With Roosevelt's death in April 1945, and the end of the war, Ickes stayed on as secretary of the Interior under President Harry Truman. Within one year, however, Ickes resigned in protest over what he considered to be a political appointment of Edwin Pauley as undersecretary of the Navy. Just as Ickes's personal views changed, his views on America's relationships with its former allies transformed. By 1945 and 1946, the one-time friend and ally of the Soviet Union began to openly distrust and criticize Joseph Stalin and his policies. Ickes strongly supported the United Nations and stood solidly behind Truman during the Korean War.

After his 1946 resignation, Ickes returned to journalism. He wrote columns for the *New Republic* and the *New York Post*, and even started publishing his memoirs in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Still working prodigiously, Ickes died on February 3, 1952, in Washington, D.C. His massive three-volume *Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes* was published shortly after his death.

Harold Ickes was probably the most accomplished secretary of the Interior in American history. He was a reformer, a man of deep convictions, and a highly capable administrator. His honesty, hard work, and drivenness were reflected in everything he did. Given his irascible personality, it is not surprising that he frequently clashed with others. But this was a small issue when one considers the magnitude of his accomplishments in the PWA, conservation, civil liberties, World War II, and other areas of American life.

See Also: CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC); INDIAN NEW DEAL; PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION (PWA).

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

ILA. *See* INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

ILD. *See* INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE.

ILGWU. *See* INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION.

INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The Great Depression and the New Deal had a paradoxical effect on the distribution of income in the United States. On one level, even though the incomes of the rich declined precipitously as the economy fell apart, the Depression exacerbated economic inequality by increasing the numbers of the poor; the New Deal and economic recovery in the late 1930s only slightly mitigated this rising inequality. But although the reforms of the New Deal did not greatly reduce economic inequality—either by lowering unemployment or by creating a more progressive tax system—they did create the political architecture that would permit the reduction of economic inequality during World War II and the postwar era. In addition, the very wealthiest fraction of the American population lost their control over the national income during the Depression

and World War II, a loss from which they never completely recovered. In 1915, the top .01 percent of the population earned incomes 400 times the national average. In 1970, they earned 50 times the average income, and by 1998 they still had not regained the control of the pre-World War I era, earning “only” 250 times the average income.

During World War II the United States saw truly progressive income taxes for the first time. This economic redistribution through the tax system was one feature among many (including steady increases in the minimum wage, high levels of unionization, and low unemployment) that would lead to the remarkably equal distribution of economic growth during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. While the New Deal did not directly create this progressive tax system, the political and intellectual framework that was built during the 1930s made the progressive tax system and the liberal political economy of the postwar period possible.

Income distribution in the United States was becoming steadily more unequal during the early years of the twentieth century. During the 1920s, income inequality widened rapidly, and during the early years of the Depression, the distribution of incomes became more dispersed as poverty spread, reaching its peak for the century. But in the late 1930s income inequality began to decline, and during World War II it narrowed rapidly. After the war, the distribution of incomes remained fairly stable, though it continued to narrow slightly throughout the postwar economic expansion. In the mid-1970s, income inequality began to expand once again, a trend that accelerated in the 1980s and 1990s. Clearly, something happened during the 1930s and 1940s that created a stable political economy of equally distributed economic growth. The questions concern what and when these changes took place.

Throughout the twentieth century, there have been two distinct tax systems in the United States. The first and older one is a *regressive* system of sales taxes (and, later, payroll taxes) that fall equally on everyone in society regardless of income, and thus penalize the poor more heavily. The second, newer system is *progressive* taxation that seeks to tax wealthier people at a higher rate than poor people

in order to collect an adequate revenue base for the government. Prior to the New Deal, the federal taxation system was heavily skewed towards regressive taxes on “sin” or “luxury” products. This did not change in the early years of the New Deal, when early federal expenditures, such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, were funded out of sales taxes and deficit spending.

Early in the Great Depression, populists and liberal reformers began to call for tax reform and a reduction of economic inequality. Louisiana governor Huey Long started a network of “Share Our Wealth” clubs, which sought to tax the rich and redistribute the income in a plan dubbed “Every Man a King.” Long’s staff claimed that there were 27,000 such clubs in the South. The Townsend movement’s calls for monthly old-age pensions, the radical writer Upton Sinclair’s EPIC campaign against poverty in California, Father Charles Coughlin’s National Union for Social Justice, and the new strength of the Farmer-Labor Party in the Midwest all created rising political pressure on Roosevelt for a program that seemed to address the maldistribution of income.

Historians and political writers, at the time and since, have pointed out that these various proposals lacked economic sense and wherewithal. Even if all of Long’s proposed taxes were enacted, the income produced would not have been adequate to provide the riches he promised it would purchase for ordinary people. But the importance of these movements is not their blueprints for social policy. It was that they mobilized millions of people around the issue of income distribution, and so helped to bring about major changes in the tax system.

In the Revenue Act of 1935 (otherwise known as the “wealth tax”), President Franklin Delano Roosevelt sought to meet these populist critics. The law boosted the top personal income tax rate from 63 to 79 percent, expanded estate taxes, and increased the corporate income tax to fall more heavily on large corporations. Even though the law in reality affected a very small number of people, and did not dramatically expand the federal government’s revenues, the wealth tax generated tremendous opposition from business to Roosevelt and the New Deal. The law coincided with the Wagner Act

and the legislation creating Social Security and the Works Progress Administration. Taken together, even though the immediate fiscal effect of the tax law was small, it seemed to promise a new day in government, and businessmen were frightened. As one Congressman said of the Revenue Act of 1935, "This is a hell raiser, not a revenue raiser." In some ways, the anti-tax politics that would characterize so much business mobilization against liberalism throughout the rest of the twentieth century began in the crusade against the wealth tax of 1935.

The question of economic distribution was also addressed in one of the great failed initiatives of the New Deal, the Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC). This congressional committee was established late in the 1930s, purportedly to study issues of monopoly and economic power. The committee produced many excellent surveys of the state of industry in the late 1930s, a boon to later historians. However, whatever legislative impact the TNEC might have had was scuttled by the war, and the committee quietly fizzled to a close.

During World War II, the personal income tax was applied to the general population for the first time, becoming, as historian Mark Leff puts it, no longer "an indicator of affluence" but instead "a token of citizenship." The withholding system was established during the war. Prior to the war, the income tax had affected at most 5 percent of the population, but during the war, 74 percent of Americans began to pay tax. After the war, Congress brought back some exemptions and lowered tax rates slightly, but the basics of the system were in place. This system, along with the strength of labor unions, the full employment policies of the postwar period, and other interventions in social policy, such as increasing Social Security payments and steadily raising the minimum wage, contributed to the relatively more egalitarian—albeit still skewed—economic growth of the postwar period.

The dramatic arguments over income distribution and economic power during the 1930s cast a long symbolic shadow. The memory of the time when a president railed against "economic royalists" would long survive in the hearts and minds of businessmen, helping to fuel their ultimate reaction against liberalism and the New Deal. But the tax

policies of the New Deal era are of more than symbolic importance. Although the postwar liberal system did not come about during the New Deal, the philosophy of the New Deal created its intellectual framework and political architecture. Roosevelt's willingness to change the tax system in response to mass political pressure and to levy taxes on the incomes of the rich helped make it possible to use the progressive income tax more broadly as the basis for federal revenues and social wealth.

See Also: TAXATION; TEMPORARY NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (TNEC).

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KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

INDIAN NEW DEAL

The Indian New Deal was preceded by over a decade of reform agitation, an important investigation of field administration from 1926 to 1927, and several moderate changes during the Herbert Hoover administration. Before Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated in 1933, Harold L. Ickes, a Chicago attorney, sought to become Indian commissioner, but the president-elect named Ickes secretary of the interior instead. This left John Collier, an Indian reformer, Nathan Margold, a New York attorney, and Lewis Meriam, an Institute for Government Research employee, as leading candidates for commissioner. Margold became a solicitor in the Department of the Interior and Meriam withdrew. In a showdown meeting in April 1933, Roosevelt chose Collier over Edgar Meritt, former assistant Indian commissioner.

The appointment was unorthodox, but promising. Twelve years of Indian reform work gave Col-

lier a deep understanding of Indian affairs, a strong belief in cultural pluralism, and a commitment to improve the Office of Indian Affairs (OIA). In addition, he hoped to achieve Indian self-support and self-government.

The first months of the Collier commissioner-ship mostly dealt with organizing Indian Emergency Conservation Work. This flexible program operated as a special branch of the national emergency agency popularly known as the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The Indian CCC started field operations in July 1933, and for the next nine years it provided jobs for many enrollees and greatly improved reservation forests, grazing lands, and farms. One of the key factors in Collier's commissioner-ship was his ability to supplement his regular OIA budget with money from the Indian CCC, the Public Works Administration (PWA), the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Soil Conservation Service, the Works Progress Administration, and other New Deal programs.

In late 1933, Collier turned to drafting legislation for a complete overhaul of Indian administration. The Indian Reorganization Bill, introduced in mid-February 1934, centered on restoring tribal governments, ending land allotment, consolidating checkerboard lands, protecting Indian cultural heritages, and creating a special Indian court. The Indian Reorganization Act of June 1934 did not contain an effective land program or a special Indian court, but it banned allotment, endorsed tribal governments, and authorized revolving loan money and several other benefits. Laurence M. Hauptman considers the measure, "the most important and far-reaching . . . legislation affecting Native Americans in the twentieth century."

With the passage of the Indian Reorganization Act, the OIA initiated a two-year campaign to persuade Indian groups to approve it, a first step in creating tribal governments and corporations. The canvassing tactics appeared more like "guided democracy." Collier and his spokesmen often reminded Indians that without an Indian Reorganization Act government, they would never enjoy the economic benefits promised by the legislation. He also tried to create a bandwagon effect by scheduling

early elections on those reservations believed to favor the Act. This partially worked, but in June 1935 Collier experienced a crushing defeat when the large Navajo Nation rejected the Indian Reorganization Act despite an all-out effort to win approval. J. C. Morgan, a bilingual mission worker and dedicated advocate of assimilation, took advantage of the Navajos' hostility to recent livestock reductions to narrowly defeat the proposal. According to historian Lawrence C. Kelly, 263 tribes and bands voted on the Indian Reorganization Act; 174 approved it and 73 opposed it.

For tribes that approved the Act, the OIA moved to form tribal governments by drafting constitutions, bylaws, and chartering corporations. In 1935 Collier established the Indian Organization Division (IOD) to assist the process. The new agency dispatched field workers to help superintendents and tribal leaders in forming the new governments. The IOD workers relied on a "model constitution" to serve as a guide. Although this could be modified to suit local needs and preferences, some observers have complained that the constitutions ignored Indian traditions and imposed white forms of government, that the new governments too closely resembled the model constitution, and that the focus was always on creating tribal governments even if Indians were accustomed to local units such as bands or communities. Once the tribes completed a constitution and it received the secretary of interior's endorsement, another referendum had to approve it. Out of the 174 tribes and bands that voted for the Indian Reorganization Act, 92 drafted constitutions, and 71 then formed business corporations that qualified them for revolving loans. Although a minority of Indians came under the Indian Reorganization Act, Collier tended to treat all as if they had come under it.

The natives of Alaska and the Indians of Oklahoma had largely been excluded from the Indian Reorganization Act, but both areas later received their own legislation. The Alaskan Reorganization Act of May 1, 1936, and the Oklahoma Indian Welfare Act of June 26, 1936, resembled the Indian Reorganization Act, but each was designed to fit the situation in its area.

In terms of improving the OIA's regular services, the Indian New Deal made some progress

but fell short of a major breakthrough. Health care offers one key example. Because of the Depression, Collier was able to hire younger and better trained doctors and nurses, and the emergency programs built eleven new and well-equipped hospitals. One major victory was the use of sulfanilamide against trachoma in 1939. The incidence of this dreaded eye disease dropped from 30 percent in 1939 to 5 percent by 1943. The OIA, however, never received the funds needed for a successful campaign against tuberculosis, the Indians' most serious health problem.

Indian education also improved, but fell short of Collier's hopes. His basic goals included improving existing schools, closing some boarding schools, developing day schools, and, above all, teaching Indian children to appreciate their own tribal heritages. Unfortunately, virtually all the Indian Service teachers were white and had little understanding of such goals or a desire to learn. Indian students, however, benefited from nearly a hundred new day schools, mostly built with PWA funds, and these often doubled as community centers.

White and Indian opposition to the Indian New Deal arose early and became serious by 1937. Several witnesses at the Indian Reorganization Bill hearings in 1934 charged that Collier's cultural pluralism was retrogressive and would isolate Indians from society. Others testified that his ideas were un-American and communistic. The Indian critics formed the American Indian Federation (AIF) in Gallup, New Mexico, in August 1934. Joseph Bruner, a Creek, headed the group, but Alice Lee Jemison, a Seneca, acted as the AIF's Washington lobbyist and most effective opponent of the Indian New Deal. The AIF membership was diverse, but all demanded Collier's resignation and the repeal of the Indian Reorganization Act. The AIF cooperated closely with the Indian Rights Association, an old-line and conservative reform organization in Philadelphia. More importantly, members of the House and Senate Indian Affairs Committees welcomed Jemison and other AIF spokesmen to testify against the Collier administration after 1934. Bills were introduced in 1937 and 1939 to repeal the Indian Reorganization Act, the centerpiece of the Indian New Deal. Although these attempts failed, Collier's crit-

ics forced him into a defensive posture. Only Secretary Ickes's support allowed Collier to continue.

The economic revival around 1940 tended to offset the growing problems that the Indian New Deal faced. Initially, the economic upturn mainly benefited Indian CCC enrollees who found good jobs in the private sector. Special arrangements in 1941 between the OIA, the states, and the U.S. Department of Education established national defense training programs for CCC workers. These included welding, sheet metal work, carpentry, radio operation and repair, and other skills. Hundreds of enrollees completed the training and found outside jobs.

World War II brought major changes for Indians and further weakened the Indian New Deal. The exodus of Indians from reservations greatly intensified. An OIA survey, for example, reported that 46,000 Indians found off-reservation employment in 1943 and earned a total of over \$40 million. The agency later estimated that 24,521 Indian men and women served in the military. The migration of Indians during the war unquestionably played a major role in the postwar movement to cities.

The war, however, had devastating effects on the New Deal programs. Although Collier desperately tried and failed to make his agency relevant to the war, the OIA was moved to Chicago. Serious budget cuts, the disbanding of emergency programs, and shortages of doctors, nurses, teachers, and other personnel hampered operations. Collier's problems with congressional opponents continued, and in June 1943 the Senate Indian Affairs Committee released Partial Report 310, which contained a scathing attack on the Collier administration. Worn down and frustrated, Collier resigned on January 19, 1945.

Scholars have studied the Indian New Deal extensively but thus far no real consensus has emerged. Clearly Collier's ability to secure emergency funds not only helped Indians survive the Depression, but government jobs provided many Indians with work skills that they used in outside employment during World War II. Accomplishments relating to gains in self-government, the preservation of Indian cultural heritages, and the achieving of self-support are less clear cut. Some

Indians actively hated Collier. The Navajos, for example, never forgave him for livestock reductions aimed at checking overgrazing. Perhaps evaluation of the Indian New Deal requires looking at each reservation and evaluating such factors as the availability of resources, the competence of tribal leaders, and the role played by the superintendent and his staff.

See Also: COLLIER, JOHN; INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1934; NATIVE AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1934

The Indian Reorganization Act represented a basic shift in federal Indian policy. It overturned forced assimilation, revived tribal governance, and ended land allotment. The act grew out of a dozen years of criticism of federal Indian administration, especially the agitation of reformer John Collier, who became Indian commissioner in 1933.

Felix S. Cohen and Marvin Siegel, assistant solicitors, and Ward Shepard, a land management expert, started drafting the reorganization bill in late 1933. Commissioner Collier and his top assistants oversaw the process. Indians played no role in writing the measure. The lengthy draft bill contained four titles. The first permitted tribes to organize reservation governments and to form business corpo-

rations. Title II called for educational loans and scholarships and strongly endorsed preservation of Indian heritages. Title III ended further allotment, outlined a complex program for land consolidation on checker-boarded reservations, gave the secretary of the interior extraordinary authority to implement consolidation, and provided for some acquisition. Title IV established a special Indian court with original jurisdiction over cases involving Indians or tribes.

The bill faced serious opposition after congressional hearings opened in mid-February 1934. Opponents during House sessions complained it would isolate Indians and condemned the arbitrary powers associated with land consolidation. In the midst of the hearings, Collier conducted ten generally successful Indian congresses to explain the bill to tribal representatives, answer questions, and gain delegates' support. When Collier returned to Washington, Burton K. Wheeler, chairman of the Senate Indian Affairs Committee, severely attacked the bill on various grounds and threatened to stall passage. Only the last minute intervention of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and a "summit" between Assistant Indian Commissioner William F. Zimmerman, Jr., and Wheeler overcame the latter's objections. Essentially, the Montana senator rewrote the bill to suit his own beliefs.

The final act of June 18, 1934, differed greatly from the original bill in substance and form. The special Indian court and involuntary land consolidation were entirely omitted. Provisions such as tribal governance, business corporations, a ban on further allotment, land acquisition, educational benefits, and Indian hiring preference remained, but in highly abbreviated form. Despite its major revisions, the Indian Reorganization Act became the centerpiece of Collier's administration.

Subsequently, 174 tribes with an adult population of 132,425 approved the Indian Reorganization Act in referenda, but only 92 tribes later drafted constitutions. Seventy-three tribes with 78,415 members rejected it. Approximately 103,000 Indians came under the Act and 113,000 did not. Despite this, after 1934 Collier habitually acted as if all tribes had approved the law. Some reservations later came under the Indian Reorganization Act by

special legislation, but far more simply utilized governments that operated without a written constitution.

Placed in its best light, the Indian Reorganization Act strengthened tribal governments during the New Deal and helped preserve Indian cultures. It also served as an important model for Indians of the 1970s and 1980s who demanded stronger tribal sovereignty. In this sense, Collier planted the seeds that later generations of Indians harvested.

See Also: COLLIER, JOHN; INDIAN NEW DEAL; NATIVE AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WHEELER, BURTON K.

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INDIVIDUALISM

Individualism as the free, unfettered expression and development of the self in life's social arenas—the political, cultural, and economic—is one of the few consistent American ideals, tracing a bright line through the course of the nation's history. Whereas European observers such as Alexis de Tocqueville tended to see American individualism as a dangerous centrifugal social force, Americans have generally embraced the individual as a self-contained, value-creating, contract-making actor whose pres-

ervation and encouragement were consistent with the needs of society and the community. Disagreements have emerged primarily about how best the individual may be reconciled with and included in society.

In the early part of the nation's history, a narrow brand of communitarian Reformed Protestantism gave shape to American individualism. But during the twentieth century the reconciliation of the individual with the needs of the community was increasingly based on a vision of society as a voluntary collection of individuals seeking their own advantage in the marketplace, with government acting primarily as a guarantor of individual rights. Ideally, through the function of the free market, individuals are automatically attracted to work that is useful, producing a product or service that others need. Acting through the free market individuals are able to find that work for which they are best suited, and which will provide the maximum opportunity for individual self expression and development. Relying on their own efforts, individuals are free to improve their social and economic standing, improving the fortunes of the groups to which they belong in the process.

Through work that is at once free and of service to others, society forms as a network of bridges of self-interest between individuals, creating intricate interdependencies. As Emile Durkheim famously observed, work may be the tie that binds societies together. Individualism has emerged as a public issue primarily when Americans have lost faith in the automatic function of the free market to support the individual, the Great Depression being a key example.

The massive unemployment of the Great Depression appeared to many to challenge the ideal of work-based free market individualism. However, unemployment compounded work and marketplace failures that had been festering for decades. Since the turn of the century, modern jobs that required little skill and offered few opportunities for creativity had eroded the hope that work could be the avenue for self expression and craftsmanship. The jobs that still existed offered little chance for pleasure and satisfaction. The rise of corporations, advertising, and mass society further complicated a

simplistic faith in individualism. Concentrations of wealth and political power appeared to be limiting social mobility, casting serious doubts on one of the nation's other precious ideals: an egalitarian, classless society of individuals.

Even the strongest supporter of the traditional idea of American individualism, Herbert Hoover, saw the need to find new ways to preserve individualism in an era of giant bureaucracies, corporations, and standardization. Hoover sought to redepoly large-scale organization in the service of "self-help," "spiritual development," and the individual through "purposeful planning" and his "association idea," a strategy largely dependent on government encouragement of business voluntarism.

Others, however, veering to the political left, sought to reenergize the Progressive movement's corporate ideal, emphasizing the need for community and the importance of solidarity and state action to assure the "public interest." Arguing for a planned society, such critics of excessive individualism as John Dewey, Lewis Mumford, Robert Lynd, and George Soule sought to counter the Depression's threats to both the individual and the community. Turning increasingly to the state to regulate the free market, leaders such as Henry Wallace (Roosevelt's secretary of agriculture and third-term vice president) emphasized "cooperative achievement" and "organic" communities, and stressed the need for increasing cooperation in American life.

Such critics hoped that by becoming more cooperative in its economic life, the United States could redeem the individual, establishing a new cultural and political foundation for free associations, replacing the failing work-based free market individualism. Social scientists, socialists, and Marxists proposed to free Americans from excessive concerns about economic matters, liberating them in life's more important venues—the cultural, communal, and, as Hoover had hoped, the spiritual.

Still others supported a more practical, traditional remedy. One of the most important political issues of the Great Depression was legislated work-sharing. The Black-Connery bill of 1933, limiting hours of work to thirty a week, attracted critics of work-based free market individualism, who, stop-

ping short of the cooperationists' remedy, saw in steadily increasing leisure the best way to reestablish individualism outside the economy. Seeking, in the words of Richard Pells in his *Radical Visions and American Dreams*, "to liberate the American people from the bondage of economic anxiety—to shift their attention from material to moral and existential concerns" people such as William Green, president of the American Federation of Labor, "liberation capitalists" such as W. K. Kellogg, and progressive reformers such as Stuart Chase proposed that a shorter workweek would provide time for alternate, free forms of association. Through increased leisure, the family, the community, churches, voluntary groups, and local governments would flourish as never before. These, instead of work and the market, would become the new media for individual growth and expression.

Roosevelt was lukewarm to the new cooperationist schemes and to work-sharing. Such measures as the National Recovery Administration and Social Security were primarily designed to provide industrial stabilization and a safety net for a free-swinging economy. Instead, Roosevelt attempted to redeem work-based free market individualism by marshaling government in support of perpetual economic growth and work-creation, employing the now familiar New Deal reform strategies: public works, liberal monetary policy, deficit spending, and direct expansion of government jobs.

With Roosevelt, leaders of the women's movement and the emerging civil rights struggle reaffirmed the importance of work-based free market individualism. The Harlem Renaissance matured and began to recognize the importance of the individual's struggle with society. Similarly, the nascent civil rights movement began to direct its efforts toward gaining equality through the marketplace, with jobs becoming a primary arena for struggle. Advancing beyond the suffrage victories of the previous decade, American women also began to make inroads into the workforce, and, like African Americans, they began to look for independence and individual liberation through work. African Americans and women turned to the government to open free and equal access to jobs, and thus extend the ideal of work-based individualism to previously excluded groups.

The rise of authoritarian, repressive regimes in Europe and the coming of World War II curtailed cooperationist talk in the United States. Work-based free market individualism entered the 1940s vigorous and growing, made stronger by the challenges offered to it during the Great Depression.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; ORGANIZED LABOR; WORK ETHIC.

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BENJAMIN KLINE HUNNICUTT

INDUSTRY, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

From a low point of recession in 1921 to its cyclical peak in 1929, the index of U.S. manufacturing production increased from fifty-four to one hundred. Within the overall upswing, the main expansion occurred during the 1922 to 1923 and 1928 to 1929 periods, and it was most pronounced in the automobile, electrical goods, and (to 1926) construction industries. Each of these sectors was associated with the expansion of “blocs” of interrelated activities, such as the rubber, paint, glass, steel, lumber,

and engineering firms that supported the growth of the automotive industry. The other aspect of structural change in the 1920s was the performance of “sick” industries, notably cotton and woolen textiles, coal mining, and railroads. Their mature status was reflected, respectively, in relocation to the South in search of cheaper labor, the exhaustion of mineral resources in older mining districts, and the competitive challenge from automobiles and trucks. Other notable features of American manufacturing during the 1920s included relatively stable prices after 1922, modest wage increases, substantial growth in productivity, and rising levels of investment. Consequently, the expansion of production was achieved with limited growth of the industrial workforce; new employment was generated in the service sector.

Although certain trends continued into the 1930s, the favorable environment was transformed by the economic collapse of 1929 to 1932, which ushered in a difficult decade for manufacturers. The index of industrial production in the United States fell from one hundred in 1929 to fifty-five in 1932, a steeper contraction than in most other industrial economies, since elsewhere rates of growth had been modest during the 1920s.

During 1930 President Herbert Hoover encouraged industrialists to maintain wages and hours of work and to proceed with investment plans on the assumption that the recession would be brief. By mid-1931, however, retrenchment was gathering pace: consumers postponed the replacement of durable goods, such as automobiles, and, with the real value of debt increasing, they retreated from buying on credit. Simultaneously, the crisis of confidence in financial institutions and declining sales and profits undermined business confidence and new investment. Private investment fell from \$16.2 billion in 1929 to only \$1.4 billion in 1933, a level that was not sufficient to maintain existing productive capacity as firms abandoned plans for new factories and had no reason to replace idle equipment. Profits, though difficult to chart fully, dwindled: net profits of 488 leading industrial corporations had fallen from \$3,174 million in 1929 to \$662.2 million by 1932. Many firms posted losses or were forced into closure. Employment in manufacturing de-

clined to 67 percent of its 1929 level by 1933. Such conditions broke the characteristic pattern of frequent bouts of short-term unemployment among industrial workers. Factory payrolls fell more than employment as employers and workers both accepted the adoption of short-term work or "share-the-work" programs. Indeed, there was a vigorous public debate about the threat of technological unemployment, particularly automation, in the 1930s. Senator Robert Wagner, for instance, supported a "technotax" on innovations as a means to finance relief; unions advocated a thirty-hour workweek; and industrialists and scientists were forced to defend technology as a source of growth rather than instability.

In this context of falling prices and profits, some industrialists and trade associations embraced notions of cooperation as a route to either higher prices or stability. The Cotton Textile Institute influenced the development in the National Recovery Administration (NRA) of codes that were designed to raise prices and wages and to standardize trade practices in order to end "destructive" competition. Although the scale of the crisis, plus New Deal pressure, resulted in the establishment of hundreds of NRA codes, many firms opposed such intervention, especially in industrial relations. Some analysts attribute significant increases in wages and prices to NRA intervention, which, in effect, offset a potential stimulus to employment and production from an increase in the supply of money between 1933 and 1935. If this was the case, the defensive strategy of the codes achieved its narrow aims for business and workers, but delayed the revival of output and employment. In some cases the price data underlying this analysis may overstate actual prices since competitive pressures ensured extensive discounting. When the NRA came to an end in 1935, the oil and coal industries still sought federal backing for controls over their production, but most manufacturers welcomed the end of the codes.

Although a brief revival of industrial production had occurred during the second quarter of 1933 as demand rose in anticipation of higher prices with the imminent introduction of the NRA, sustained expansion only came between 1934 and 1937 when U.S. growth compared favorably to other econo-

mies. Real wages in manufacturing tended to rise, despite the persistence of high rates of unemployment. To some degree, wage rates did not reflect the full impact of economic trends because fluctuations in the number of hours worked were a significant part of adjustments during the 1930s. Another possible influence was the effect of "internal" labor markets in which the wages of people who were working were set without full reference to the availability of unemployed workers. The expansion of union organizing compelled some employers to concede higher wages after 1935, either in the hope of deterring the entry of unions or as a consequence of increased bargaining power, though the latter was achieved very unevenly in the face of aggressive resistance from many employers.

Trends in industrial production after 1933 can, on one level, be explained in terms of the severity of the slump between 1929 and 1933. Following the expansion of industrial investment in the late 1920s, the downturn left underutilized capacity during the 1930s that deterred new investment. Key growth industries, notably construction and automobile manufacturing, were particularly susceptible to the declines in consumer confidence and incomes. The falls in profitability were especially marked in the steel, oil, machinery, and automobile sectors. Michael Bernstein's analysis of U.S. manufacturing highlights the contrasting experiences of the different sectors. Cyclical trends are a central factor in the fluctuations of industrial output and employment: the steepest contractions in production in the early 1930s occurred in the iron and steel, coke, lumber, and cement industries, with a major factor being their dependence on the depressed construction industry.

The automobile industry illustrates the difficulties faced by manufacturers of durable goods, especially where production involved high capital costs. Given the geographical distribution of manufacturing activity, the loss of industrial jobs was concentrated in the northeastern and midwestern states. The flip side was less steep falls in the production of the nondurable products that consumers purchased regularly, such as food, textiles, clothing, footwear, and tobacco. As a result, employment in these industries did not fall so dramatically. The

distinction should not be overstated since both textiles and footwear, though large employers, were already less dynamic in the 1920s, and sales of radios, a recent addition to the list of consumer durables, continued to expand throughout the 1930s. The contrasting fortunes of "heavy" industries, such as steelmaking, and "light" industries, such as food processing, were reflected in larger increases in rates of unemployment among men than among women in manufacturing. A further group of industries achieved impressive increases in production during the 1930s, notably chemicals, tobacco products, and paper products. The chemical and petroleum manufacturers combined new product innovations, such as artificial fibres and improvements in the cracking of oil, with capital and labor-saving innovations in production. Firms in the paper business developed new applications in packaging, a successful strategy also adopted by the glass and canning industries. Although a growing demand for cigarettes enabled the tobacco industry to increase its output rapidly, sustained productivity growth ensured that its workforce changed little.

A rise in the real incomes of employed people during the 1930s shifted effective demand for goods and services towards more affluent consumers, which may have delayed the recovery in terms of employment. This trend was reflected in an increase in sales of luxury goods, such as high-priced cars, refrigerators, and fashionable clothing, as well as in an increase in the purchases of services. More broadly, the largest industries in terms of employment, such as textiles and leatherworking, were in long-term decline, creating structural employment as their workers struggled to find alternative jobs. Durable goods producers, such as automotive manufacturers and steelmakers, remained depressed and offered few employment opportunities until the impact of rearmament and war could be felt. Finally, the most innovative sectors, including chemicals and petroleum, accounted for a relatively small share of the workforce. This, combined with their increasing labor productivity, prevented these more vigorous industries from providing sufficient new employment to counter the loss of dynamism elsewhere.

When recovery stalled during the 1937 to 1938 recession, New Deal liberals came to regard the

weakness of investment, the persistence of high rates of unemployment, and rising prices as symptoms of monopolistic practices or even of a politically-motivated investment strike by corporate interests. As a result, the NRA phase of support for regulating prices and trade practices was replaced beginning in 1938 with an antitrust campaign, led by Thurman Arnold at the Department of Justice, that was intended to promote more competitive behavior as a route to recovery.

Manufacturing output and employment were transformed by rearmament and the switch to a war economy from 1941. Military demands stimulated the metalworking trades, vehicle production, aircraft manufacturing, and the chemical and petroleum industries, and also supplied a general stimulus to the production of raw materials. Although civilian consumption was restricted during the war, pent-up demand and increased savings were the foundations for renewed prosperity during the 1950s based on automobiles, electrical goods, and housing, as in the 1920s. In the longer run, industrial restructuring gained momentum, but from the mid-1950s services displaced manufacturing as the largest source of employment.

See Also: NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA).

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MICHAEL FRENCH

INSULL, SAMUEL

Both before and after the stock market crash in 1929, Wall Street had no more potent symbol than Samuel Insull (November 11, 1859–July 16, 1938). He was the utilities magnate who either made fortunes or stole them. By the time of Insull's death on a Paris subway platform in 1938, most Americans had come to see him only as a thief.

Before October 1929, few American businessmen were more respected than Insull, who had a bit of Horatio Alger about him. Born in 1859 to a London family of modest means, Insull was twenty-one years old when he left England for a job in America. He came to work as Thomas Edison's personal secretary, a position that led him to a career in generating and selling electricity. In 1891, Edison's electrical holdings were folded into a new company, General Electric, with Insull named as a vice president. Soon dissatisfied with his position, Insull left the company to try his hand at running an electrical utility in Chicago. His efforts led to the creation of Commonwealth Edison, a model utility that quickly won over commercial and residential customers.

Insull preached what historian Harold Platt has called the "gospel of consumption," spreading the virtues of Commonwealth Edison through aggressive advertising and promotion. "Give Something Electrical," urged one Christmas ad campaign. Curious shoppers could visit a Commonwealth Edison "Electric Shop" to behold new appliances, or they could travel to the suburb of River Forest and see a model electric home. Samuel Insull had seen the future, and it was electric. Insull's ambition was to wire the entire United States. By late 1929, the companies he controlled generated one-eighth of all the electricity consumed nationwide. It was an activity that affected one million investors and forty-one million customers.

Insull raised money through the creation of holding companies. These were, in effect, corporate shells that allowed Insull to issue ever more stock. Investors bought the stock on Insull's reputation, and Insull used the proceeds to buy more utilities. The strategy worked until the great bear market of October 1929. Stock in four Insull holding compa-

nies declined \$150 million in value by 1931. Small investors were especially hurt, and anyone who lost heavily in the crash was likely to hold Insull responsible for chasing the bull out of the market. The worsening Depression only furthered that view. Newspapers that had once viewed Insull as a genius now portrayed him as a pariah. During the 1932 presidential election, Democratic candidate Franklin Roosevelt lashed out at "the lone wolf, the unethical competitor, the reckless promoter, the Ishmael or Insull." In response, Insull fled the country, a move that only guaranteed more bad publicity. When he was extradited from Turkey two years later, Insull became a page-one story that simply would not go away.

The onetime protege of Edison was indicted for embezzlement, larceny, and mail fraud. Despite three separate trials Insull was never convicted, perhaps because Americans realized no one person could have caused such an economic calamity. Now stripped of one reputation and saddled with another, Insull retired to Paris, where he died in July 1938.

See Also: STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929).

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DOUGLAS BUKOWSKI

INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Any analysis of the Great Depression must start with World War I. This conflict had a dramatic economic impact, which went far beyond the massive military casualties. It embraced non-belligerents as well as those directly involved in the conflict. The war encouraged but also grossly distorted economic effort.

WORLD WAR I: THE PROBLEM OF INDEBTEDNESS

All wars are inflationary and World War I was no exception. Everywhere farm and factory prices rose inexorably and continued their upward course even after the conflict ended in 1918. For most countries the postwar depression of 1920 and 1921 was the sharp deflationary shock, which brought to an end war-induced price increases. In Germany, however, hyperinflation continued and currency stability was not achieved until 1924, and then only with the assistance of U.S. bankers.

War needs radically altered international indebtedness. In order to pursue the conflict with full vigor, the British and French governments borrowed extensively from U.S. private lenders and also, after America had joined the conflict in April 1917, from the federal government. Once the war was over, Washington insisted upon repayment of the debt even though the economies of both Allied nations had been seriously weakened by four years of conflict. For other stricken European countries, international indebtedness continued to rise after 1918. Desperately short of foodstuffs and raw materials, these countries had to contract postwar relief loans from the U.S. government and use the dollars they received to purchase American products.

The British and the French did not worry unduly as they ran up a large war debt bill because they assumed that a vanquished Germany would meet the costs of the war. In 1921 a reparations total was agreed upon by the non-U.S. allies and imposed upon Germany. The Germans viewed the reparations bill as outrageous and the sum far too large for them to pay. The victors were convinced that Germany could pay if its exports were competitive and the foreign currency they earned was transferred to the Allies. However, the prospect of maintaining a low-wage, high-tax economy for many decades after the hardships of war and postwar turmoil had no appeal to Germans.

The United States did not take part in the reparations negotiations and did not seek payment from Germany. Reparations were paid principally to Britain and France, which had begun payment of their war debts to the United States. One problem was that neither of the two recipients could be confident

of regular payments while hyperinflation consumed Germany. Eventually the fear of mounting economic instability became so great that American intervention to stabilize the German currency was proposed. The intervention was not governmental because Washington did not want to enter any negotiations in which concessions on war debts might be demanded. American bankers produced the Dawes Plan, which in 1924 brought the frightening hyperinflation to an end and gave a New World stamp of approval to Germany. To support the Dawes Plan, the Federal Reserve (Fed) resolved to keep U.S. interest rates low, thus making Germany, where rates were high, attractive to the American investor. Soon Germany became the world's leading international borrower and American citizens very willing lenders.

The war created a new group of indebted nations and transformed the United States, the world's leading debtor nation in 1914, into the status of leading creditor nation four years later. During the 1920s the United States assumed the role of leading international lender.

WORLD WAR I: PRIMARY PRODUCTS

High war prices encouraged the producers of foodstuffs and raw materials to expand output. Indeed, many countries were prepared to go into debt to fund roads, which would open up new areas of production, and docks that were vital to an expanded export trade. The United States was the only source of funds for virtually all borrowers. However, the depression of 1920–1921, which reduced prices savagely and suddenly, had a devastating effect on primary producers, virtually all of whom were in debt. Moreover, once European agriculture recovered from the war, surpluses in internationally traded commodities such as wheat began to appear. European countries, with the exception of the United Kingdom, protected their exposed farmers with high import duties. As stocks of coffee, cotton, and sugar mounted, exporters of these products found it difficult to pay for the imports of manufactured goods they wished to consume. Indeed, some found it difficult to fund the interest on the debt that they had run up when times were good and prices high. It was tempting, but not realistic, to

view such problems as temporary and to borrow, usually from the United States, to meet bills and pay for imports. There is some evidence to suggest that American international lending, which was poorly regulated, became more unsound as the twenties progressed. Many U.S. banks, new and enthusiastic entrants to this profitable business, were as devoid of good judgement as were the eager borrowers. By 1928 many primary product producers had become dependent upon a steady stream of American funding.

THE GOLD STANDARD

Many countries had temporarily abandoned the gold standard during the war, and there was a widespread conviction that this discipline should be embraced again as soon as possible. In part this belief was connected to the pre-1914 era view that the gold standard had ensured stability. Moreover, the devastating hyperinflations in central Europe seemed to indicate that a rigid discipline was needed if the worst excesses of economic mismanagement were to be avoided. Indeed the return to gold was seen as an essential prerequisite for the restoration of normality to war devastated economies.

Contemporaries debated about how soon their economies could return to gold and at what exchange rate, but never questioned if this move was wise in a world so different from the one before August 1914. The choice of exchange rate was crucial. The wrong rate would lead to formidable problems if it proved difficult to defend during an economic crisis, as devaluation was not an option. Gold standard countries that came under pressure had to deflate in order to make their exports more competitive through cost reductions, which inevitably caused rising unemployment and wage cuts.

Nations returned to gold not in an orderly, but in a piecemeal, fashion and many had slender gold reserves. Moreover they returned at different exchange rates. For example, Britain returned in 1925 at the exchange rate that had been in force in 1914: £1 = \$4.86. This rate would be difficult to defend given Britain's reduced economic circumstances. On the other hand, the French franc that went back on gold in 1926 was worth only one-fifth of the 1914 franc. Thus the low value franc made it far eas-

ier for the French to penetrate export markets than British business, which was handicapped by an overvalued currency. Far from being a source of strength, the gold standard during the twenties did not provide the means to avoid economic catastrophe; it gave weaker economies no protection once crisis came

THE FIRST SHOCK: 1928–1930

In early 1928 the Fed moved to curb growing stock market speculation by introducing a tight money policy. As interest rates rose, Fed officials believed that borrowing for speculative purposes would become too expensive and the furious buying would fade away. This strategy was a complete failure. It did, however, have serious repercussions for international lending because it altered the relationship between U.S. interest rates and those in the rest of the world. Since 1924 the Fed had kept rates low in order to encourage U.S. money to flow overseas, and many economies had become highly dependent on the continuation of the flow. However, borrowers began to see that much of the international capital was short term and highly volatile. Indeed the term "hot money" had been coined to describe its chief characteristic. Responding to higher interest rates, U.S. savers decided that the domestic opportunities had become so attractive that money which previously would have been sent overseas remained at home. But the United States was the world's leading international investor during the 1920s, with central Europe and Latin America being especially favored. How could international borrowers entice Americans to send more capital to them?

An obvious response for the borrowing countries was to raise interest rates themselves and preserve their relative appeal to the international investor. Many did just that, but the imposition of even higher rates of interest was not without its cost. For countries moving into recession, the imposition of a restrictive monetary policy would accelerate the economic decline. For example, in Germany the economy had reached a peak in 1927 and had already begun to contract when the supply of U.S. capital, on which rising German living standards relied, became less certain. All countries try-

ing to attract international capital had to reject economic plans that would cause a budget deficit. International lenders became alarmed when policies they judged imprudent were introduced, but with tax receipts falling and legitimate claims for relief rising, maintaining a balanced budget was very difficult. Unfortunately, the gold standard restricted the freedom of nations to implement expansive economic policies that might counteract the effect of severe depressions.

After the Stock Market Crash in October 1929, the Fed reduced interest rates, and for a short while international lending recovered. However, this revival was a false dawn. In the middle of 1929 the U.S. economy had reached a cyclical peak and began to contract rapidly. At the same time there was a sharp fall in international foodstuff and raw material prices, which was serious for primary product nations as it lowered the value of their exports relative to imports and quickly led to balance of payments deficits. Most primary producing countries were in debt and deflation increased the real burden. In other words, more pounds of coffee or tons of copper had to be exported to pay off interest charges on the debts already accumulated. Nor was there any easy way to check falling prices. In fact, sometimes the response of producers to deflation was to produce more, which only compounded the problem.

As the economies of major industrial powers, such as Germany, Great Britain and the United States, deteriorated, their purchases of imports declined. Primary product countries now faced a two-fold problem. First their exports could not find markets even at very low prices; second, it was becoming increasingly difficult to attract foreign capital. In these circumstances nations were forced to cut imports. Countries reacted by increasingly desperate measures, such as the introduction of tariffs and quotas and the production of import substitutes. As one country's imports are another's exports, this move only shifted the problem and invited retaliatory action.

The use of tariff increases was not confined to debtor nations. In 1930 Congress approved and, in spite of the appeals of hundreds of economists, President Hoover refused to veto the Hawley-

Smoot tariff. The decision to raise duties on U.S. imports was one of narrow self-interest; policy makers failed to understand the need for debtor countries to earn dollars by selling goods to the United States. Although Hawley-Smoot invited and received retaliation, it would be a mistake to view this legislation as playing more than a minor role in reducing international trade. Growing depression and contracting income explain the decline in the purchase of internationally traded goods.

THE EUROPEAN FINANCIAL CRISIS: 1931

After two years of depression, financial institutions in many countries were in a highly vulnerable position. Moreover, such was the intensity of the economic collapse that new international lending had virtually ceased.

The failure of Austria's largest bank, the Credit Anstalt, in the spring of 1931, rang alarm bells. The Austrian government had conscientiously followed the rules of the gold standard but had not been able to fight off the crisis. Calls for help to the international financial community had generated only modest assistance. In July 1931, a crisis of confidence enveloped the German banking system. Since the first signs of depression, the German government had been rigorously deflating the economy, doing so at enormous social cost as unemployment mounted and serious political unrest began to attract international attention. German banks had a large amount of foreign debt, about forty percent of which was American. To ease the strain on German banks, President Hoover unilaterally proposed a moratorium on all inter-governmental debts.

The Hoover Moratorium suspended war debts and reparations payments for one year but expected the repayment of private debts to U.S. citizens to continue. The Germans were delighted with this initiative, but the French, who had not been consulted, were furious, suspecting that this action spelled the end of reparations payments. Unfortunately the Moratorium did not halt the assault on the banking system. As the uncertainty increased, those Germans and Americans who could shift their money out of marks into gold or currencies less at risk of devaluation did so quickly, thus mak-

ing the threat of devaluation even more likely. Who could help Germany?

The United States felt that with the Hoover Moratorium it had done enough. Great Britain, low on gold reserves, could offer no more than minor assistance. France had accumulated a massive gold stock but insisted on attaching political conditions to assistance that Germany found unacceptable. In the summer of 1931, Germany introduced exchange controls and froze foreign-owned credits, making it impossible for U.S. citizens to withdraw their capital. This action was a stark warning to holders of foreign currency everywhere. The mark was not devalued, but severe deflation and import controls became even more draconian. As a result, unemployment rose, farm income plummeted, and Communists battled for political control with fascists.

As the crisis gathered pace in Germany, investors became increasingly anxious about sterling, widely considered overvalued. Britain's highly publicized budget and balance of payments deficits intensified anxieties, as did the presence of a new Labour government. The orthodox deflationary policies imposed by the country's first socialist government were in vain. The Bank of England did not have sufficient reserves to withstand the persistent selling of sterling, and in September 1931 Britain devalued the pound and became the first major country to leave the gold standard. Virtually all the countries that had strong trading links with Britain quickly followed London's example and cut their links with gold. Investors everywhere saw this action as a warning that no currency was safe from devaluation. It is important to remember that Britain was forced to abandon gold and did not take this action as part of a measured policy initiative. It is also significant that Britain, and the other economies that cut themselves free from the shackles of the gold standard, soon showed signs of a rapid recovery from the Depression.

The reaction of many countries that had close trading links with Britain was to abandon gold and devalue their currencies, too. However, once devalued, sterling was considered safe. Speculators turned away from London and made an assessment of the next most vulnerable currency. They quickly concluded that it was the U.S. dollar.

Once the speculators began to attack the dollar, the Fed moved quickly to protect the external value of the currency by instituting a tight money policy. Raising interest rates was the appropriate course of action for a defense of the currency, but unfortunately it was exactly the wrong policy for the beleaguered banking system. However, the Fed wanted to send a strong signal to speculators that defending the dollar was a priority. Sadly, at the same time an already serious depression was made even worse by a cluster of bank failures which required an easy money policy if the Fed was to render central bank assistance to distressed bankers and depositors. After a while speculation eased but returned with a vengeance during the winter of 1932 and 1933. Again the Fed raised interest rates to defend the dollar, and by March 1933 virtually every state had closed its banks.

THE GOLD STANDARD AND THE TRANSMISSION OF THE DEPRESSION

The gold standard, which was held in awe, was supposed to guarantee stability. It imposed a set of rules on participating economies, and the adjustments required to maintain equilibrium were supposed to minimize economic fluctuations. But the gold standard did not work in that way. During the 1920s, France and the United States acquired the bulk of the world's gold stock but chose to sterilize it rather than let it increase the money supply. The latter course of action would have introduced inflationary pressures, made their exports more expensive, and eventually have led to a loss of gold that would have benefitted the nations which received it. Apart from France and the United States, many gold standard countries lived on the margin with inadequate reserves. Once these countries began losing gold they had limited choices. They were forced to deflate their economies, so that their exports became more competitive, and cut back on imports in order to reduce gold losses. But deflationary policies raised unemployment, increased business failures, and lessened the demand for someone else's exports. International borrowing, which had been a useful way of avoiding the full rigors of deflation in the past, was not a possibility after the middle of 1930 when nervous investors began to repatriate their funds—and with great

speed once the first payment defaults added to the anxiety. Even in robust democracies such as Great Britain, deflation imposed evident strains. In other nations, breaking the backs of the people was eventually viewed as a cure worse than the disease. Default, or devaluation, seemed preferable. Even during this deflationary spiral, many policy makers and members of the public associated devaluation with damaging inflation. Reducing the external value of the currency was a weapon of last resort in societies with recent experience of destabilizing price rises. Devaluation had also the disadvantage of antagonizing international investors, but this disincentive was no longer powerful once there was no international capital to attract. Countries that devalued gained a competitive advantage for their exports, but in doing so they put an even greater strain on nations that strove to maintain the external value of their currencies. Sometimes competitive, or “beggar-thy-neighbor,” devaluations took place with countries striving to stay ahead of the game. Those who declined to devalue, responded with increased tariffs and quotas or the imposition of exchange controls.

The depression was transmitted through foreign trade, and the United States was at the heart of the contraction. The supply of dollars to the rest of the world, which resulted both from American overseas lending and payment for U.S. imports, fell drastically from \$7.4 billion in 1929 to \$2.4 billion in 1932. The growing shortage of dollars became a serious problem. Once Debtor countries used up their meagre reserves, they had to take steps to cut their imports. Unfortunately, in doing so they helped to export the Depression. Primary producing nations found that the prices of their exports fell far more steeply than the prices of the manufactured goods that they wished to import. In Europe, the inter-related war debts and reparations were fundamentally destabilizing. Unfortunately, the gold standard functioned as a mechanism for spreading the Depression rather than containing it.

In April 1933, Roosevelt, who was less committed to orthodoxy than Hoover, devalued the dollar and the U.S. abandoned the gold standard. The president was clearly signalling his intention to put domestic recovery to the fore. The aim of devalua-

tion was to stimulate the U.S. economy and it was an essential prerequisite for New Deal policies designed to raise export-oriented farm prices. Indeed, the devaluation of the dollar was welcomed by farmers who also hoped that some beneficial inflation of farm prices would follow.

In 1931, forty-seven countries embraced the gold standard. By late 1933 only a small rump comprising, principally, Belgium, France, the Netherlands and Switzerland still clung to the old orthodoxy. To remain competitive the “gold bloc” nations had to resort to savage deflation, which imposed serious social costs on their populations. As their economies declined their currencies came under severe speculative pressure, to which the orthodox solution was even more deflation and protection. However, raising tariff barriers was not a solution since countries that had already devalued their currencies also used tariffs as a retaliatory device.

By 1936, Germany no longer paid reparations, and Britain and France ignored their war debt payments to the United States. In that year, 77 percent of Latin American loans were in default—for Chile and Peru the figure was 100 percent. September 1936 also marked the demise of the gold standard as France, the Netherlands and Switzerland were forced to concede that the cost of staying on gold far outweighed any possible advantages. With this round of devaluations, the governments of these countries had more freedom to address the formidable economic problems that loyalty to the gold standard had intensified.

As Eichengreen shows, the countries that followed Britain off gold in 1931 managed to avoid the worst effects of the Depression. However, although devaluation presented policy makers with the opportunity to implement vigorous recovery policies, few nations embraced expansionary fiscal and monetary initiatives. Caution prevailed, and although the abandonment of the gold standard, together with devaluation, was essential for economic recovery, the subsequent expansion was often disappointingly weak.

During World War II, commentators became convinced that the selfish economic nationalism that characterized the 1930s had played a key role

in exacerbating the international tensions that ultimately led to armed conflict. War debts and reparations, inadequate international co-operation and the absence of international institutions that could assist economies in trouble all helped to make the prewar decade so troubled. The Bretton Woods Agreement (1944) sought to correct the deficiencies of the 1930s by setting up two new institutions. They were the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which became known as the World Bank. These institutions were designed to provide an effective structure for international co-operation and to render unnecessary the “beggar-thy-neighbor” policies that proved so destabilizing before 1939.

See Also: AFRICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; ASIA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; CANADA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; GOLD STANDARD; LATIN AMERICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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PETER FEARON

INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE (ILD)

The International Labor Defense (ILD), founded in 1925 for the purpose of providing free legal services and support for “labor and political prisoners” and their families, was the legal arm of the Communist Party and was closely associated with the International Red Aid (an organization founded by Comintern in Moscow in 1922 to provide relief for martyrs of the revolution). The ILD attracted a significant following during the 1930s due to its spirited defense of numerous poor and working-class defendants, immigrants, and blacks, contributing considerably to the Communist Party’s reputation as a militant proponent of workers’ rights and a champion of oppressed black Americans.

James P. Cannon, an influential Communist Party member, led the drive to create the ILD, and was at its helm until he was expelled from the Communist Party in 1928. Membership in the ILD was open, but Communists generally held positions of leadership. National directors during the 1930s included J. Louis Engdahl, who succeeded Cannon; William L. Patterson, a prominent African-American party member; and Anna Damon.

Shortly after its founding the organization became engaged in the failed campaign to save the lives of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, two Italian immigrants and anarchists convicted and sentenced to die for a 1927 robbery and murder. The ILD went on to agitate for the release of labor activists Tom Mooney and Warren Billings, who were unjustly confined for a 1916 bombing in San Francisco.

During the 1930s the ILD began to direct more of its activities toward African Americans. As part of its constitution, the ILD made special concessions to “the defense of the Negro people;” however, it was subsequent to 1928 and the mandates of the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (the international Communist body headquartered in Moscow) that it began to concentrate on cases of racial injustice. Its efforts included the successful nationwide campaign to free Angelo Herndon, a young black organizer imprisoned in Georgia for leading a hun-

ger march in Atlanta in 1932, and numerous other less celebrated cases of southern racial repression.

Unquestionably, it was the struggle surrounding the "Scottsboro Boys," nine black youths wrongfully condemned for the rape of two white women on an Alabama freight car in 1931, that propelled the ILD and the Communist Party into the forefront of American consciousness. The organization mounted an aggressive legal defense bolstered by its hallmark strategy of "mass pressure": massive publicity, demonstrations, rallies, and speaking tours. Largely through its efforts, the ILD transformed a local miscarriage of justice into a national and international indictment of racism.

In 1937, the ILD selected its first non-Communist head, Vito Marcantonio. Under his leadership, the organization continued its vigorous defense of targeted groups and initiated an attack on debt peonage in the South. The ILD began to lose momentum in the next decade and merged with the Civil Rights Congress in 1946.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; HERNDON, ANGELO, CASE; SCOTTSBORO CASE.

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GWEN MOORE

INTERNATIONAL LADIES' GARMENT WORKERS' UNION (ILGWU)

Two dramatic strikes in the pre-World War I period contributed to making the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) one of the larg-

est and most successful unions in the nation at the end of the war. The famous 1909 "uprising of the 20,000" New York City shirtwaist makers and the 1910 cloakmakers' strike that established the "Protocol of Peace" gave the ILGWU a solid base and stable membership through the teens. The Protocol limited homework and inside subcontracting or sweating, and established a six-day, 54-hour workweek. During this period of strength the union also developed an extensive education program, health insurance, and unemployment insurance for its members.

Following World War I, conflict broke out between radicals and moderates within the ILGWU. The union was wracked with dissention and factionalism for the first half of the 1920s. In 1926, some 35,000 cloakmakers led by the Communist faction went on strike over the issue of job security. The strikers lost; manufacturers would not negotiate with the radicals, while the radicals were accused of refusing to support compromise agreements that would have ended the strike. As a result of the defeat, most of the Communists were driven out of the union by the end of the decade. By then the Depression was settling into the garment trades. By 1933 union membership had dropped to 40,000, down from almost 100,000 in 1920. The ILGWU lost over 3,300 members in 1930 alone.

Benjamin Schlesinger, a moderate, was elected ILGWU president in 1928 on a campaign to stabilize the union's finances and increase membership. David Dubinsky followed Schlesinger into the presidency with the latter's death in 1932. Meanwhile, shifts were also occurring within the industry. With the growth of the readymade dress industry in the 1920s, female dressmakers were replacing male cloakmakers. With the coming of the Depression employers began replacing male workers with female workers. The percentage of women workers in the garment trades increased from 64 percent in 1925 to 74 percent in 1935.

Confronted with a growing number of female workers in the garment trades, the ILGWU began aggressively organizing women, often taking advantage of campaigns initiated by the women themselves. The success of female dressmakers in their strike against the nonunion dress industry in



Members of Local 89 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union in New York make uniforms for the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps in 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Philadelphia spurred on organizing efforts, and membership began to climb after 1933. Even though many of the union's social programs had been cut back (financial difficulties even led to the suspension of the union newspaper *Justice*), the ILGWU continued to maintain its Education Department, the Union Health Center in New York, and its unemployment insurance services in Cleveland, Ohio.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's election and the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act offered new opportunities for the ILGWU. The National Recovery Administration (NRA) established codes for each industry and gave the workers the right to organize under Section 7a. Although workers in many of the heavily industrialized occupations found the NRA to be of limited value, garment workers were well positioned to take advantage of the new law. Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers union was on the NRA board to set codes, and Dubinsky served as a labor advisor to the NRA. Using Section 7a the ILGWU extended its organizing efforts. In the summer of 1933 the ILGWU called a general strike of dressmakers in the Northeast; 60,000 workers walked out. The union won the strike and enforced the new NRA code. By the end of 1934 union membership had climbed to over 200,000. The ILGWU also campaigned for shorter hours and a voice in setting job conditions. The union had fought against the piece rate system in the prewar years, but with the coming of the Depression, manufacturers began using hourly rates and firing slower workers. Piecework allowed for more widely distributed work and employers were less likely to lay off older and less efficient workers, but the concern was the rates. The union won a voice in setting standard piece rates. The national codes established a 35-hour workweek.

Although Dubinsky was loyal to the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and close to its president, William Green, most ILGWU officials supported industrial organizing. In 1935 Dubinsky served on the AFL Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO). When the CIO unions were suspended from the AFL, Dubinsky resigned from the AFL executive committee and withdrew his union

from the AFL. The ILGWU did not join the CIO, but remained independent until 1940, when it rejoined the AFL.

While the union retained its membership base and won a voice in setting rates and hours, it faced the continuing challenge of runaway shops. For many years, New York had been the center of the trade. For manufacturers the city offered a huge pool of capable labor, was close to the fashion industry, and had extensive networks of external economies. Yet New York was also the center of union activity and had extensive radical networks and reinforcing institutions. In the pre-Depression years, moving a shop entailed the necessity of locating new space and a willing and capable labor force. With the coming of the Depression manufacturers could move at significantly less cost. Empty factories begged for occupation, particularly in the depressed old textile centers, such as Fall River or New Bedford, Massachusetts. These were places with an abundance of unemployed women familiar with industrial work and piece work, and city leaders were more than willing to encourage the movement of manufacturers into their empty textile mills. Garments were a low capital-intensive industry. Manufacturers could load bolts of cloth and sewing machines in trucks and drive into New England, unload them into an abandoned textile mill, hire workers as learners, and begin work. The union tried to follow these plants but it was a difficult and frustrating task at best. The ILGWU approached the problem of runaway shops with a dual campaign of publicizing the union label and the urging of the passage of a minimum wage. The industry was also expanding on the West Coast. In the 1920s Jewish and Italian women made up the heart of the West Coast garment workers, but with the coming of the Depression, employers turned more and more to the larger pool of Hispanic and Asian women who were desperate to find work at any wage. Although the ILGWU maintained a non-discrimination policy, the new, more conservative, leadership that had taken over following the purge of radicals in the late 1920s held tight control over the union. This discouraged more aggressive organizing of minority women.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR.

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JOHN T. CUMBLER

INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION (ILA)

For several decades after its founding in 1895, the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) functioned mainly as a collection of local unions and regional federations. The ILA faced a sharp challenge from One Big Union advocates during the era of World War I; it suffered major losses during the "lean years" of the 1920s; and in 1937 the union's rebellious Pacific Coast District split off to form the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU). But in the face of persistent charges that it was corrupt, undemocratic, and "in no real sense of the word a labor union at all," the ILA survived and in some locations thrived.

The ILA's origins can be traced to the founding of local unions of lumber handlers and tugboatmen on the Great Lakes in the 1870s. A number of these unions combined to form the National Longshoremen's Association of the United States in 1892. Following the affiliation of Canadian locals, the organization changed its name to the International Longshoremen's Association, and it received a charter from the American Federation of Labor in 1896.

By the turn of the century, the ILA had thousands of members on the Great Lakes. But New

York, home to one third of the nation's longshoremen, remained the key to the union's future. The ILA signed its first port-wide agreement in New York in 1916. Although union members were granted preference in employment, the contract did not address the vast surplus of labor that was the hallmark of the port.

Between 1916 and 1945, the hourly wage on the New York waterfront increased from 40 cents to \$1.45. But there were no authorized strikes until 1948. There was also no democratic procedure within the union and no effective advocacy of the members' interests. To many observers, it appeared that the ILA's principal function was to "keep the lid on."

The man who warmed to that task was the colorful Joseph P. Ryan, who emerged as the union's central figure during the 1920s and eventually became its "president for life." On his watch the ILA began the rapid descent into "gangsterism" that was so vividly portrayed in Elia Kazan's film *On the Waterfront* (1954). New York's longshoremen remained more or less quiescent in the 1930s, in part because of organized crime's ominous presence in and around the union, but also because the dockworkers were enmeshed in a cultural network that offered few openings to the forces of change. In Irish-American neighborhoods such as Chelsea, family, ethnicity, and faith were the foundation stones of daily life, and outsiders were unwelcome.

But it was different on the West Coast, where the union's Pacific Coast District called a walkout in May 1934 that mobilized longshoremen from San Diego in the south to Vancouver, British Columbia, in the north. The legendary "Big Strike," which lasted for eighty-three days, spread to other seafaring crafts and eventually triggered a four-day general strike in the San Francisco Bay area. The walkout also ushered in a "Pentecostal" era of union militancy among West Coast dockworkers that eventually propelled them out of the ILA and the AFL and into the welcoming arms of the Committee for Industrial Organization (later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO). Led by Australian immigrant Harry Bridges—"Red Harry" to his friends, as well as his enemies—the ILWU confidently set out to topple the ILA by at-

tacking its New York stronghold and the strategic southern port of New Orleans.

Joe Ryan's "goons" easily repelled Bridges's men in New York, making New Orleans all the more important to the ILWU's, and the ILA's, future. In the Crescent City, race would play a critical role, because black longshoremen outnumbered whites by a three-to-one margin and were determined to defend their turf against white encroachment. In an election conducted by the National Labor Relations Board in 1938, New Orleans longshoremen voted overwhelmingly for the ILA in a bitter contest with the ILWU. In a competitive labor market, they believed that racially separate unionism would serve their interests better than the racial egalitarianism of the ILWU. Even in the midst of the post-World War II civil rights revolution that demolished *de jure* segregation, black longshoremen in New Orleans and other southern ports clung to their "separate but equal" organizations, until a federal court compelled them to merge with white ILA locals in the early 1980s.

Meanwhile, in New York, Catholic "labor priests" developed close ties with rank-and-file insurgents at the end of World War II, and for the next decade the waterfront became a hotbed of conflict. A wave of wildcat strikes helped bring down the Ryan regime and nearly destroyed the union in the nation's largest port. But the ILA survived and adapted—unevenly—to the new rights-conscious environment and to the mechanization of cargo handling.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); BRIDGES, HARRY; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR; SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE (1934).

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BRUCE NELSON

ISOLATIONISM

U.S. isolationism has traditionally involved opposition to participation in war outside the Western Hemisphere, particularly in Europe; avoidance of binding military alliances; and refusal to participate in organizations of collective security. Above all, the isolationist desires to maintain the United States's freedom of action. Such people differ from pacifists, who withhold support for any conflict and renounce any war. Proponents of the isolationist position usually consider the label perjorative: As most oppose isolating the United States from either the world's culture or its commerce, they have long preferred such terms as "neutralist," "nationalist," "non-interventionist," or "anti-interventionist."

By the above definition, U. S. foreign policy was isolationist until the twentieth century. Only when President Woodrow Wilson sought entry into the League of Nations in 1919 did isolationism emerge as a distinctive political position. Moreover, only in the 1930s, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought discretionary power to aid victims of aggression, was the general isolationist consensus threatened. Opponents of Roosevelt's policies fought so successfully that the years 1934 to 1937 marked the high tide of isolationist legislation.

In April 1934 Roosevelt signed the Johnson Debt Default Act, introduced by Senator Hiram Johnson (R-Calif.), who had been prominent in the fight against the League of Nations. The Senate passed the measure without a recorded vote, the House without dissent. The bill prohibited private loans to nations in default of obligations contracted during World War I to the U.S. Government.

In January 1935 the Senate turned down Roosevelt's bid for U.S. entry into the World Court by seven votes. Founded in 1921, the Permanent Court of International Justice (as the court was formally called) was closely tied to the League of Nations. The League Assembly and Council had to approve

all nominations; the World Court's budget was underwritten by the League; the League Covenant required the court to give "an advisory opinion upon any dispute or question referred to it by the Council or by the Assembly." Contrary to myth, Roosevelt's defeat did not result from unscrupulous propaganda fostered by publisher William Randolph Hearst and radio priest Charles E. Coughlin. Rather it was due to Congress's hostile predisposition and Roosevelt's own lack of leadership.

In the spring of 1935, however, investigators for the Senate's Special Committee Investigating the Munitions Industry began to collect material concerning U.S. entry into World War I. During this time such revisionist works as journalist Walter Millis's *Road to War: America, 1914–1917* (1935) portrayed the Great War as a futile crusade. Munitions committee chairman Gerald P. Nye (R-N.Dak.), together with his committee colleague Senator Bennett Champ Clark (D-Mo.), introduced bills for an impartial arms embargo against belligerents, a prohibition on loans to belligerents, and denial of passports to Americans wishing to enter war zones. When the Roosevelt administration, which was opposed to mandatory isolation, countered with a bill that would permit discriminatory embargoes, its proposal found little response.

In August 19, 1935, as Italy was poised to invade Ethiopia, members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported a joint resolution. "Arms, ammunition and implements of war" could not be sent to belligerents once the president declared that a state of war existed. (Roosevelt later defined "implements of war" to include airplanes, various chemicals, and armored vehicles, but not such items as cotton, oil, scrap iron, and trucks). Submarines of belligerent nations could not use U.S. ports. The president possessed discretionary authority to proclaim that Americans traveling on ships registered in belligerent nations did so at their own risk. Though the administration deplored the fact that its hands were being tied, it permitted the bill to pass, although it did secure an amendment limiting its term to six months. The legislation passed the Senate 77 to 2 and the House without a recorded vote.

When Roosevelt signed the bill on August 31, he warned that "the inflexible provisions might

drag us into war instead of keeping us out" (Cole 1983, p. 178). He did not, however, want to jeopardize pending New Deal legislation, such as the regulation of the coal industry, over foreign policy matters. In addition, he thought the bill would probably injure the aggressor Italy far more than it would injure its victim. On October 6, three days after fighting broke out in East Africa, Roosevelt invoked the new bill. No munitions could be sold to either side.

Because the neutrality law was due to expire in February 1936, that month Congress passed the Neutrality Act of 1936. The House voted 353 to 27; the Senate took no roll call. The act was almost identical to the 1935 law, with the addition of one feature: it forbade the United States to lend money to belligerent nations, though exceptions were made for wars in Latin America. It did not, as Roosevelt had hoped, prohibit any trade with the belligerents beyond peacetime levels. Like the previous act, the new one was temporary, scheduled to expire on May 1, 1937.

This measure imposed more restrictions upon a president already opposed to mandatory legislation. Yet the president signed it without comment. Roosevelt feared that a fight would risk further stripping of his power, produce debate that could only comfort Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, and risk votes in the impending presidential race.

In July 1936 rebel forces in Spanish Morocco led by General Francisco Franco attacked the Spanish Republic, triggering a civil war that would last almost three years. Within a month the U.S. government announced a "moral embargo" on arms shipments to either side, but not until January 1937, on Roosevelt's recommendation, did Congress pass a nondiscriminatory arms embargo, with the Senate voting 81 to 0 and the House 406 to 1.

On May 1, 1937, the Neutrality Act of 1936 would expire. In return for sections forbidding Americans to travel on belligerent ships and prohibiting the arming of U.S. merchantmen, anti-interventionists accepted discretionary authority on cash-and-carry, a scheme by which nations at war could collect goods in U.S. ports and pay for them on the spot. The cash-and-carry provision would remain in force until May 1, 1939. The president

could also ban shipment on U.S. vessels of commodities that he might specify, close U.S. ports to belligerent warships, and declare U.S. territorial waters off-limits to belligerent submarines and merchantmen. The measure kept the arms embargo and loan prohibition of the old law, and it applied to civil wars as well as international ones. On April 29, 1937, the new bill was passed, and was signed by the president a day later. Roosevelt offered no objection, undoubtedly because he realized that cash-and-carry favored Britain and France, two major sea powers, rather than the inland nations of Germany and Italy. Engaged in a dispute over enlarging the Supreme Court, which had struck down much New Deal legislation, Roosevelt sought no additional conflict. By remaining aloof from debate while quietly backing the congressional moderates, he was able to maintain some flexibility.

In January 1938, in the wake of a crisis in which Japanese forces in China sunk a gunboat, the *Panay*, the House considered the Ludlow Amendment. Congressman Louis Ludlow (D-Ind.) sought an amendment to the U.S. Constitution by which Congress's power to declare war would be restricted to cases of actual or imminent invasion of the United States or its territories or attack by a non-American nation on a state in the Western Hemisphere. In any other case, Congress must allow voters to choose, by means of a national referendum, whether they wished to go to war. On January 10, 1938, the House voted 209 to 188 to return the proposed amendment to committee. Just before the vote, House Speaker William Bankhead (D-Ala.) read a public letter from Roosevelt that claimed that the amendment would "cripple" the president's ability to conduct foreign policy and encourage other nations to "violate American rights with impunity."

Meanwhile, Roosevelt sought to revise the 1937 Neutrality Act. As the cash-and-carry provision of this law was scheduled to expire on May 1, 1939,

the administration sought a new bill that would retain cash-and-carry while repealing the arms embargo. At the end of June the House, by a vote of 200 to 188, passed an amended bill that included cash-and-carry but also added an arms embargo introduced by Congressman John Vorys (R-Ohio). Because the Senate did not act, most of the 1937 law, including the arms embargo, remained in effect.

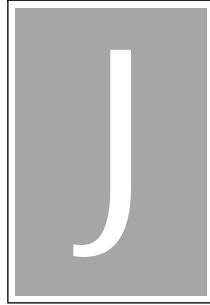
Once Hitler invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, isolationism declined. As the United States emerged from the Depression, Roosevelt defeated his foes on one issue after another. In November 1939 Congress voted for military sales to Britain and France on a cash-and-carry basis. In September 1940 it adopted military conscription, and supported extending the terms of army draftees less than a year later. In November 1941 it authorized the arming of U.S. merchant vessels and permitted them to carry cargoes to belligerent ports. Acting on his own authority, Roosevelt occupied Greenland and Iceland, froze Japanese assets, issued a set of war aims with Britain, and entered into an undeclared naval war with Germany. Isolationism was over well before Pearl Harbor.

See Also: ETHIOPIAN WAR; HULL, CORDELL; SPANISH CIVIL WAR; WORLD COURT.

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JUSTUS D. DOENECKE



JACKSON, ROBERT

Robert H. Jackson (1892–1954) served as U.S. solicitor general from 1938 to 1940, as attorney general in 1940 and 1941, and as associate justice of the Supreme Court from 1941 to 1954. Raised in upstate New York, Jackson studied law with a local attorney active in the Democratic Party. While developing a successful law practice, Jackson advised Franklin Roosevelt during his service as New York's governor.

Jackson came to Washington with the Roosevelt administration, working first as general counsel to the Internal Revenue Service and then in the Department of Justice, where he helped develop the legal arguments used to defend the Public Utilities Holding Company Act, regarded by many as one of the New Deal's key statutes. Jackson's foremost contribution was as Roosevelt's legal adviser; in that capacity he made a major speech describing the obstacle the Supreme Court posed to the New Deal, and he drafted the legal opinion defending the president's power to lend U.S. ships to Great Britain early in World War II when the United States was still technically a neutral party.

As associate justice, Jackson wrote opinions that defined one part of the New Deal's constitutional revolution. *Wickard v. Filburn* (1942) crystal-

ized the new doctrine that the Constitution's grant of power to regulate interstate commerce allowed Congress to regulate seemingly local activities (such as raising wheat for consumption on the farm).

Jackson's nationalism led him to support civil liberties, as in *Edwards v. California* (1941), where the majority struck down as interfering with interstate commerce a California law barring "Okies" (poor emigrants from Oklahoma) from entering the state. His affirmation of principles of free expression in *West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette* (1943) remains one of the most eloquent in the reports: "If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion or other matters of opinion." Later in his career on the Court, Jackson, who also served as chief prosecutor in the Nuremberg war crimes trials, became skeptical about toleration of subversive speech.

Jackson believed that Roosevelt had promised to make him chief justice of the Supreme Court when the position became available, but the appointment fell instead to President Harry Truman, who did not feel obliged to honor Roosevelt's promise. Jackson suspected that Justice Hugo Black had poisoned Truman's mind against the appointment, and relations between the two New Dealers

on the Court were permanently soured. Having rejected his doctor's advice that he should retire after his first heart attack in early 1954, Jackson returned to the bench and suffered a fatal heart attack in the fall. He died on October 9, 1954.

See Also: SUPREME COURT.

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MARK TUSHNET

JAZZ

When Joseph "King" Oliver died in the spring of 1938, his protégé, Louis Armstrong, and other bandleaders, such as Cab Calloway and Earl Hines, claimed at his funeral that Oliver was the true "king of swing." Others who wore the title, and swing musicians in general, they insinuated, owed a great debt to the leader of the Creole Jazz Band. This was a way of suggesting that the music of the big band era, known as *swing* since the 1930s, was an outgrowth of early forms of jazz. This idea contrasts with the fans' notion that swing music, like New Orleans jazz or Dixieland, is a discrete and separate entity from bebop.

Scholars disagree on how to define jazz and swing, but many assert that the earlier bands of James Reese Europe, Fletcher Henderson, and Duke Ellington, as well as Oliver, were fundamental to swing's evolution. On the eve of World War I, James Europe's orchestra performed at New York City's Carnegie Hall—one full decade before Paul Whiteman and a generation before the jazz concerts of the late 1930s were staged in this hall. James Europe's music grew out of ragtime and popular dance music, as did Henderson's and Ellington's. Don Redman, Henderson's arranger, is often credited with having the reed or brass sections perform passages in call-and-response sequences, but Ferdinand "Jelly Roll" Morton also used this dis-

tinctive voicing and organization. Besides employing the rhythms of ragtime and the harmonies of blues and popular dance music, Ellington's compositions and arrangements contained unusual harmonies and unique combinations of instruments.

These outfits, and southwestern orchestras such as those of Alphonso Trent, Bennie Moten, and the Oklahoma City Blue Devils, grew in size from six to eight to twelve and thirteen or more musicians in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In the rhythm section, the string bass replaced the tuba and the guitar was used instead of banjo, and lighter more flexible rhythms were played in 4/4 instead of 2/4. Swing bands also alternated ensemble passages with improvised sections by "hot" soloists, while other band members "riffed" or played highly rhythmic motifs in the background. These exciting new sounds buoyed dancers and musicians alike, sending them into climactic moments when music, musicians, and dancers melded for an evening into a symphony of sound and movement. New jitterbug dances, such as the Lindy Hop and the Big Apple, illustrated these distinctive rhythms with not only new steps, but also highly acrobatic moves in which one partner propelled the other up and away from the floor in what were known as *air steps*.

These changes occurred gradually, however, and in the 1930s, there were still many bands, African-American and white swing orchestras, that included New Orleans styles, songs, and collective improvisation. Nonetheless, as evident from the 1932 recordings by Fletcher Henderson and Bennie Moten, as well as others, musicians perfected the swing idiom and arrangements in songs such as "King Porter Stomp" and "Moten Swing." By the mid and late 1930s, bands led by Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, and the Dorsey brothers also thrilled jitterbug dancers, as well as radio listeners from coast to coast. The white bands often utilized African-American arrangers—Fletcher Henderson, Sy Oliver, and Eddie Durham—to write the more soulful aspects of swing arrangements.

In several respects, swing bands contained within them the seeds of future developments in music and culture for decades to come. Most if not



One of the most popular jazz musicians of the Depression era was Louis Armstrong (front right), shown with his band in 1937.

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all of the contemporary dance music in the United States stemmed from this tradition. The enhanced role of the drummers, of long drum solos, of melodies that were basically riffs, and of the incessant dance beat foreshadowed the rhythm and blues of the 1940s, which came to be known as rock and roll in the 1950s. Drummers who were leaders also contributed to these developments; Chick Webb in the 1930s was one of the first to bring drums front and center, a role popularized by Gene Krupa and leading to Max Roach and Art Blakey, among others. In another respect, the small combos within the big bands, Count Basie's Kansas City combos, for example, or Goodman's Quartet, presaged bebop bands, such as those led by Charlie "Bird" Parker

and Dizzy Gillespie, and progressive jazz ensembles, such as the Modern Jazz Quartet. Even the fusion of European classical music with jazz, as in the compositions, arrangements, and playing of band leaders Artie Shaw and Eddie South, were comparable to Third Stream developments in the 1950s.

In the midst of the Depression, U.S. workers and unemployed men and women danced, socialized, and wooed to hits of the swing era—"One O'Clock Jump," "Mood Indigo," and "In the Mood." Notably during the swing decade, blues moved to the forefront—not the country blues of Blind Lemon Johnson or city blues of Ma Rainey, but the urban versions of this music played by El-



Fats Waller, a popular Depression-era jazz pianist and songwriter, in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

lington, Henderson, Basie, and Jimmy Lunceford. By the late 1930s, guitarists Eddie Durham, Charlie Christian, and T-Bone Walker electrified the instrument and amplified the sound, integrating the guitar with large orchestras and using it to solo like a saxophone or trumpet. Their efforts and the combos of Nat "King" Cole, Slim Gaillard and Slam Stewart, Stuff Smith, and Louis Jordan led to rock and roll and the music of Muddy Waters, Chuck Berry, and eventually Elvis Presley and the British rock bands. Electrification of the guitar in the 1930s also presaged fusion with the electric piano, bass, and other instruments in the 1970s.

Along with blues and jazz dancing, a distinctive way of speaking, *swing slang* or *jive talk*, accompanied the music and was even adopted in articles about the music and musicians. Some attributed this slang to Louis Armstrong's influence, but the

jazz world, the underworld, and entertainment circles have always had their distinctive argots. These merged in the swing band milieu, and expressions such as "Hit that jive, jack" and "Let's get racy with Count Basie" punctuated the repartee and banter of not only musicians, but dancers, listeners, writers, and others in the "hip" crowd and became part of common parlance. Even the humor of, for example, "Nagasaki," "Flat Foot Floogie," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" was to be found in rock and roll songs of subsequent decades.

The social aspects of swing bands were as important as the music, as they provided staging grounds for assaults on racial segregation. In jam sessions, white musicians and black musicians performed together on the bandstand, a practice that was illegal in the South because it meant racial integration. Bandleaders such as Benny Carter hired white musicians, and Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw hired black musicians, a practice that was a frontal assault on segregation. Integrated bands traveling in the South encountered threats of arrest or violence when they defied the law by demanding equal rights for all band members. Up north, Billie Holiday, Oran "Hot Lips" Page, and others fought back in nightclubs and bars when whites attacked them. Thus, in a social sense as well as in the music, dance, and language, swing prepared the ground for future developments in subsequent decades of the twentieth century.

See Also: ARMSTRONG, LOUIS; BIG BAND MUSIC; ELLINGTON, DUKE; GOODMAN, BENNY; HOLIDAY, BILLIE; MUSIC.

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DOUGLAS HENRY DANIELS

JCNR. See JOINT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL RECOVERY.

JOHNSON, HUGH

Hugh Johnson (August 5, 1882–April 15, 1942), head of the New Deal's National Recovery Administration (NRA), was born in Kansas and raised in Kansas and Oklahoma. He graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1903 and was commissioned in the cavalry. In the early stage of his military career, Johnson served with the First Cavalry Regiment in Texas, the Philippines, and California. During these years the essential elements of his personality emerged. A heavy drinker, he was pugnacious and ready to harshly criticize the transgressor of even the most minor army regulation. This gruff side later led a pundit to dub him "Old Iron Pants." Yet Johnson also had a sentimental side, and his quick mind for wisecracks and ability to tell good stories made him popular with messmates. From 1914 to 1916 he attended the University of California Law School, and immediately upon graduation he joined the Punitive Expedition in Mexico that was chasing Pancho Villa, serving as judge advocate.

During World War I, Johnson rose to the temporary rank of brigadier general while playing a major role in the mobilization of the nation's manpower and industry. Initially he was the principal assistant for Major General Enoch H. Crowder, head of the Judge Advocate General's Department and the Provost Marshal General's Office. In this

capacity Johnson helped formulate and implement the selective service system. Transferred to the War Department General Staff in 1918, Johnson spearheaded the restructuring of the army supply organization to end the inter-bureau competition that had made a mess of procurement. He also represented the army on the War Industries Board (WIB), which was mobilizing the nation's industries for war through a program of industrial self-government. Through his stint with the WIB, Johnson acquired considerable knowledge of American industry and became good friends with many of the businessmen serving with the WIB, including Bernard M. Baruch, its chairman, and George N. Peek.

Disappointed by his failure to serve in France and anxious to make some "real" money, Johnson resigned his commission in 1919 and joined with Peek to take over the management of the struggling Moline Plow Company. Their efforts to turn Moline Plow into a profitable concern failed, and after an acrimonious break with Peek, Johnson supervised the company's liquidation during the late 1920s. In the meantime, Johnson became an associate of Baruch, a figure of great influence as a result of his success on Wall Street and his twin roles as a political strategist and publicist on national issues. Among other things, Johnson helped Baruch publicize the need for ongoing planning for economic mobilization and was an investigator on business and economic conditions. At Baruch's request, fueled by a sizable campaign contribution, Johnson was admitted to Franklin D. Roosevelt's "brains trust," an informal group of academicians who served as speechwriters and thinkers in his 1932 presidential race. As Baruch's man, Johnson saw that Baruch's views on recovery from the Depression were heard.

In 1933 Johnson emerged as a key figure in Roosevelt's New Deal. During the spring he participated in the drafting of the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), an ambitious attempt to stimulate recovery through industrial self-government and public works spending that Roosevelt approved on June 16. Impressed with his vigor, knowledge of the industrial sector, and experience with the WIB, Roosevelt wanted Johnson to administer the act. However, after hearing from Baruch

that Johnson was too impulsive to be “a number-one man,” Roosevelt restricted him to the administration of the agency to implement industrial self-government, the NRA, and the president placed public works in a separate agency, the Public Works Administration.

Johnson’s initial task was the drafting of the “fair codes of competition” that were at the heart of industrial self-government. Designed to minimize the cutthroat competition that many argued had weakened American industry and to bring a degree of social justice to labor, the codes were to include provisions for production, price, and marketing agreements; minimum wages; maximum hours; and the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. In each of the nation’s industries, businessmen and labor representatives would draft a code that had the force of law once it received the president’s signature. Through the codes, predatory practices would be extinguished and labor standards improved, increasing stability, employment, and investor confidence, and encouraging general economic progress and social harmony.

At the outset, Johnson concentrated on codes for the nation’s largest industries, such as cotton textiles, steel, petroleum, automobiles, and coal. Fearing constitutional problems, Johnson eschewed the coercive features of NIRA, which included federal licensing of business and presidential authority to impose codes. Moreover, convinced that NRA could succeed only if he worked with business, Johnson generally relied on the voluntary cooperation of business and regularly made concessions to the dominant elements in an industry to get it codified. These actions often led to codes that included restrictive economic policies and gave short shrift to the aspirations of workers. When code drafting stalled, Johnson instituted a voluntary blanket code for all industries covering minimum wages and maximum hours that was to be in effect until the end of 1933 or until an employer’s specific industry was codified. Employers who abided by the code would display the emblem of the NRA, the “Blue Eagle,” in their windows or on their products.

Through the fall of 1933 Johnson presided over a massive publicity campaign to enlist public support for NRA. Marked by giant rallies and parades,

the campaign made Johnson the nation’s number-one Depression fighter, a status *Time* magazine confirmed by naming him its “Man of the Year” for 1933. Next to Roosevelt, he was the most talked-about man in Washington. His pithy quotes, tough talk, gravel voice, rugged looks, and military demeanor made him good copy for reporters. For weeks Johnson worked at a non-stop pace, at one moment bargaining with business and labor leaders to finalize a code and the next moment flying across the country to give a speech. Through a mixture of cajolery, pleas to patriotism, bluster, and horse-trading, he broke the logjam in code drafting. Eventually more than five hundred codes, covering twenty-two million workers, were implemented.

By 1934 Johnson and NRA were engulfed in controversy. Many complained that price-control devices in codes were hindering recovery by raising prices faster than wages. Labor leaders argued that business was undermining the right of workers to form unions by herding them into company unions. “Chiseling,” or the refusal to abide by code provisions, was widespread. In response Johnson agreed to limit price-fixing arrangements, rushed into labor disputes to avert or end strikes, and threatened to “crack down” on “chiselers.”

Under the stress of running NRA, Johnson made contradictory statements, lost his temper, branded criticism of NRA as “treason,” and feuded with detractors. His self-control sapped by overwork, he drank too much, slept too little, and at times appeared on the verge of exhaustion. He permitted his secretary to become a power in NRA, and many speculated that there was something improper about their relationship because she always seemed to be at his side. Unwilling to delegate authority, he tended to run a one-man show and put off bureaucratizing the organization of NRA, resulting in low morale and administrative chaos. By the late summer of 1934 Roosevelt concluded that Johnson had outlasted his usefulness, and at the president’s request Johnson resigned in September. Eight months later the U.S. Supreme Court declared NRA unconstitutional.

In March 1935 Johnson became a syndicated columnist for the Scipps-Howard newspaper chain. Still loyal to the president, he spoke out against Fa-

ther Charles Coughlin and Senator Huey P. Long, two of Roosevelt's most vocal critics, and in June he became temporary director of the newly created Works Progress Administration (WPA) program in New York City. A massive federal public works program, WPA was intended to provide emergency public employment, and in his brief tenure as its head Johnson got WPA off to a flying start in New York City, hiring more than two hundred thousand people before he left the position in October 1935.

Over the next years Johnson turned against Roosevelt and the New Deal. In his columns and speeches he questioned the failure to balance the budget, charged that anti-business elements had too much influence on policy, and warned that Roosevelt was concentrating too much power in the White House. As war loomed in the late 1930s Johnson became an outspoken isolationist, and in 1940 he supported Wendell Willkie, the Republican Party candidate for the presidency. Johnson's isolationism and attacks on Roosevelt soured his relationship with the White House and cost him many readers, prompting Scripps-Howard to drop his column in 1941. After his column was picked up by King Features Syndicate, Johnson continued to be unrelenting in his criticism of Roosevelt and his policies until the United States entered World War II in December 1941. Despite failing health brought on by his drinking, Johnson continued with his column until his death.

Johnson's place in history rests on his leadership of NRA. Under his direction it provided a temporary psychological stimulus and brought several social innovations, like labor's right to organize, to the national scene. But ultimately NRA failed to spur recovery, floundering on its inability to get the various segments of the economy to look beyond self-interest and exhibit a concern for the national welfare. Johnson contributed to the failure of NRA. He was a poor administrator, was too pro-business, and let code-making become an end in itself. His personal excesses compounded these weaknesses. Yet for all of his failings, Johnson's frenzied direction of NRA and colorful style made him one of the most influential and memorable figures of the early New Deal era.

See Also: NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA); NEW DEAL.

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JOHN KENNEDY OHL

JOHNSON, LYNDON B.

Lyndon Baines Johnson (1908–1973) was a congressional aide, director of the Texas National Youth Administration, U.S. congressman, U.S. senator, vice president, and president of the United States. Reared by his politically active parents for a career of public service, Johnson learned early the importance of choosing powerful mentors such as Sam Rayburn and Franklin Roosevelt. His political legacy is mixed: as president, Johnson enacted far-reaching civil rights legislation while also further miring the nation in the Vietnam War. Johnson's political style was pragmatic and activist, for he was committed to a reform agenda rooted in New Deal economic liberalism.

After graduating from college, Johnson taught briefly in a Mexican-American school in Cotulla, Texas, where he observed firsthand the viciousness of poverty and segregation. In 1931 his father

helped him gain a post as secretary to Congressman Richard Kleberg, a Democrat from south Texas. Since Kleberg cared little about the daily duties of his office, many of the responsibilities of managing legislation and constituent concerns fell to Johnson, who handled them with aplomb. Further recognition of his political acumen came with his leadership of the “little congress,” an important behind-the-scenes organization of congressional aides and Johnson’s growing list of older, more powerful political confidants. In 1935 he was a rising star in the Democratic Party and was tapped by President Roosevelt to become the director of the National Youth Administration in Texas. In that position, Johnson oversaw a successful jobs program that included the construction of countless state roadside parks; a student aid program that funded high school, college, and graduate students; and an employment referral service. During his tenure, Johnson ensured that African-American and Mexican-American students received equitable treatment.

In 1937, the congressman from Texas’s tenth district died, opening a seat to be filled in a special election. Johnson, a virtual unknown in the district, bested a field of nine candidates. His campaign slogan was “Franklin D. and Lyndon B.,” and he presented himself as the consummate New Dealer, even endorsing Roosevelt’s Supreme Court packing plan. Once in Congress, Johnson worked hard for New Deal issues such as rural electrification. He helped bring a series of dams and water projects to the lower Colorado River in Texas, completely re-making the economics of the Texas Hill Country. Johnson’s eleven years in Congress were successful, and his ambitions and his political talent ultimately took him to the White House.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1938; NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA).

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NANCY BECK YOUNG

JOINT COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL RECOVERY (JCNR)

The Joint Committee for National Recovery (JCNR) was the mechanism by which some black activists sought to represent a collective black voice on political, economic, and social policies in the New Deal era. The JCNR was the brainchild of John P. Davis, a graduate of Harvard Law School.

In 1933 Congress began debating the implementation of the National Recovery Administration (NRA), one of Franklin Roosevelt’s key New Deal agencies. The NRA was created to establish codes that would promote fair competition and standardize wages and hours. Davis, along with fellow Harvard graduate student of economics Robert C. Weaver, noticed that during code hearings Congress devoted very little attention to blacks in the workplace. Davis and Weaver decided to represent blacks’ interest on Capitol Hill and formed the Negro Industrial League (NIL) in order to highlight racial discrimination in the NRA’s wage codes.

The NIL only existed for the summer of 1933—it collapsed when Weaver was recruited into Roosevelt’s administration as an assistant to Clark Foreman, the race advisor to the Department of the Interior. Many hailed Weaver’s appointment as a great step forward for black Americans, but Davis felt that Foreman had co-opted the work of the NIL. Davis remained convinced of the need for a group that represented black organizations on Capitol Hill. By the end of 1933, Davis persuaded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) to support his plan for the JCNR. By December 1933 the JCNR represented eighteen organizations. A year later, twenty-four organizations considered the JCNR their voice on Capitol Hill. Of these twenty-four, however, the only major group was the NAACP. The NAACP felt that the JCNR could not survive without its support and therefore tried to control the group. When

Davis rejected the NAACP's directives, the NAACP withdrew its support, effectively ending the JCNR.

Before the JCNR disappeared at the end of 1935, however, it organized a major conference at Howard University—"The Position of the Negro in Our National Economic Crisis." This conference, in the spring of 1935, attracted New Deal administrators, labor activists, academics, political party leaders, and laborers from around the country. It received negative press from those who alleged that conference organizers promoted communism. In truth, many of the conference speakers were highly critical of the New Deal's treatment of black America, claiming that racial discrimination undercut the support that the New Deal policies promised, but a congressional investigation after the conference found no evidence that attendees advocated a turn to communism. Several conference leaders, however, did call for a new political organization. Less than a year after the JCNR collapsed and the conference ended, this new organization, the National Negro Congress, held its first meeting in Chicago. Labor leader A. Philip Randolph was its first president and John P. Davis, still committed to the idea of a national umbrella organization dedicated to articulating blacks' collective voice, ran the organization on a day-to-day basis.

See Also: FOREMAN, CLARK; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS; WEAVER, ROBERT CLIFTON.

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JONATHAN SCOTT HOLLOWAY

JONES, JESSE

Jesse Holman Jones (April 22, 1874–June 1, 1956) was born to a farming family in Robertson County, Tennessee. Like so many Tennesseans seeking eco-

conomic opportunity in the nineteenth century, the Jones family headed for Texas, settling in Dallas. Blessed with a keen eye for good business deals, Jesse Jones attended Hill's Business College in order to secure at least a rudimentary knowledge of accounting and marketing, and he graduated there in 1891. He accepted a job in his uncle's local lumber business, learning all he could about construction and real-estate development. But Jones wanted to be his own boss. Deciding that Houston offered a more fertile business climate, he invested in real estate and oil and gas properties there. Within a decade he had become one of the city's most influential developers, responsible for founding Texas Commerce Bank, what later became Exxon, and the *Houston Chronicle*. As chairman of the Houston Harbor Board, Jones built the Houston Ship Channel, which eventually made the city one of the country's busiest ports.

Jesse Jones also became the most powerful man in the state's Democratic Party. During World War I, he moved to Washington, D.C., to work for the American Red Cross, and there he became a close friend of President Woodrow Wilson. In 1928, Jones managed to bring the Democratic national convention to Houston. When the nation's banking system disintegrated in 1932, President Herbert Hoover needed a Democrat on the board of the newly-created Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), and Jones accepted the appointment. The RFC made loans to troubled financial institutions, and in 1933 newly-elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt selected Jones to chair the RFC.

During the next twelve years, the RFC became the most powerful agency in the federal government, dispensing tens of thousands of loans to banks, railroads, savings and loan associations, insurance companies, and private businesses. Because Jones was so well connected with the Texas congressional delegation and such influential Texans as Sam Rayburn, Tom Connally, John Nance Garner, and Marvin Jones, and because he could deliver so many perquisites to their constituents, he became one of the most powerful men in the country. And because the RFC operated on a revolving loan basis, it always had hundreds of millions of dollars in its accounts, money that could be used to

fund other federal agencies. Between 1932 and 1940, the RFC dispensed more than \$10 billion in federal assistance to tens of thousands of businesses, prompting one historian to label its work as "saving capitalism." At one point during the Great Depression years, Jesse Jones, by presiding over the RFC and the money it funneled to other agencies, had substantial influence on numerous federal agencies, including the Federal Relief Administration, the Public Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the Rural Electrification Administration.

When World War II erupted, and the federal budget grew geometrically, Jones, as the man who headed the RFC, the so-called "Fourth Branch of Government," virtually presided over the economy's shift to wartime production. Congress created and placed under RFC control the Rubber Reserve Company, the Metals Reserve Company, the United States Commercial Company, the Petroleum Reserve Company, the Defense Plant Corporation,

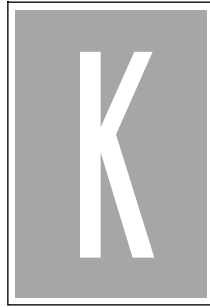
the Defense Supplies Corporation, and the Smaller War Plants Corporation. More than \$40 billion passed through Jones's hands during World War II. It's no wonder that journalists often referred to Roosevelt as "Mr. President" and Jesse Jones as "The Czar." When the war ended, Jones retired to Houston to manage his real-estate empire and to engage in philanthropic activities. He died there in 1956.

See Also: RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION (RFC).

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JAMES S. OLSON



KAISER, HENRY

Henry John Kaiser (May 9, 1882–August 24, 1967) became a national figure through involvement in New Deal public-works projects and wartime defense contracts. Initially a salesman in New York and Spokane, Washington, Kaiser was a small-scale contractor on highway projects in western Canada and then California during the 1920s. Kaiser's business was transformed by major public-works contracts, beginning with the Six Companies consortium of western construction firms that won the Hoover (Boulder) Dam contract in 1931. The immense project required effective coordination of a large workforce in hazardous conditions, major investments in raw material supplies, and the construction of Boulder City. Kaiser was the consortium's key link to politicians, officials, and insiders in Washington, D.C., during the bidding phase, and he later maintained support and confidence during the lengthy construction phase. Kaiser was a prime example of a "government entrepreneur" and a model for positive working relationships between business and the government during the New Deal era. Further public-works contracts followed the Hoover Dam. When unsuccessful in bidding for the prime contract for the Shasta Dam in northern California in 1938, Kaiser won contracts to supply ce-

ment for the project, establishing Permanente Cement.

During World War II, Kaiser's contacts and ambition resulted in spectacular diversification into shipbuilding, steel manufacturing, and the production of magnesium and aluminium. All were major elements in western economic development, in which federal support and contacts, including Reconstruction Finance Corporation loans, were fundamental. Kaiser's public profile attained great heights, aided by his own attention to public relations and by regular and favorable coverage in Henry Luce's Time/Life media during the 1940s. In 1944 Roosevelt even considered Kaiser as a potential vice-presidential running mate. Kaiser's construction companies maintained a tough relationship with workers and unions, but beginning with the Grand Coulee contract in 1938 Kaiser adopted more liberal views on collective bargaining. The Grand Coulee project included a medical-care plan, and similar provisions were made for Kaiser's shipyard workers during the war. After 1945 the health-care plan developed into the Kaiser Permanente Medical Care Program, which proved his most durable business. By contrast, a postwar venture into car manufacturing via the Kaiser-Frazer company was short-lived.

Kaiser's achievements depended on effective networking to negotiate the complex but lucrative

challenges of federal contracting. Moreover, his greatest achievements were in projects that fulfilled the goals of key New Deal policymakers, whether in public works, defence contracts, or efforts to increase competition in monopolistic industries.

See Also: GRAND COULEE PROJECT.

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MICHAEL FRENCH

KENNEDY, JOSEPH P.

Joseph Patrick Kennedy (September 6, 1888–November 19, 1969) amassed enormous personal wealth as a businessman and became both the first chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the first Irish-American Catholic to be U.S. ambassador to Great Britain.

Kennedy was born in Boston, Massachusetts, into an Irish-American family active in the local Democratic Party. After an education at Boston Latin School and Harvard University, he began a successful business career. In 1914, at age twenty-five, he became the country's youngest bank president, heading the Columbia Trust Company. After a brief period in shipbuilding during World War I, he joined Hayden, Stone and Company, where he developed expertise in stock dealing. In 1922, he began to speculate in the stock market full-time, quickly proving himself an exceptional corporate predator and a skilled manipulator of Wall Street. Kennedy portrayed himself as both talented and lucky, but questionable ethics assisted his progress.

The Bostonian mastered the use of inside information, participated in stock pools, and often sold short, earning money from falls in stock prices. Kennedy also invested in the film industry, creating the famous Radio-Keith-Orpheum (RKO) corporation. Most accept that Kennedy also gleaned substantial profits from liquor trading during the prohibition years, a process that demanded dealings with organized crime syndicates. By the mid-1920s, Kennedy's fortune was estimated at \$2 million. This wealth not only survived the Wall Street crash, as Kennedy sold long-term holdings beforehand, but was enhanced as he sold short to profit from the crisis.

By 1931, Kennedy had entered politics by contributing to Franklin D. Roosevelt's campaign coffers and collecting donations from businessmen who wished to remain anonymous. Arguably, Kennedy also helped Roosevelt secure the 1932 Democratic Party nomination; by scaring his friend, William Randolph Hearst, with tales that internationalist Newton D. Baker might be nominated, Kennedy persuaded the influential Hearst to support Roosevelt.

In 1934, Roosevelt appointed Kennedy to the SEC. The new commission was designed to regulate the worst corporate excesses, but conservatives feared development of an anti-business agency. Kennedy's appointment proved a masterstroke. Portraying the SEC as improving conditions for business, Kennedy bolstered investor confidence, particularly by emphasizing negotiation and self-enforcement over federal coercion. He established an effective administrative system, with excellent staff, and won respect from all quarters. Quickly bored, Kennedy resigned in 1935. Roosevelt, though, retained his ally, appointing Kennedy the first chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission in 1936.

Kennedy assisted the president beyond fundraising and winning business support for New Deal measures. His friendship with Hearst proved useful, and Kennedy also managed to temper the anti-Roosevelt rhetoric of radio demagogue Father Charles Coughlin. Yet, tensions developed between Roosevelt and Kennedy. Kennedy's successes, helped by his penchant for self-publicity, won press

attention. Reflecting Kennedy's own ambitions, coverage emphasized Kennedy's presidential potential. When Kennedy resigned from the Maritime Commission in 1937, and pressured Roosevelt to appoint him ambassador to Great Britain, the president obliged. Roosevelt took the opportunity to maneuver a rival out of Washington before the 1940 election.

Kennedy's tenure as ambassador earned him notoriety. In 1938, the threat of Adolf Hitler's Germany loomed large. Kennedy worried that war would jeopardize economic progress. Overlooking the moral issues, he searched for accommodation with the Nazis. Even as appeasement failed, Kennedy made pro-German statements and advocated U.S. neutrality. His claim that Britain lacked the will and weaponry to resist German power upset his hosts. Furthermore, Kennedy's position contrasted with Roosevelt's growing internationalism. The ambassador appeared ready to endorse isolationist Republican Wendell Willkie in the 1940 presidential election. However, on returning to the United States, Kennedy met with Roosevelt. While historians debate the deal agreed to, or blackmail employed, Kennedy endorsed Roosevelt's candidacy two days later.

Shortly after the election, Kennedy blundered. His statement that "democracy is all finished in England . . . it may be here" drew overwhelmingly negative public reaction. Amid the subsequent furor, Kennedy and Roosevelt met again. No record of the ten-minute meeting remains, but it left Roosevelt furious. Kennedy resigned the ambassadorship in early 1941. Loathed for his defeatism and estranged from his former ally, Kennedy never held political office again. Instead, he groomed his sons for political success, seeing his son, John F. Kennedy, become president in 1961.

See Also: HEARST, WILLIAM RANDOLPH; PROHIBITION.

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JON HERBERT

KERR, FLORENCE

Florence Stewart Kerr (June 30, 1890–July 29, 1974), women's relief work administrator, was born in Harriman, Tennessee, but was early moved to Marshalltown, Iowa. She graduated in 1913 from Grinnell College where both she and her classmate Harry Hopkins were students of George Herron, a teacher of Applied Christianity. She was teaching English at Grinnell in 1930 when she was named a member of Iowa's Unemployment Relief Council. At the creation of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Hopkins had her appointed as one of five (later seven) regional directors of the WPA Women's and Professional Division with headquarters in Chicago from which she supervised relief work activities in thirteen midwestern states. The most extensive of the projects she supervised were sewing and library projects for women, but she also oversaw work by men and women employed by the white-collar Federal Art, Music, Theater, and Writers' Projects.

Kerr was viewed as the strongest of the regional supervisors and, as a longtime associate of Hopkins, she was named in December 1938 to replace Ellen S. Woodward as WPA assistant administrator for the Women's and Professional Projects (WPP). She assumed those duties early in 1939 at a time when executive reorganization reconstituted the WPA as the Work Projects Administration under the new Federal Security Agency. She faced difficulties stemming from successive budget cuts and the necessity to adapt toward defense preparedness almost all of the work projects within her division. For example, library programs were created for the armed forces and defense-impacted area, and sewing projects produced parachutes and sandbags. She managed to retain most of the community-centered and institutional service aspects of the

women's program that were showcased in 1940 in a nationwide "This Work Pays Your Community" promotion touted by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Kerr especially defended before congressional committees nursery and daycare centers as vital for mothers engaged in defense work. Many of the women's projects remained until final liquidation of the WPA in 1943.

From 1944 until her resignation from government at the war's end, Kerr directed the war service program of the Federal Works Agency. She then became an executive with Northwest Airlines, based in Minneapolis. In the mid-1950s she resigned and returned to Washington where she died.

See Also: ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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MARTHA H. SWAIN

KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD

John Maynard Keynes (June 5, 1883–April 21, 1946) was a brilliant, colorful, and outspoken English economist whose *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936) provided the academic rationale for governmental use of a compensatory fiscal policy in countering the peaks and valleys of economic cycles. Keynes was born in Cambridge; his father, John Neville Keynes, was a noted philosopher and economist, and his mother, Florence Ada Keynes, was mayor of the city.

John Maynard Keynes was educated at the finest British schools, Eton and then King's College, Cambridge, becoming in his youth a part of the Bloomsbury Group, which consisted of a dozen privileged aesthetes, including Virginia Woolf, Lyt-

ton Strachey, and Clive Bell. Unsettled as to métier, Keynes took a position with the Foreign Service, but soon tired of his assignment at the India desk.

In 1915 Keynes joined the British Treasury staff, distinguishing himself in the effort to manage national financing of World War I. He gained international fame as a key member of the British delegation to the Paris Peace Conference during the drafting of the Versailles treaty in 1918 and 1919. Deeply concerned about the vindictive peace treaty and the impossible level of reparations imposed on Germany, he published in 1919 *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, a book sharply critical of the treaty and the heads of state who drafted it.

Keynes continued to write and offer advice on public economic issues during the 1920s, publishing at the end of the decade what he considered to be his magnum opus, the two-volume *A Treatise on Money* (1930). Critics noted that it failed to address adequately key economic issues of the time, including especially the relationship between production, employment, and money. Keynes immediately began to address the criticism through another project, which became his *General Theory*.

Deeply concerned about the economic crisis of the 1930s, Keynes quickly became persuaded of the wrong-headedness of the widely held business cycle theory of the time that advised policy makers to let "natural" adjustment of money supply and interest rates ameliorate the crisis without governmental intervention. In Keynes's view, when times were so bad that potential investors were unwilling to borrow and initiate new enterprises, even with interest rates near zero, the government should step in and stimulate demand by borrowing and investing. Keynes advocated these views in an open letter to Franklin D. Roosevelt published in the *New York Times* on December 31, 1933, and in a meeting with the president in June 1934. Yet, neither the letter, the meeting with the president, nor the publication of the *General Theory* were significant in shaping New Deal economic policy. When, during the recession of 1937 to 1938, Roosevelt's advisors moved him toward acceptance of a rationale for a compensatory fiscal policy, they did so principally on the basis of their independently-derived observations and experience.

Though Keynes had little direct influence upon New Deal policy formation, his *General Theory* provided the most coherent after-the-fact academic explanation for the crisis and recovery of the 1930s and 1940s, and it became the foundation of postwar economic policies and perspectives. In 1944 Keynes was the chief British Treasury representative at the Bretton Woods Conference held in New Hampshire to provide a foundation for the postwar world economy. His influence there helped in the design and establishment of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Keynes was knighted in 1942; his ideas, as interpreted against the backdrop of the Great Depression, informed a generation of economic thinkers and made him the best-known economist of the twentieth century.

See Also: ECONOMISTS; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS.

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DEAN L. MAY

KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS

John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946) was a brilliant, well-born British economist who during the Great Depression laid the foundations for an alternative to classical economics, which dominated economic thought and policy in the Western democracies from the late 1930s through the end of the century. In the public mind, Keynes is most commonly thought of as offering the rationale for a compensatory fiscal policy to regulate the swings of economic cycles. The centrality of his thought is underscored by the efforts of scholars only in the last decade of the twentieth century to evolve what they call a *post-Keynesian* economics.

In the conclusion to his *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936) Keynes maintained that “the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when

they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else.” The twists and turns in the story of the role of Keynesian economics during the Great Depression and its enduring connection to that crisis in the public mind are fascinating and revealing.

Though he became well-known early in the century through his critique of the Treaty of Versailles and considered his major work to be his two volume *A Treatise on Money* (1930), Keynes is best known for his *General Theory*, an uncharacteristically turgid and poorly organized tome that explained in highly theoretical language how a calamity such as the Great Depression could have happened and what policies governments might employ in countering the extremes of business cycles.

From the beginning of his career Keynes was keenly interested in the practical world and quick to offer advice to politicians and public officials. He did so frequently and eloquently during the 1920s and the Great Depression. He was particularly concerned about the state of the American economy, which seemed more fragile than the British economy and which was more sharply affected by the stock market crash of 1929.

In April 1931 Keynes made a radio address to the people of the United States, warning that businessmen and financiers were too optimistic and that the Depression could easily last another five years. A month later he came to the United States to deliver a lecture at the University of Chicago in which he argued that in the United States regulation of credit would be more effective than public works spending in countering the Depression. In December 1933 Keynes wrote for the *New York Times* a somewhat condescending open letter to President Franklin Roosevelt, warning him to avoid such reform measures as those undertaken by the National Recovery Administration, that, as Keynes saw it, were shaking business confidence and thus impeding recovery. In June 1934 Keynes came to the United States again, this time meeting personally with Roosevelt, presenting calculations on the level of spending needed to achieve recovery. Accounts of the meeting suggest that the two were mutually unimpressed.

Clearly, advice from Keynes was abundant. Yet hardly anyone formulating policy at the time was

listening. Nevertheless, the essential components of both his analytical framework and policy recommendations were developed independently by administration officials, especially presidential advisors Stuart Chase and Harry L. Hopkins, several of their staff, and Reserve Board Chairman Marriner S. Eccles. All drew from their practical experience, the work of a broad range of economists and advisors, and most importantly, all were pressed by an imperative to respond to the obvious human needs that the crisis engendered. As Eccles later put it, “we came out at about the same place in economic thought and policy by very different roads.” Thus, one might be understandably suspicious of Keynes’s conclusion concerning the ideas of academics that “the world is ruled by little else.”

Nonetheless, Keynesian economics ultimately became, in the minds of some, almost synonymous with the New Deal. Why so? Because Keynes offered a powerful theoretical analysis of the economic conditions underlying the crisis of the 1930s at precisely the moment when Western democracies were desperately in need of an authoritative and coherent explanation of the Depression, and of hope that there was a way out consistent with their ideology.

Of initial concern was the duration and depth of the Depression. Prevailing business cycle theory, offered by eminent scholars such as Jacob Viner and Wesley C. Mitchell, proposed that cycles were an inevitable, even necessary, part of the progression of capitalist economies. During downturns the decline in prices, wages, and interest rates would reach a point where investors could not resist the potential profits these conditions offered and would start borrowing, investing, and propelling the economy back onto an upward trajectory. Similarly, in upturns, high prices, wages, and interest rates would restrict investment and lead to a downturn. The implication for policy was that governments should intervene as little as possible and let “natural” forces right the economy in their own due time. Yet during the Great Depression the downturn went deeper and lasted longer than anyone had imagined, and still no “natural” forces were leading to recovery. It seemed that the economy might not be self-correcting and could reach equilibrium at le-

vels far below full employment and adequate living standards.

The use of public works to offer jobs to the unemployed and build public infrastructures at minimal cost had become legitimized during the 1920s. Herbert Hoover had implemented such programs before leaving office and the policy was continued in the New Deal under Harold Ickes’s Public Works Administration. Yet federal spending for relief was regarded by both Hoover and Roosevelt as an expedient to mitigate suffering, a galling necessity (and hence a symbol) of bad times. It was difficult for them to accept spending, other than on well-planned and needed public works, as a deliberate and continuing instrument of economic policy. Moreover, how could one reasonably argue that tax money given back to taxpayers, who would have spent it had the government not taken it in taxes, could provide a stimulus to the economy?

These concerns could be pushed to the background as long as there seemed to be progress, however halting, towards recovery. But when the recession of 1937 struck, the nation was faced with not a Hoover but a “Roosevelt Recession,” which had to be addressed. The domestic political implications were clear to New Dealers, but so also were the implications for the worldwide ideological struggle among fascism, communism, and liberal democracy.

As the recession deepened during the winter of 1937 and 1938 there were widespread complaints in the press that the administration was adrift and had no coherent policy, a criticism that could justly be applied to the various pragmatic, need-driven programs of the early New Deal. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., urged a return to a balanced budget. Eccles, Hopkins, and others urged a resumption of spending. The president finally resumed spending, but only after being presented with arguments that the policy was consistent with American historical experience and with liberalism, and that the resulting growth would bring in enough to pay back the deficits incurred.

That decision was announced in April 1938. By August there were clear signs of recovery and it was assumed by all that the renewed spending program had caused the recovery. But by the time the reces-

sion struck, the *General Theory* was being read and avidly embraced by young American economists within and outside of the administration. Several addressed the recession crisis by restating Keynes's ideas in a brief, accessible manifesto, *An Economic Program for American Democracy*, published in November 1938. The book was, in effect, a simplified, policy-oriented, Americanized distillate of Keynes's *General Theory*. It immediately became a best seller. Eccles was so impressed with its argument that he used his personal funds to buy copies for every member of the U.S. Congress. The *Washington Star* called it "the first authentic attempt to tell compactly and in simple language the complete economic and social ideology of the New Deal." The *Boston Globe* concluded that "for the first time the effects of haphazard spending and investment policies of the New Deal are dispassionately analyzed and given academic sanction."

Of course, as economists and other policy makers were beginning to understand, the base of that academic sanction was Keynes's *General Theory*. In it Keynes provided elaborate explanations for why it was possible for the economy to reach equilibrium at levels well below full employment. His analysis of "liquidity preference" explained that in some circumstances potential investors might wish to retain rather than invest their resources. Thus, contrary to classical economic theory, interest rates could fall to zero without attracting new investment. His description of the "propensity to consume" explained what proportion of incomes citizens would, under various circumstances, re-inject into the economy through consumption. His "multiplier" concept borrowed from economist R. F. Kahn to offer clearer answers to the question of how much stimulus would be given by a specific amount of public investment as it moved through the economy. The multiplier concept offered the possibility of predicting levels of increased economic activity and tax yields, and thus assurance that an invigorated economy could eventually pay the deficits such investment created.

None of these ideas appeared early enough in analytical form to affect New Deal policy, including even the resumption of spending in 1938. They did, however, as the *Boston Globe* reporters understood,

provide academic sanction and legitimization of that policy. Informed observers quickly came to conflate Keynesian economics and the later New Deal. As Eccles put it, New Deal policies, now bolstered by Keynes's academic sanction, offered "some assurance that we can go forward in the future."

Keynes, the economic theorist, had little direct influence on the formulation of policy. The world, in fact, was ruled by others. But his work suggested that the United States was on the right path and thus brought hope and promise to a generation of young academics disheartened by the ideological choices that leaders of Italy, Germany, Spain, and Japan had made in their efforts to cope with the Great Depression. As the United States spiraled into recession in 1937, Western civilization seemed to hang in the balance. And in the minds of those persuaded by Keynes, the "academic scribbler," by explaining what was happening, had tipped that balance in the direction of the liberal democracies. Having thus grasped a hand of rescue at so critical a time, it is understandable that over six decades later Keynesian economics continued to be the predominant paradigm for economic thought and policy in much of the world, including even most societies that had once embraced fascism and Marxism.

See Also: ECONOMISTS; KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD.

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DEAN L. MAY

KEYSERLING, LEON

Leon Hirsch Keyserling (January 22, 1908–August 9, 1987) was a leading New Deal economic and legal adviser. After working briefly in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), he served as Senator Robert F. Wagner's chief legislative aide from 1933 to 1937. From 1937 until 1946, Keyserling was the general counsel for federal housing authorities. His last government appointment was as a member of President Harry S. Truman's Council of Economic Advisers (CEA).

Born in Charleston, South Carolina, the son of Jewish immigrants, Keyserling graduated from Columbia University in New York in 1928 and received a law degree from Harvard University in Massachusetts in 1931. He returned to Columbia for graduate work in economics with institutional economist Rexford Tugwell. Keyserling soon followed Tugwell to Washington, working first for the AAA and then for Wagner. In helping to draft the 1935 National Labor Relations Act, also called the Wagner Act, Keyserling incorporated a purchasing power rationale into its preamble. In addition to quelling industrial unrest, the Wagner Act sought to restore equality of bargaining between employers and employees so that workers could bargain for higher wages that would in turn sustain consumer demand. A strong labor movement could coordinate wages and profits to bring about economic recovery and prevent a return of economic decline. Keyserling believed that only trade unions organized by industry with majority representation could serve as an effective check on corporate power. Having seen the failures of the labor provisions in section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, Keyserling sought to insure that the Wagner Act endowed workers with sufficient rights to representation on the shop floor and created the National Labor Relations Board to enforce those rights.

In addition to the maldistribution of income, the other major problem that Keyserling and other New Dealers saw was the failure of the heavy goods industry, which was responsible for so much unemployment. The Wagner-Steagall Housing Act of 1937, which Keyserling helped to draft, was intend-

ed to help stimulate the production of durable goods by giving a boost to home construction. After its passage, Keyserling used his authority as the general counsel for the United States Housing Authority to lobby for increased federal spending and government insured loans for home construction.

In 1940, Keyserling married Mary Dublin, executive secretary of the National Consumers' League. At the end of the war, Keyserling helped to draft the Employment Act of 1946 to commit the government to maintaining maximum employment, production, and purchasing power. The Act created the CEA, on which Keyserling served until 1953, first as vice-chairman and then as chairman. In the post-war period, Keyserling continued to support a vigorous labor movement as the way to redistribute national income and sustain economic growth. In the 1960s, he emerged as a leading critic of the Kennedy era tax cuts, arguing that they ignored fundamental questions of income distribution.

See Also: INCOME DISTRIBUTION; NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT).

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MEG JACOBS

KRISTALLNACHT

Kristallnacht was the first massive, government-endorsed, violent action against Jews in Nazi Germany's Third Reich. It occurred on the night of November 9/10, 1938, and its name, German for "crystal night," stems from the enormous amount of broken glass that covered the streets the following morning.

The violence was precipitated by the government's decision to round up fifteen thousand Polish Jews in Germany late in October 1938, even though



Pedestrians in Berlin pass by the shattered window of a Jewish-owned shop that was destroyed in November 1938 during Kristallnacht. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

it knew that the Polish government was not willing to grant them entrance visas. The family of Herschel Grynszpan, a Polish youth living in Paris, was among those left in a precarious situation on the border between Germany and Poland. In retaliation, Grynszpan assassinated Ernst vom Rath, the Third Secretary at Germany's embassy in Paris. Vom Rath died in the afternoon of November 9, and the news reached Adolf Hitler that evening, which was the anniversary of his attempt to overthrow the Weimar Republic in 1923. Hitler met with his propaganda chief, Joseph Goebbels, and soon thereafter orders to wreak havoc on Jews were

given to the Nazi paramilitary force, the Sturmabteilung, or SA.

This night resulted in widespread destruction of Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues. The SA also took action against spiritual objects as they forced rabbis and other Jews to desecrate the Torah and to stand inside of synagogues and read from *Mein Kampf*. The SA smashed windows and set buildings ablaze. Over one hundred Jews were killed in this night of violence. The SA, assisted by Schutzstaffel (SS) troops, also engaged in the first major round-up of German Jews. They seized approximately 25,000 Jewish men and placed them in

the concentration camps of Dachau, Buchenwald, and Sachsenhausen. The attacks on the Jewish communities of Germany resulted in the destruction of over two hundred synagogues and more than seven thousand Jewish-owned businesses. The Third Reich declared that the Jewish communities had to pay a fine in the amount of one billion reichsmarks as punishment.

While many Jews had earlier believed that Hitler would eventually be taken out of power, Kristallnacht signaled a different kind of Germany, one that threatened their lives directly. The push to emigrate intensified, but would-be emigrants faced many barriers. The Third Reich blocked their bank accounts, and countries would not accept immigrants who could not provide for themselves. In 1939, 185,000 Jews emigrated, but often they could only obtain entrance visas for another European country. Once the German occupation of Western Europe began in 1940, they were back under the control of the Third Reich, and many of these refugees were shipped to killing centers in the east during the Holocaust.

In response to the pogrom, on November 15 President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced that he had taken the unusual step of recalling the Ameri-

can ambassador to Germany for consultation. Roosevelt stated that the recent events in Germany had shocked him, but reiterated that additional visas would not be made available for Jewish refugees. Within the week, however, Roosevelt did agree to extend the visas of approximately 14,000 Jews who had entered on tourist visas until they had fulfilled citizenship requirements. One of the Jews who benefited from this decision was Albert Einstein.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; HITLER, ADOLF.

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LAURA J. HILTON

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ROBERT S. McELVAINE
EDITOR IN CHIEF

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Encyclopedia of The Great Depression

Robert S. McElvaine, Editor in Chief

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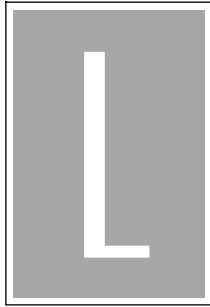
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LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE

With the approach of the presidential election of 1936, labor unions in the United States offered President Franklin D. Roosevelt their undivided support. Never before in American history had a president been so sympathetic to their needs and so willing to convert that sympathy into protective legislation. The National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 had provided the country's first minimum wage law, had guaranteed the right of unions to bargain collectively, and had outlawed "yellow-dog" contracts, which required employees to pledge that they would not join a union. The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 went even further, establishing the National Labor Relations Board as an independent federal agency with the power to investigate disputes between labor and management, and enforce legal and judicial regulations regarding labor union rights. The 1935 act also guaranteed majority rule and exclusive representation, outlined unfair practices, and required management to bargain with the labor unions of their employees' choice. William Green, head of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), found the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 so extraordinary that he labeled it the "Magna Carta of the labor movement in the United States."

Not surprisingly, such major labor unions as the AFL and the Committee (later Congress) of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and most of their constituent members considered Roosevelt's reelection critically important to the labor movement. Roosevelt was only too eager to get their support. In April 1936, John L. Lewis, head of the United Mine Workers as well as the CIO, founded Labor's Non-Partisan League. Sidney Hillman of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers union and George L. Berry of the Printing Pressman joined Lewis in the effort. Labor's Non-Partisan League, Lewis bluntly said over and over again, existed for one reason: to secure reelection of the president. To make sure that the League did not appear to be a front organization for the Democratic Party, the term *Non-Partisan* was used, but few were fooled. Labor's Non-Partisan League raised more than \$1 million for the president's reelection campaign. On election day, the League provided funds to get Democratic voters to the polls. Finally, the League established the American Labor Party in New York. Many socialists and other left-wing voters wanted Roosevelt reelected, but they were ideologically opposed to supporting the Democratic Party. When the American Labor Party nominated Roosevelt as its presidential candidate, left-wingers could cast a vote for Roosevelt without smudging their virtue.

The effectiveness of Labor's Non-Partisan League will never be accurately measured. Public support for President Roosevelt and the New Deal was already overwhelming. The last thing a substantial majority of Americans wanted in 1936 was to have a Republican back in the White House dismantling the New Deal. When the votes were tabulated, the president won with 27,252,869 popular votes to Landon's 16,674,665; at 523 to 8, the vote in the Electoral College was even more lopsided. William Lemke of the Union Party received 882,479 popular votes and no electoral votes. Labor's Non-Partisan League claimed that their assistance gave the president his margin of victory in Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. The 1936 election, however, was the high water mark for the League. Leaders quickly fell into ideological squabbling, rendering the League useless in terms of marshaling political support.

John L. Lewis's decision in 1940 to oppose Roosevelt's reelection, and his endorsement of Republican nominee Wendell Willkie, spelled the demise of Labor's Non-Partisan League. In 1944, the CIO formed its own Political Action Committee, spelling the end of the league. Although Labor's Non-Partisan League had a short life span, its legacy—a constituency forming a political action committee to promote its interests—became standard in American politics.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ELECTION OF 1936; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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JAMES S. OLSON

LA FOLLETTE, PHILIP

Philip Fox ("Phil") La Follette (May 8, 1897–August 18, 1965), three-term governor of Wisconsin (1931–1933, 1935–1939), was one of the most creative and controversial politicians of the Depression

era. In appearance, demeanor, and ambition, he resembled his father, Robert M. La Follette, Sr., a former Wisconsin governor and U.S. senator. Phil La Follette was educated in Madison and Washington, D.C., schools and at the University of Wisconsin, where he also obtained a law degree. After engaging in private practice, serving for two years as district attorney of Wisconsin's Dane County, and doing some teaching at the University of Wisconsin law school, La Follette was elected governor on the Republican ticket in 1930. Although he persuaded the legislature to pass the nation's first unemployment compensation law and several other significant measures, he, like many other incumbents that year, lost in his bid for reelection during the desperate economic circumstances of 1932. After spurning offers of a high-level job in Franklin Roosevelt's Democratic administration, he allied himself politically with the president during the early New Deal years. La Follette played the leading role in launching the new Wisconsin Progressive Party in 1934 and recaptured the governorship that fall, while his brother Bob went back to the U.S. Senate on the same ticket.

La Follette's focus during his second term as governor was on a massive public-works program. His cooperative relationship with Roosevelt enabled the state to administer federal relief monies outside the normal bureaucratic channels of the Works Progress Administration. During his third term, with Progressives commanding a tenuous majority in the legislature and amid great acrimony, La Follette rammed through measures for governmental reorganization, a labor relations act, an agricultural authority, and a public power plan that collectively constituted a "Little New Deal" for the state. Meanwhile, political ambition led him to distance himself from the president and launch the National Progressives of America in April 1938. The new party went nowhere and La Follette lost in his run for a fourth term that fall. After service on General Douglas MacArthur's staff during World War II, La Follette practiced law, dabbled in business and politics, and wrote his memoirs.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1930; LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.; WISCONSIN PROGRESSIVE PARTY.

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JOHN E. MILLER

LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.

Robert Marion (“Young Bob”) La Follette, Jr., (February 6, 1895–February 24, 1953) was a prominent United States senator from Wisconsin. He replaced his illustrious father upon the latter’s death in 1925 and was succeeded by another famous political figure, Joseph R. McCarthy, in 1947. During twenty-two years in Congress, La Follette became known as a hardworking legislative craftsman who was devoted to Senate tradition, gaining respect from colleagues and journalists. He and his younger brother, Wisconsin Governor Philip La Follette, carried on the La Follette progressive tradition in Wisconsin and dominated state politics during the 1930s.

La Follette attended the University of Wisconsin for two years, but health problems prevented him from graduating. He served as his father’s chief aide in the Senate from 1919 until 1925, when, at the age of thirty, he became the youngest Senator since Henry Clay. Inheriting his father’s progressive instincts, he emerged during the late 1920s as a major critic of conservative Republican policies and one of a group of liberal-minded Midwestern politicians referred to as the “sons of the wild jackass.” During the Great Depression La Follette became a leading advocate of federal spending for public works and relief for the unemployed and a spokesman for national economic planning.

Though he often cooperated with the Roosevelt administration during the early New Deal, La Follette frequently criticized the president for moving too timidly in addressing the nation’s social and economic problems. He played a major role in pass-

ing relief, public works, and tax legislation. In 1934, he somewhat reluctantly went along with the formation of a new state Progressive party, deserting the Republicans, and winning reelection to the Senate that fall. Between 1936 and 1940, as chairman of the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, he investigated activities of businesses and other groups that were inhibiting labor’s right to organize, earning considerable publicity for his efforts. A staunch isolationist before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, La Follette backed the war effort once the country entered World War II, becoming an early critic of the country’s wartime ally the Soviet Union. Out of politics after 1947, La Follette died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in 1953.

See Also: LA FOLLETTE, PHILIP; LA FOLLETTE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE; MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE; WISCONSIN PROGRESSIVE PARTY.

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JOHN E. MILLER

LA FOLLETTE CIVIL LIBERTIES COMMITTEE

The La Follette Civil Liberties Committee (1936–1940) was a subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor set up to investigate the heavy-handed methods employers used to prevent labor unions from organizing and bargaining collectively. Chaired by Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., it was the most extensive congressional inquiry ever conducted into civil liberties violations. In the process, it helped galvanize liberals and supporters of organized labor and drew atten-

tion to the work of the new National Labor Relations Board.

For years, the American Civil Liberties Union, the American Federation of Labor, various religious organizations, and other groups had urged government probes of civil liberties violations and oppressive labor practices. Senator La Follette, a Progressive from Wisconsin and one of organized labor's staunchest defenders, introduced the Senate resolution that created the investigatory committee in the spring of 1936. Along with La Follette, who became its chairman, the committee consisted of two Democrats—Elbert D. Thomas of Utah and David I. Walsh of Massachusetts (who did not join until 1939, three years after the original appointee died in a car accident).

Although La Follette and Thomas were the most visible representatives of the committee, much of the work of amassing evidence, identifying witnesses, and preparing questions was done by committee staff. In general, staff employees were liberal and pro-labor in orientation and tended to blame business for tensions that existed between labor and management. The Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act) had been passed the year before, and part of the work of the committee was to ensure that it succeeded. The first phase of the committee's work during the fall of 1936 and the following spring concentrated on four anti-union weapons: the employment of strikebreakers, the use of private police forces, the hiring of private detectives and labor spies, and the stockpiling of munitions, such as tear gas, nauseating agents, billy clubs, and even machine guns.

By May 1937, with the labor situation improving, the Committee for Industrial Organization (later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations) growing in strength, and the Supreme Court having validated the Wagner Act, it appeared that the La Follette Committee might soon complete its task. Then a clash between police and company detectives on one side and striking workers on the other on Memorial Day at the Republic Steel Company's South Chicago plant, which left ten strikers dead and more than one hundred wounded, led to demands for further probes, extending the life of the committee for three more years. During a sec-

ond round of hearings, attention focused on the Little Steel Strike of 1937, union-busting tactics used by employers' associations, and the violence-ridden farm-labor situation in California. These investigations proved less dramatic and more complex than the earlier ones, and press coverage dwindled. Though failing to generate new legislation, the committee in the end issued seventy-five volumes of transcripts and documents and more than twenty reports, and its work led to a lessening of strong-arm practices by businesses during labor disputes and helped undergird a growing governmental commitment to the cause of civil liberties.

See Also: CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.

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JOHN E. MILLER

LA GUARDIA, FIORELLO H.

Fiorello Henry La Guardia (December 11, 1882–September 20, 1947) was born in New York City to immigrants Achille (Italian) and Irene Coen (Jewish) La Guardia. He grew up in Arizona, where his father was a bandmaster in the U. S. Army. During the Spanish-American War, Achille became seriously ill, probably from eating tainted beef. His health broken, Achille was discharged and returned with his family to Europe.

EARLY CAREER

There, Fiorello obtained a position with the U.S. Consular Service, becoming fluent in five languages, which he used in political campaigns in polyglot New York. In 1906, La Guardia quit his job and returned to the city of his birth. Employed as an interpreter at Ellis Island immigration station by day, La Guardia studied law at night at New York University, gaining admission to the bar in 1910.

The short (5' 2"), rotund attorney represented primarily poor immigrants and embattled labor unions. He joined the Republican Party because he could not stomach the graft-ridden Tammany Democratic machine and because an Italian-American's chance of political advancement in the Irish-dominated organization was miniscule.

In 1914, La Guardia, running as a Republican for a U.S. House seat from a lower Manhattan district, almost beat his Tammany opponent. Two years later he won. He remained in Congress until 1919, with a brief absence during World War I for army service. That year, he was elected president of New York's board of aldermen and married Thea Almerigotti. He lost this municipal office in 1921. Tragically, that same year, Thea and their infant daughter died of tuberculosis. The grief-stricken La Guardia blamed New York's airless tenements for their deaths.

Winning reelection to congress as a progressive Republican from a mostly working-class Italian and Jewish district in East Harlem, La Guardia joined a small bloc of urban liberals and midwestern and western progressives in bucking the policies of the business-dominated Republican administrations of the 1920s. He denounced prohibition, Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon's tax-cuts for the wealthy, and electric power monopolies. A New Dealer before there was a New Deal, he advocated federal development of public power, child labor laws, old-age pensions, and unemployment insurance. Once the Depression started, he demanded government insurance of savings bank deposits, regulation of the stock market, and federal relief for the destitute. La Guardia's most important legislative achievement was the Norris-La Guardia Act, which curtailed the use of yellow-dog contracts (agreements that employers forced their employees to sign, swearing that they would not join unions or strike) and injunctions against labor unions. In 1929, the crusading congressman made an ill-timed run for mayor against the popular incumbent, James J. Walker and was badly beaten. He also married his devoted secretary, Marie Fisher, with whom he subsequently adopted two children.



Fiorello La Guardia with his wife, Marie, and Eleanor Roosevelt (center) in New York City in May 1934. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

THE DEPRESSION YEARS

Despite his progressive record, La Guardia lost his House seat to Tammany's James Lanzetta in the 1932 Democratic landslide. He decided to run again for mayor in 1933. When La Guardia had charged, in 1929, that the Walker administration was riddled with corruption, New Yorkers, still basking in the afterglow of prosperity, didn't care. By 1933, things were different. The city, with a million jobless, was devastated by the Depression. There had also been three investigations of the municipal government, led by Samuel Seabury, that revealed the truth of La Guardia's accusations. Walker resigned in September 1932, but Tammany continued to run the city under his successor, John P. O'Brien, who proved incapable of handling the economic crises. To stave off bankruptcy, first Walker and then O'Brien had borrowed money from New York bankers, who ex-

acted control over municipal finances as a condition. Whatever relief funds the city had, Tammany dispensed to its loyal supporters. These dire circumstances finally brought together anti-Tammany Democrats, good-government reformers, and Republicans in the Fusion Party. The backing of Seabury and Roosevelt brain-truster Adolf A. Berle, Jr., secured the Fusion nomination for La Guardia, who in a three-way race against O'Brien and Recovery Party candidate Joseph V. Mc Kee, won the election, aided by an outpouring of Italian voters, eager to see one of their own as mayor.

La Guardia took office on January 1, 1934, determined to revitalize his city. The federal government's willingness to spend on pump-priming and employment-creating programs, as well as La Guardia's special relationship with President Roosevelt, provided the opportunity. La Guardia's cooperation with the Roosevelt administration had begun when, as a lame-duck congressman, he had introduced bills for the president-elect. As early as November 1933, Mayor-elect La Guardia helped Federal Emergency Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins plan the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and presented him with a host of carefully drawn projects. As a result, by January 1934 New York's unemployed held 20 percent of all CWA jobs and 4,000 CWA projects were rehabilitating the city's neglected parks, streets, and playgrounds. However, the CWA lasted only four months, and the metropolis needed much more aid. Mayor-elect La Guardia had approached Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes for Public Works Administration (PWA) funding, only to be told he must first balance his budget. By slashing municipal payrolls through layoffs and salary cuts, and imposing new taxes, the city managed to balance its 1934 budget. This enabled La Guardia to renegotiate earlier loans, reducing the rates of interest and returning control over fiscal policies to elected officials instead of bankers. Ickes then loosened his purse strings. By June 1940, New York had obtained more than \$250,000,000 from the PWA. The Mayor fared even better with the freer-spending Hopkins and his Works Progress Administration (WPA), launched in 1935. Anticipating the new program, La Guardia instructed his parks commissioner, Robert Moses, and his engineering committee to

prepare blueprints for thousands of projects. Thanks to their quick initiative, by October 1935 the metropolis was receiving more than one-seventh of the WPA's expenditures, and 208,000 New Yorkers were employed.

La Guardia presided over the repair of two thousand miles of streets and highways and construction of fifty miles of expressways, three major bridges, one hundred smaller bridges, and the New York City Municipal Airport-La Guardia Field, which was renamed La Guardia Airport in 1947. Five thousand acres of new parks were developed and seventeen public swimming pools built, as well as ninety-two schools, 255 playgrounds, fifteen clinics, and additions to municipal hospitals that increased bed capacity by eight thousand. Old tenements were razed and thirteen public housing projects, surrounded by landscaped grounds and play areas, provided apartments with bathrooms, heat, and electricity for 17,000 working-class families. While La Guardia captured the lion's share of New Deal largess for his city, he also, as president of the U. S. Conference of Mayors from 1935 to 1945, became the recognized spokesman for more aid and closer ties between Washington and urban America. La Guardia helped convince President Roosevelt that rescuing cities was a federal responsibility.

Besides promoting the federal-urban connection, La Guardia cleaned New York's government. Inefficient and grafting political appointees were driven out and replaced with energetic, capable people. The proportion of city jobs filled through civil service competitive examinations rose from 55 percent in 1933 to 74 percent by 1939. In making appointments not covered by civil service, La Guardia did reward supporters, but rarely compromised his insistence that they must be as dedicated, hard-working, and honest as he was. He also attempted to open municipal employment to minorities, who had been largely ignored by Tammany Hall. The result was a major shift in the ethnic and racial composition of New York's bureaucracy; the previously dominant Irish gave way to Jews, Italians, and blacks. In 1934, the city had three black firemen; by 1941, there were forty-six. After La Guardia took over the subways, African Americans were hired for the first time as conductors, dispatchers, and mo-

tormen. There were limits, however, to La Guardia's achievements. The mayor's war on gambling and slot and pinball machines barely fazed organized crime. Continued discrimination against blacks provoked major riots in Harlem in 1935 and 1943. Nor did La Guardia always respect civil liberties. Burlesque theaters and pornography were banned. Cops were encouraged to "mess up" criminals, but not to rough up strikers or demonstrators.

Whatever La Guardia's shortcomings, he was reelected in 1937 and again in 1941. All previous New York Fusion mayors had been kicked out after a single term. La Guardia triumphed because his honest, effective administration continued to recommend him to good-government advocates, while his caring, activist policies won him the gratitude of Jews, Italians, blacks, and union members, many of whom voted for him on the American Labor Party line.

THE LAST TERM AND THE WAR YEARS

La Guardia's last term was his least fruitful. Washington's assistance to cities dwindled after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. Without federal funds, the building projects halted, and New York found it impossible to maintain its new facilities and continue expanded services without unbalancing its budget. La Guardia increased borrowing rather than impose politically unpopular cutbacks. Further, he was distracted from governing New York by his futile quest for a cabinet post or military commission and by his brief tenure as Director of the Office of Civilian Defense. Still, there were accomplishments: The city passed the earliest laws against housing and employment discrimination in the nation; conceived the first managed health care program, Health Insurance Plan (HIP); and convinced the United Nations to make New York its permanent headquarters.

La Guardia ended his mayoralty in 1946, then briefly directed the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. He died of pancreatic cancer on September 29, 1947. During the worst depression in the country's history, La Guardia had forged an unprecedented federal-urban partnership, revitalized New York, and given it the most honest, effective government it had ever known.

See Also: AMERICAN LABOR PARTY; CITIES AND SUBURBS; NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT; REPUBLICAN PARTY; TAMMANY HALL.

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BARBARA BLUMBERG

LAISSEZ-FAIRE

Laissez-faire, literally "leave alone," constituted the core doctrine of classical economics that there should be minimal government intervention in economic affairs. According to this theory, an economy operating under a system of free competition will tend to produce at maximum capacity with the result that labor and other resources of production will be fully utilized. Its adherents also contended that recession was a temporary, self-correcting situation. They reasoned that when unemployment rose, wages and prices fell, with the consequence that the *real* supply of money in the economy grew, which in turn would eventually generate economic expansion.

The political corollary of laissez-faire held that the best government was the one that governed

least. This view enjoyed its heyday during the industrial revolution of the late nineteenth century (though it did not preclude protective tariffs). Its last hurrah in the 1920s reflected the view that government had grown too large as a result of progressive regulatory expansion and wartime economic controls. Moreover, big business—once the progressives' whipping boy—had regained popular esteem through its war production success. Getting government off the back of business therefore became a primary goal of the Republican administrations of Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

Though they could not dismantle the progressive state, Harding and Coolidge (just as Ronald Reagan did later) named conservatives unsympathetic to regulation to head the Interstate Commerce Commission, the Federal Reserve Board, and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). Republican fiscal policy, guided by Secretary of the Treasury Andrew Mellon, also reaffirmed traditional principles. Though federal spending was not reduced to prewar levels, every 1920s budget was balanced, ending a period of regular deficits that stretched from 1894 to 1919. The national debt, which had risen from \$1.2 billion in 1916 to \$25.5 billion in 1919, was reduced to \$16.2 billion by 1930. Finally, convinced that the 1920 to 1921 recession was attributable to the Wilson administration's high taxes, the Republican governments practiced *trickle down economics* to justify tax reductions that principally benefited business and the well-to-do as being necessary for the entire economy's good.

In contrast to other Republican leaders, Herbert Hoover had no truck with what he dubbed "the eighteenth century thesis of laissez-faire." As Secretary of Commerce from 1921 to 1929, Hoover made this hitherto minor agency into the most dynamic federal department in the 1920s by promoting its economic planning and coordination capabilities. When the Depression hit, Hoover's brand of progressive conservatism allowed him to become the first president in American history to exercise federal leadership in such an emergency.

On Hoover's recommendation, Congress reduced personal taxes and increased public works appropriations in 1930 and later enacted measures to underwrite credit to farmers, homebuyers, and

banks. Hoover's most significant initiative in this regard was the creation in January 1932 of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which was initially empowered to extend federal loans to banks and other financial institutions and later authorized to loan funds for self-liquidating state and local government public works. Nevertheless, his activism was constrained by concern to preserve the ethos of free enterprise and self-help that he regarded as fundamental to American individualism. Being convinced that there was no major flaw in America's domestic economy—he denied there was maldistribution of wealth and blamed the severity of the downturn on world conditions—Hoover was determined not to spur the irreversible growth of big government. Accordingly he would not use compulsion to restrict business wage-cutting practices and manifested a flinty attitude towards unemployment and farm relief. His anti-Depression programs were largely indirect, involved recoverable outlays (such as loans), and did not entail permanent expansion of the federal budget. As a result they were utterly insufficient to compensate for the catastrophic decline in the private economy.

Hoover's presidential policies represented a pre-modern transitional phase between old-style laissez-faire and New Deal interventionism. His party had little option in the face of Roosevelt's immense first-term popularity but to move further away from its traditional orthodoxy. Some die-hard conservative Republicans and renegade Democrats (including former presidential candidates Alfred E. Smith and John Davis) joined the American Liberty League, created by wealthy businessmen, to demand the restoration of laissez-faire, but its stand hurt the Republican cause in the 1936 elections. By then the bulk of the party recognized the need for some accommodation with the New Deal. The 1936 Republican platform condemned unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, the Wagner Act, and deficit spending, but accepted other Roosevelt policies, including the farm program, federal work relief, and regulation of the financial sector. Even when Roosevelt's popularity declined in the second term, mainstream conservatives did not wholly revert to laissez-faire. The Conservative Manifesto of 1937, a statement of bipartisan congressional con-

servatism, demanded lower taxes, less spending, and balanced budgets to restore business confidence but accepted unemployment relief (provided it was not politicized and permanent) and government programs that did not harm or compete with private enterprise (the farm program and large scale public works were acceptable, public utility development was not). Business groups like the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce also railed against New Deal taxes and deficits. Nevertheless, it was evident by the late 1930s that political and economic debate no longer centered on whether government should intervene in the economy but on the extent to which it should do so.

No Western democracy pursued such a wide-ranging program as the New Deal in the face of the 1930s Depression, but none pursued a wholly laissez-faire approach. In the United Kingdom, the national government rejected New Deal-style public works for expenditure retrenchment and tax increases to balance the budget (which it did from 1934 onward). However, old-age pensions, unemployment compensation, and housing assistance programs were already established in Britain. French governments of the 1930s eschewed macroeconomic activism but some intervened in other ways, especially to improve workers' conditions. It was the need for postwar economic reconstruction that compelled the final abandonment of classical economic doctrine in Western Europe.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; COOLIDGE, CALVIN; FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; HOOVER, HERBERT; MELLON, ANDREW; MONETARY POLICY.

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IWAN MORGAN

LANDON, ALFRED M.

Alfred Mossman “Alf” Landon (September 7, 1887–October 12, 1987) was the governor of Kansas and Republican presidential candidate in 1936. Landon was born in West Middlesex, Pennsylvania, received a law degree from the University of Kansas in 1908, and became a successful independent oil producer and Republican politician. He was active in Theodore Roosevelt’s Bull Moose campaign in 1912, was secretary to Kansas Governor Henry J. Allen in 1922, assisted William Allen White’s campaign against the Ku Klux Klan in 1924, and narrowly won the governor’s race in Kansas in 1932.

As governor, Landon confronted the effects of the Depression in Kansas and instituted measures to regulate banks, insurance companies, and public utilities. He also moved to protect farmers from bankruptcy, and he developed programs to bring relief to the hard-hit oil industry. Landon’s ability to work with the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration resulted in Kansas receiving greater funding from New Deal agencies than did other midwestern states. In 1934, Landon was the only Republican governor in the nation to win reelection. This, together with his moderate conservatism, secured for him the Republican presidential nomination in June 1936, with Chicago publisher Frank Knox as his running mate.

With Roosevelt’s popularity at its height, Republicans hoped that Landon’s down-home midwestern image as a “liberal Calvin Coolidge” would attract an electorate thought to be weary of the urbane Roosevelt. Landon’s campaign initially charted a moderate course, endorsing conservation, farm relief, balanced budgets, efficient administration, business expansion, and fairness to the poor, the unemployed, and organized labor. However, Landon’s campaign failed to energize the electorate and was damaged by the vicious attacks launched upon Roosevelt and the New Deal by conservative Republicans and big business. With the election looming, Landon himself made increasingly desperate and immoderate attacks on the president. On November 3, 1936, Roosevelt was reelected in a landslide, receiving 27,751,841 votes compared to Landon’s 16,679,491. Roosevelt received 60.8 per-

cent of the popular vote; the plurality (11,072,350) was the largest in presidential election history. Roosevelt won 523 electoral votes to Landon's eight, the biggest margin since James Monroe in 1820. In addition, Roosevelt's coattails brought Democratic majorities in the Senate (75–16) and the House of Representatives (331–88).

Following his election defeat, Landon never again ran for public office, though he remained active in Republican politics for rest of his life. His daughter, Nancy Landon Kassebaum, was elected to the U.S. Senate from Kansas in 1978. Alfred Landon died in 1987, a month after his 100th birthday.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1936; REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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MICHAEL J. WEBBER

LAND USE PLANNING

Land use planning held the promise of unifying the disparate elements of New Deal agricultural policy. Most agrarian New Dealers thought that poor land use caused "the farm problem." Low farm prices and incomes, poverty and regional underdevelopment, soil erosion and related abuses of the land—these were the central rural problems of the Great Depression, and they all pointed to land use reform. Henry A. Wallace stated in his *Report of the Secretary of Agriculture, 1938*, "There are no separate problems of forestry, of wildlife conservation, of grazing, of soil conservation, and of regional crop adjustment. There is one unified land use problem, of which forestry, grazing, crop adjustment and so forth are merely aspects." Yet with few exceptions, historians have not treated New Deal agricultural policy from this vantage point. Admittedly, the baffling array of alphabet agencies makes it difficult to follow the thread of land use planning policy.

The three main "action agencies" of the New Deal U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) changed land use patterns substantially. To raise farm prices, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) induced acreage reductions. First the Resettlement Administration, then the Farm Security Administration (FSA), "rehabilitated" poor land as well as poor farmers, and even achieved minor land reform, turning some tenants into owners. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) demonstrated erosion-control practices and advised farmers on preventing environmental degradation. Further, the SCS acquired a small but important land retirement program that purchased submarginal land, ended crop production, and resettled the residents onto better plots. Most other rural programs (e.g., farm-forestry, flood control, public grazing, wildlife preservation) also required land use adjustments. Wide-ranging alternative policy discussions and experiments pervaded New Deal agricultural circles; stellar examples include two presidential committee reports, *The Future of the Great Plains* (1936) and *Farm Tenancy* (1937), and the remarkable *Farmers in a Changing World: The Yearbook of Agriculture, 1940*. Late in the New Deal, the USDA and the land-grant colleges set up county land use planning committees to localize and coordinate all the new agencies. This participatory planning program represented the intended and long-range unity of agricultural policy.

The county land use planning committees consisted of farmers, local administrators of the new federal agencies (e.g., AAA, SCS, FSA), the extension agent, plus specialists from the state college. Together the citizens, bureaucrats, and scientists sought to unify and adapt all the government programs in the county. The committees began by discussing the philosophy of planning and studying how to subdivide their county for adequate community representation. They investigated each local area by mapping current land uses and then recommended improvements. The committees developed and implemented long-term as well as immediate land use plans, often by modifying the federal programs. By 1941 over two-thirds of all U. S. counties were engaged in this work, which involved 125,000 farm men and women as citizen-planners. The states had similar land use planning committees,

and Henry Wallace reorganized the USDA to carry out the program.

Wallace and others believed that the county land use planning program, begun only in 1939, culminated New Deal agricultural policy. They saw it as adding a third major function—planning—to the public agricultural institutions, to complement education and research. It offered the local and programmatic synthesis so obviously lacking at mid-decade. In his final *Report of the Secretary of Agriculture* (1940), Wallace wrote, “Land use planning brings farmers, technicians, and administrators together in broad attacks on wrong land utilization, menacing soil erosion, inefficient farming, anti-social land-tenure relationships, and bad rural living.” In an extremely innovative way, the planning program combined adult education, action research (by scientists and farmers), decentralized administration, and participatory policy-making. These features transcended land use planning; they amounted to integrated rural development. Most significantly to the New Dealers, the county planning program extended “grass-roots democracy,” engaging meaningful citizen participation far beyond their earlier efforts.

Historians generally disagree with that self-assessment: The farmer-planners almost always came from the local elite, and they did not accomplish either planning or democracy. Actually, most historians argue, the real long-term goal of New Deal land policy was an efficient, rational agriculture. Government support therefore favored modern family-sized and larger operations, and usually ignored the needs of subsistence farmers, tenants, and sharecroppers. These historical judgments are hard to dispute. Still, while emphasizing the aim of modernization, historians underestimate the democratizing aspects of the planning program. Especially compared to the AAA’s farmer committees, the land use program broadened the interests represented by local USDA agencies. Conservative enemies of reform—some of the department’s own agencies, farm organizations (particularly the Farm Bureau), and anti-New Dealers in Congress—felt threatened enough by the county planning program to destroy it in 1942. Thus America lost the opportunity for a unified agricultural policy that

serves more than narrow farm-commodity interests.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); FARM POLICY; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE (SCS); WALLACE, HENRY A.

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JESS GILBERT

LANGE, DOROTHEA

Dorothea Lange (May 26, 1895–October 11, 1965) was one of the leading documentary photographers of the Depression and arguably the most influential. Some of her pictures were reproduced so repeatedly and widely that they became commonly understood symbols of the human suffering caused by the economic disaster. At the same time, her work functioned to create popular support for New Deal programs.

Born in Hoboken, New Jersey, Lange’s life changed when her parents separated and her



A destitute man, photographed by Dorothea Lange in 1935. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

mother went to work. Lange attended school on New York City's lower east side because her mother worked there, and she often entertained herself after school by exploring the city on foot, despite her slight limp as a result of childhood polio. Attracted by photography from her early teen years, Lange created a kind of apprenticeship for herself by persuading studio portrait photographers to hire her as a helper. She went to San Francisco in 1919

and lived the rest of her life in the Bay area. She developed a fashionable and profitable portrait studio there, a success that indicates her remarkable charisma, self-confidence, and drive. Lange's insightful and slightly eccentric portraits made her the favored portraitist of the city's economic elite—the Fleishhackers, Zellerbachs, Strauses, and Kahns—as well as the artistic elite, which included Yehudi Menuhin, Mischa Elman, and Ernst Bloch. Lange



This photograph, shot in 1940 in a migrant camp between Weedpatch and Lamont in California, was one of Lange's many poignant photographs of the children of migrant workers. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

married the then well-known “western” painter Maynard Dixon, with whom she had two children, and her portrait photography was the family’s main source of support until the marriage ended in 1935.

As the Depression hit, Lange’s rich clients and her marriage began to seem confining beyond her endurance. She started to move around San Francisco, photographing darker, poorer, more intense scenes. These pictures came to the attention of University of California-Berkeley economist and reformer Paul Schuster Taylor, who hired her to illustrate his exposés of the brutal working and living conditions of migrant farmworkers. Lange fell doubly in love, with Taylor and with the challenges and

rewards of this so-called documentary photography (a phrase she hated). She divorced Dixon and married Taylor, and their marriage was thereafter a collaboration in work as well as life.

Taylor’s salary from the university and the federal government’s new interest in photographic documentation provided Lange with the economic basis to explore new possibilities in her medium. Between 1935 and 1945, she worked for the Farm Security Administration, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the War Relocation Authority, and the Office of War Information. She traveled extensively throughout the United States, often spending months at a time on the road in sweltering southern

summers, struggling to keep dust out of her cameras and to develop film in motel bathrooms. Along with Walker Evans, Arthur Rothstein, Ben Shahn, and others, Lange documented the Dust Bowl, agricultural poverty, and, later, wartime defense workers. Among her most powerful work was a series of photographs of the Japanese internment, pictures so critical that many of them were suppressed by the agency that hired her to make them.

Because the pictures taken during this time belonged to the federal government, they were in the public domain and could be reproduced without charge and without permission. Their emotional power touched viewers like no other photographer's work did. Her portrait of a destitute migrant mother with her children has been reproduced thousands of times, sometimes substituting different faces and different situations. Lange believed that her disability gave her a strong connection with those who suffered.

Although Lange was not in any conventional sense a politically oriented person, and her own community was primarily one of artists, she felt not only great sympathy for the victims of injustice, but also intense outrage at the injustices she saw. She was not attracted by the organized Left, but she was in sympathy with some of the Communist-led causes of the period, such as the farmworkers' struggles, the San Francisco general strike of 1934, and the defense of the Scottsboro "boys." She made many insightful and respectful pictures of blacks, Filipinos, Mexicans, and Mexican-Americans, although these were reproduced much less often than her photographs of whites. In her home state she was particularly incensed at the extreme exploitation of farmworkers and the violence directed at those who tried to unionize and improve their conditions by the powerful agribusinesses and their hired thugs.

After 1945, fighting illness for twenty years, Lange slowed her pace considerably, but turned out superb, lasting work. She accompanied Paul Taylor on several of his trips studying land tenure in underdeveloped countries, and she made many beautiful pictures in Vietnam, Egypt, and Indonesia. She also made a series on the work of a public defender in Oakland. This late work continued to reveal her

often uncanny eye for human expressiveness and the complexity of the poor, so often stereotyped as simple.

See Also: DUST BOWL; EVANS, WALKER; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); PHOTOGRAPHY; ROTHSTEIN, ARTHUR; SHAHN, BEN.

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LINDA GORDON

L A T I N A M E R I C A , G R E A T D E P R E S S I O N I N

Although the nations of Latin America had won their political independence during the nineteenth century, they continued to remain subordinate to external economic forces. The reason lay in their adherence to the model of economic development that had begun during the colonial era and which concentrated on the production and export to Europe and North America of large quantities of staple commodities, such as sugar, tobacco, coffee,

cotton, grain, wool, meat, fruit, copper, tin, and silver. While the policy of export-led growth could claim considerable success and justification so long as international commerce flourished and the world economy enjoyed prosperity, its inherent defects were displayed at times of adverse economic developments. This was especially the case for Latin America whenever trade and inward investment were affected with the leading economic powers of Great Britain, France, Germany, and the United States. Consequently, the worst international economic crisis of the twentieth century, which began with the stock market crash on Wall Street in October 1929 and subsequently developed into the Great Depression, was extremely damaging to the economies of all the Latin American countries.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Even before the 1929 crash, Latin America was already experiencing economic difficulties as a result of falling world prices of staple exports, such as Argentine grain, Brazilian coffee, and Cuban sugar. The amount of inward foreign investment had also declined as funds were drawn away to fuel the speculative fever that raged in American and European stock markets in the late 1920s. The economic downturn in 1929 was, therefore, not entirely unexpected. What was surprising was the sheer scale and longevity of the subsequent Depression. Instead of a temporary reduction in external demand for foodstuffs and raw materials, the traditional markets for Latin American goods in Europe and North America severely contracted as the value of world trade fell by more than half within three years. Furthermore, Latin American exports were sharply reduced in terms of both quantity and value and dropped to low levels not seen since World War I. Agriculture and mining were seriously affected throughout the region, ranging from the sugar industry in Cuba to the extraction of tin and copper in Chile. In 1939 the value of these Chilean exports had decreased to one-sixth of the 1929 figure. In addition, the collapse of world commodity prices was so marked that exports fell more in value than imports of capital and manufactured goods so that the terms of trade decisively turned against Latin America. The notable exception was Venezu-

ela, where the production and export of oil continued to be profitable.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSES

The Great Depression caused considerable monetary difficulties for Latin American governments. There was not only a problem in finding sufficient foreign exchange to finance external commerce and particularly to pay for imports, but there were also increasing difficulties in servicing the foreign debt. Taxes on exports and tariff duties on foreign imports had long been a significant item in the revenue of Latin American governments. Declining trade meant, however, a corresponding fall in revenue. The combination of severe balance-of-payments difficulties, budget deficits, and the dwindling of gold reserves to the point of exhaustion led the majority of Latin American governments to suspend payments to foreign bondholders. In some cases, outright default could not be avoided as exemplified by Bolivia in January 1931, followed by Peru in May and Chile in August. Even for those countries that struggled to service their external debt, the fact that the interest rate remained unchanged meant that the debt actually rose in real terms if increased payments could not be made. Indeed, all governments were forced to enter into complex and often protracted negotiations with North American and European governments, bankers, and bondholders to seek a readjustment of their foreign debt and a rescheduling of payments. In contrast to the later debt crisis of the 1980s, however, Latin American indebtedness during the 1930s was not singled out for particular condemnation. Such was the international extent of the debt problem that Latin America was not considered to be any more profligate or financially reckless than other regions of the world.

The effects of the 1929 crash soon brought a severe contraction of economic activity in both agriculture and industry and, consequently, a sharp rise in unemployment and under-employment throughout Latin America. The resulting economic discontent led to political protests directed against the governments in power, which were blamed for economic mismanagement and corruption. A series of successful coups, often involving the military, oc-

curred in 1930. In May, President Hernando Siles was overthrown in Bolivia. In August, President Augusto Leguía resigned in Peru. In September, General José F. Uriburu led a military coup that overthrew President Hipólito Irigoyen in Argentina. In October, Gétulio Vargas assumed power in Brazil. In July 1931 a general strike in Chile forced President Carlos Ibañez to resign and go into exile. Changes of government also took place in several nations of Central America and the Caribbean, including the overthrow of President Gerardo Machado in Cuba in March 1933 in what became known as the 1933 Cuban revolution.

The governments that came into office in Latin America during the early years of the Great Depression found that their economic options were tightly constrained. Even during times of prosperity the political power and influence of entrenched landed oligarchies and business elites made it extremely difficult for central governments to raise income or property taxes. Moreover, the outbreak of the world economic crisis ruled out the customary resort to external borrowing in the form of large foreign loans from European or American bankers. As a result, the newly empowered Latin American governments generally sought to balance their budgets by pursuing orthodox deflationary policies that stressed the reduction of public spending. So great, however, was the scale of economic crisis in the early 1930s that conservative *laissez-faire* attitudes were gradually abandoned in favor of the state adopting a more active and assertive role in economic policy and planning. This was evident in the establishment of strict exchange controls to alleviate the scarcity of foreign currency caused by the sharp fall in levels of trade. The policy of maintaining the gold standard was also either suspended or abandoned. Local currencies were pegged in value to the pound sterling or the U.S. dollar. In effect, Latin American currencies were allowed to depreciate in value. At the same time the circulation of money was often expanded by reflationary measures that were similar to those undertaken by the New Deal in the United States and the fascist regimes of Benito Mussolini in Italy and Adolf Hitler in Germany. In order to stimulate the domestic economy, a number of Latin American governments resorted to large programs of public spend-

ing, especially in developing economic infrastructure such as roads and highways. However, due to prevailing deflationary conditions resulting from the general lack of world demand, loose monetary policies did not result in rampant inflation.

During the early 1930s the primary objective of governments throughout Latin America was to combat the economic crisis by stimulating exports. This was regarded not only as the best means of generating increased earnings of foreign currency but also as essential to save particular export sectors from what was perceived to be an imminent danger of complete economic collapse. Attempts to improve price levels for staple commodities were not new and had been tried earlier, as in the case of the Brazilian valorization of coffee at the beginning of the twentieth century. Such policies, however, involved an element of manipulating market forces by fixing prices and imposing controls on production. Consequently, they had proved controversial so that their implementation had generally been left to private rather than governmental agencies. To achieve stable price levels during the Great Depression, however, it was necessary for the state to intervene directly in the economy. Central economic planning was adopted to regulate domestic production and prevent overproduction. Surpluses were stored and, where necessary, destroyed. During the decade of the 1930s an estimated sixty million bags of coffee were burned in Brazil, the equivalent of two years of world consumption of coffee.

A similar strategy to improve the balance of payments was import substitution. Known as import-substituting industrialization (ISI), this policy was designed to promote domestic industries by supplying capital investment in the form of government loans and subsidies. In addition, domestic products would be given protection from competing foreign imports, most usually by increases in tariff duties. ISI was initially a series of measures rather than a systematic policy. It was introduced in limited stages and mostly applied to nations with strong manufacturing sectors such as Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, and Chile. At first, the policy was limited to processed food, beverages, and textiles, but it was later extended to a wide range of manufactured goods, chemicals, and pharmaceuticals.

Particular success was achieved in Brazil, where domestic industry accounted for almost 85 percent of the country's supply of manufactured articles in 1938. ISI, however, did not aim to produce self-sufficiency. Foreign imports, especially of capital goods and machinery, were still considered vital for economic growth and could not be readily replaced by domestic production. In fact, during the 1930s Latin American governments placed more importance on export promotion than ISI. Beyond the decade of the 1930s, however, the development of ISI brought significant structural economic change as it influenced the shift of emphasis from agriculture to manufacturing. In the process, Latin American economic growth was made less dependent on foreign trade and inward investment.

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

The beginning of the Great Depression in Latin America can be directly associated with the Wall Street crash in 1929. The actual ending is more uncertain, but it is generally accepted that the effects of the Depression lasted throughout the decade of the 1930s and that the next period of significant economic change was started by the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939. In fact, economic recovery was clearly evident in some Latin American nations as early as the 1931 to 1932 period. In 1933 Brazil's trade balance was back in surplus and industrial production had recovered to its 1929 peak. Indeed, economic performance in the region as a whole was superior to that of Europe or the US. With the exceptions of Honduras and Nicaragua, by the end of the 1930s the gross domestic product figures of all the Latin American nations were back to 1929 levels. The actual pace of recovery varied from country to country and was most rapid in Brazil, Chile, Cuba and Mexico and weakest in Panama and Paraguay. Arguably the improvement resulted not so much from particular government policies, such as exchange controls or ISI, but from the pick-up in world economic activity and consequent revival in demand for the staple commodities traditionally produced by Latin America. For example, the recovery of world copper prices meant that Chilean copper production regained its pre-1929 levels in 1937. Similarly, the rise in the price of sugar restored the profits of sugar producers, especially in

Cuba, where the value of exports of sugar doubled between 1932 and 1939. The production of some commodities actually increased in quantity, as well as price, as a result of buoyant world demand. A prominent example was cotton, which was widely and profitably cultivated in Brazil and Peru.

During the 1920s the large majority of Latin American countries exhibited outwardly stable political systems. The shock of the Great Depression, however, brought a general crisis of confidence among the ruling elites of Latin America and contributed to a decade of political turmoil and, on occasion, violent change. This was particularly the case at the beginning of the 1930s when the traditional policy of export-led growth was suddenly brought into serious question. The exploitation of natural resources had greatly benefited the powerful landowning oligarchies and was the basis for their considerable political influence. The sudden collapse of external markets resulted not only in considerable economic loss but also provoked public disaffection with rule by the oligarchies. The political left, including the Communist parties and labor unions, responded by organizing strikes and protests and, in some cases, attempted unsuccessful military coups, as in Cuba in 1933 and Brazil in 1935. The appeal of the left, however, was very limited and was generally confined to the cities and industrial workers. It did not extend to the large masses of population that lived at subsistence level in the countryside and were historically excluded from active participation in the political system. Moreover, the threat of revolutionary upheaval posed by the left and especially the ideology of communism served to unite the urban middle class and the military with the landowning oligarchy. It was a combination of these basically conservative elements, often led by senior military officers, that assumed political power during the period of the Great Depression, which explains the subsequent emphasis of these governments on policies intended to produce stability rather than radical change. In many cases, the result was the establishment of repressive authoritarian regimes in which military figures, such as Augustín Justo in Argentina, Fulgencio Batista in Cuba, Rafael Trujillo in the Dominican Republic, and Jorge Ubico in Guatemala, took a leading role in government.

EXTERNAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The political rise of the military notably contributed to the adoption of nationalistic economic policies like ISI. For example, in Brazil the government of Gétulio Vargas was sympathetic to the views held most prominently by junior military officers known as *tenentes* (lieutenants) that industrial growth was essential to reconstruct Brazil into a strong and prosperous modern state. The *tenentes* were also critical of their country's long-standing economic subordination to the world economy. They urged Vargas to assert Brazil's economic independence from external powers by expanding the role of the federal government in regulating foreign owned utilities, such as electricity, telephone, and gas, and by promoting efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in products with natural security implications, notably oil and steel. Similar action was taken in Bolivia in 1937 and Mexico in 1938 to remove foreign control over national oil industries.

While the Great Depression stimulated an increase in antiforeign sentiment among the people of Latin America, it did not promote any marked desire for greater regional economic cooperation or integration. So long as the economies of the Latin America countries were essentially agrarian, there was not a great deal of potential for significant commercial exchange. Consequently, the 1930s saw only a modest increase in trade between Latin American nations. Nor were there any concerted attempts to form cartels to support and manipulate price levels of particular commodities. In fact, the pattern of Latin American trade continued to stress the maintenance of close links with the markets of North America and Europe. In 1933 Argentina negotiated the Roca-Runciman Treaty, a commercial agreement with Great Britain that was designed to make exports of Argentine meat secure. Brazil entered into barter arrangements with Nazi Germany that helped to double Brazilian exports to that country from 1933 to 1939. Indeed, Germany gained from the Great Depression in that the German share of Latin American exports rose from 7 percent in 1930 to more than 10 percent in 1938.

Economic relations between Latin America and the United States followed an ambivalent course during the 1930s. Initially, the United States ap-

peared unsympathetic to the economic plight of Latin American exporters because it maintained a strongly protectionist attitude that was symbolized by the passage of the Hawley-Smoot Tariff in 1930. During the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, however, the United States launched the Good Neighbor Policy in an attempt to improve hemispheric relations. While the policy proclaimed the importance of closer political cooperation, it also stressed closer economic contact to help the American economy recover from the Great Depression. Starting with Cuba in 1934, the Roosevelt administration concluded a series of bilateral trade treaties with eleven Latin American countries by 1939. Although its share of the Latin American export trade actually declined slightly from 33 percent in 1930 to just over 31 percent in 1938, the United States remained the largest single market for Latin American goods. The challenge to the United States of European economic rivals such as Great Britain and especially Germany was substantial but was considerably weakened by the outbreak of World War II in 1939. The resulting wartime economic boom enhanced the preeminent economic role of the United States in the hemisphere and brought an end to the Great Depression in Latin America.

See Also: DICTATORSHIP; GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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JOSEPH SMITH

LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

According to the federal census, there were approximately 1.5 million Latinos in the continental Unit-



A Hispanic-American woman weaves rugs as part of a Works Progress Administration Project in 1939 in Costilla, New Mexico.

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ed States in 1930, the vast majority of whom were Mexican or Mexican American. Cubans, Dominicans, Central and South Americans, and Puerto Ricans made up a much smaller portion of the total mainland population. Not included in this enumeration was the population of the island of Puerto Rico, then a protectorate of the United States, which numbered more than one million by 1930.

Although some Latinos predated Anglo-American settlement in what became the United States, many had arrived only recently. Responding to the desperate need for labor during World War I, and often fleeing unrest in their home countries, Latino immigrants transformed American cities not only in the Southwest but in the Midwest and Northeast. Hundreds of thousands arrived between

1900 and 1930. Mexicans, many fleeing the violence of the Mexican Revolution of the 1910s, arrived in the greatest number. Puerto Ricans, made United States citizens by the Jones Act of 1917, increased their migration to the mainland in this period as well, responding in particular to employment opportunities in New York City. Although Cubans, Dominicans, and Central and South Americans would not immigrate to the United States in large numbers until after World War II, small numbers of immigrants from these areas did form communities in the early twentieth century in key U.S. cities, including Chicago, New Orleans, New York, and Tampa.

Latinos were among the hardest hit by the economic downturn of the Great Depression. Al-



Latino ranchers in Chamisal, New Mexico, discuss plans with a representative of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

though more established Latino communities had some upper- and middle-class families, most Latinos in the 1910s and 1920s were working class once they arrived in the United States. They participated in—and oftentimes formed the backbone of—a large range of industries, including mining, agriculture, and textile manufacturing. Despite their vital contributions to the U.S. economy, Latinos often were restricted to the lowest paying jobs, received less pay than their Anglo counterparts, and had highly limited occupational mobility. Their position on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder, combined with the ugly specter of racism, put Latinos at a great disadvantage during the 1930s. As the American economy soured and jobs became

scarce, Latinos—who were perceived by many Anglo Americans as foreigners, regardless of their actual citizenship status—provided an easy scapegoat. In many states, Latinos were the first to be fired, as employers felt obligated to give preference to Anglo workers. In Puerto Rico, where the economy depended heavily on a small number of industries, unemployment rates skyrocketed even faster than in the mainland United States, reaching 36 percent in 1929. Not only were Latinos unable to find work, but they also found the doors of welfare offices and work relief programs closed to them, as increasing numbers of government and charitable organizations adopted a “citizens only” policy. In practice, this policy often meant “whites only.”



A Farm Security Administration supervisor checks the tobacco crop of an FSA borrower near Barranquitas in Puerto Rico in 1942.

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MEXICAN REPATRIATION

Latinos of all backgrounds were on the move during the Great Depression. An estimated ten thousand Puerto Ricans returned from the mainland to the island between 1930 and 1934, hoping to find better opportunities at home. In New Mexico and Colorado, workers who had migrated to urban areas in the 1920s returned to rural villages, planning to eke out a living on the land, while in California, unemployed agricultural workers poured into the cities, seeking financial assistance. But by far the largest movement of Latinos during this period occurred among Mexicans and Mexican Americans who returned to Mexico. From 1929 to 1937, more than 450,000 persons of Mexican origin were repatriated. This massive movement of men,

women, and children—representing close to half of the Mexican-origin population in the United States at that time—was triggered by the economic woes of the Depression and exacerbated by a rising tide of xenophobia. Repatriation was sometimes voluntary, other times involuntary, and often somewhere in between. The most notorious cases of involuntary repatriation occurred in the Southwestern states, where self-deputized Anglo citizens took it upon themselves to rid their communities of unwanted populations. These groups rounded up Mexicans and Mexican Americans, without regard for their actual citizenship status, and physically removed them to Mexico.

More common than these vigilante roundups were official repatriation drives, undertaken by city



The members of this Mexican-American family from Texas found work as agricultural laborers in East Grand Forks, Minnesota, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

and county governments and by the Federal Bureau of Immigration. Local leaders in Los Angeles, shocked by the thousands of new entrants on their relief rolls, saw repatriation as an alternative to providing support for immigrant families. Insisting that paying for a one-way train ticket would be cheaper than providing welfare, county leaders organized train rides back to Mexico and paid for the passage of hundreds of Mexican citizens, and sometimes also for their American-citizen children. Between 1931 and 1934, more than thirteen thousand people rode the Los Angeles county repatriation trains. Similar programs arose in Colorado, Indiana, Minnesota, and Michigan, among other states.

The federal government also participated in efforts to send Mexicans home. Federal repatriation

drives focused on all destitute aliens, although those of Mexican origin made up the largest percentage of those actually returned. Federal repatriation drives were largely ineffective: only 9,549 “distressed” immigrants, of all nationalities, were officially repatriated between 1931 and 1940. Tens of thousands of immigrants, however, were deported during this period. Deportation, unlike repatriation, entailed official government proceedings, and a charge of deportability prohibited an alien from legally entering the country again. The Bureau of Immigration capitalized on immigrants’ fears of being deported, staging high-profile raids in public spaces and workplaces. In Los Angeles, for example, immigration officials raided a popular park in the middle of the day. Plainclothes officers barred

the exits, asking all those there for citizenship documentation. Of the four hundred people stopped and questioned by the officials, only eleven Mexicans were taken into custody. The raid had its intended effect, however, as word of the event spread quickly among immigrant communities and intimidated those who were already facing difficult times. Not content to settle at large-scale deportations, the federal government also attempted to assure that fewer Mexicans would immigrate to the United States during this period by denying visas to any Mexican citizen “likely to become a public charge” or entering to engage in “contract labor.” The enforcement of these visa restrictions, combined with the lack of opportunities across the border, effectively cut the official admission of Mexican citizens from 38,980 in 1929 to only 2,627 in 1931.

Some Mexicans and Mexican Americans did travel to Mexico of their own accord, without the aid of government or charitable organizations, but they were no doubt influenced by a variety of factors that made clear that they were no longer welcomed in the United States. Shut out of any gainful means of employment and, in some instances, from any source of charity, many of *los repatriados* had little choice but to return to their native land, where they hoped to find some support. The first wave of these voluntary repatriates tended to be better off; they left at the beginning of the Depression, able to drive in their own cars with their own belongings in tow. As the Depression worsened, however, the next waves of returnees were far worse off and had to depend on others to assist them in their travels.

Unfortunately, most of those returning found few opportunities south of the border. Anthropologists traveling in Mexico during the 1930s found that the return to Mexico was perhaps hardest for the children among the repatriates, many of whom were born in the United States and had grown accustomed to a different standard of living in the North. Those who returned to the rural areas of their parents had to adjust to new styles of dress, new types of food, and the dominance of a different language. The Mexican government sought to assist the migrants in a variety of ways. In the early years of the Depression, Mexican consulates in the United States cooperated with local governments in

planning the repatriation drives. Inundated with pleas of help from unemployed Mexicans in the United States, the consul offices initially saw repatriation as a chance both to assist their fellow countrymen and to regain the valuable workforce that had been lost during the great migration of the 1910s and 1920s. Mexico paid for the passage of some of its citizens and reduced import taxes for the repatriates so that they could bring their belongings home. The government also established a National Repatriation Committee, which sought to resettle the migrants in colonies along the western coast of Mexico. Living conditions there were hard, however, and most migrants returned to their old hometowns instead. As the economic collapse in the United States turned global, Mexico’s economy foundered as well. Frustrated with the government’s failure to provide for them, *repatriados* in Mexico City formed their own union, which sought to lobby on behalf of the hundreds of thousands of returnees. The union was largely ineffective, however, and returning migrants had to rely on old support networks instead of the government.

SELF-HELP AND FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

For those Latinos who remained in the United States during the Depression, finding ways to support themselves and their families was a constant challenge. In many parts of the country, even those who were employed had to seek additional help, since wages dropped drastically as the economy worsened. Latino beet workers in Colorado, for example, saw their wages shrink from \$27 an acre to \$12.37 in just three years. Seeking to supplement the meager family income, Latinas entered the industrial workforce in unprecedented numbers. Teenage daughters were typically the first to go to work, but mothers and grandmothers sometimes followed suit. From pecan shelling factories in San Antonio to garment districts in New York, one could find generations of immigrant women working side by side. Although they struggled with poor working conditions and extremely low pay, women often were able, through their work, to keep their families afloat. Their experiences in the workplace, which allowed them to experience life outside of typical gendered roles, also helped contribute to a

nascent Latina women's movement, which would mature after World War II.

When even the multifamily income proved insufficient, many Latinos fell back on ethnic mutual aid societies, or *mutualistas*, for assistance. Self-help in Latino communities ranged from highly organized, structured groups like the *Cruz Azul* (Blue Cross) to informal groups of women banded together to sell tamales at cost to unemployed workers. In cities with long-standing middle-class Latino populations, such as Los Angeles and New York, the *mutualistas* were able to provide some modicum of relief. But in most other towns, the support quickly ran out as benefactors lost their wealth. Latinos then turned to local, state, and federal governments for assistance. Latinos participated in a wide range of federal relief programs under the New Deal. Social security, labor reforms, and housing assistance all benefited Latino families. New Deal welfare relief programs also protected Latinos by insisting that all funds be distributed without discrimination based on citizenship status. Some programs were targeted specifically towards Latino communities, such as the Hispanic arts revival in northern New Mexico, which sought to teach traditional crafts to the local populace as a means of both cultural and financial survival. Other programs retained a majority of Latino workers by default, such as large-scale construction projects that drew on already experienced Latino labor. An estimated 100,000 Mexican nationals alone participated in New Deal work programs in the western states.

As with other racial/ethnic minorities, however, the New Deal left an ambivalent legacy among Latinos. Despite federal efforts to insure that immigrants could find welfare assistance, some state governments continued to turn Latinos away. In 1937 Congress, following a trend already established by the states, declared that all programs of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) would be closed to aliens. The "citizens-only" policy of the WPA extended even to companies that fulfilled government contracts; corporations such as General Motors fired those whom they perceived as foreigners to keep from losing lucrative government business. Southwestern craft programs that sought

to preserve Hispanic villages in reality left many with skills that could not sustain them in an increasingly industrialized nation. In Puerto Rico, the targeted programs of the Puerto Rico Emergency Relief Program provided some aid, but they also paid lesser wages than similar programs in the mainland United States. In sum, Latinos both benefited from and were scarred by their experiences with the New Deal.

POLITICS AND THE GROWTH OF ETHNIC IDENTITY

Desperate times served to politicize many Latinos, both in the workplace and at home. Workers of all backgrounds, united by the trials and tribulations of the Depression, engaged in an unprecedented amount of labor organizing in the 1930s, seeking reforms in wages, hours, and other conditions of employment. In 1934 alone, union membership doubled, and there were more than 1,800 strikes nationwide. As the backbone of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors in some parts of the United States during the 1930s, Latinos provided the union rank and file in many labor disputes, especially in the heavily Hispanic states in the Southwest. Entire families participated in labor activities, helping to staff the picket lines, provide food for strikers and their kin, and lobby local officials. Notably, Latinos also emerged as labor leaders during this period, helping to organize farm workers in California, pecan-shellors in Texas, and steel workers in Illinois, to name just a few.

The scarcity of resources during the Depression did pit some Latinos against each other. Those who were American citizens fought hard to assert their right to all the benefits of citizenship. They sought to differentiate themselves from more recent Latino immigrants who bore the brunt of the "Americans only" policies in this period. On the whole, however, the struggles of the Depression era contributed to a more unified sense of ethnic identity among Latinos. Even relatively conservative Latino groups were forced to recognize that they shared a common fate with the foreigners in their midst. The indiscriminate enforcement of "no aliens" policies, capturing not only undocumented Mexican migrants but also long-standing Latino citizens of the United States, served to raise the consciousness of

many Latinos. Second- and third-generation Latino Americans, who had previously argued for restricted immigration and increased deportations, had a change of heart when they themselves suffered harassment and discrimination at the hands of government officials. Those who remained in the United States during these years realized the tenuousness of their membership in the national community, no matter how long they had lived in the country or how much they had given of themselves and their resources.

This new sense of communal identity, born out of repression, led to greater political mobilization. Although a rich variety of local and regional Latino organizations had emerged earlier in the century, it was not until the Depression era that national Latino groups came to prominence. Such groups included the League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), founded in Texas in 1929, and *El Congreso de Pueblos que Hablan Español* (The National Congress of Spanish Speaking Peoples), established by Guatemalan-American labor leader Luisa Moreno in 1937. Increasingly, Cubans, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, and other Latinos came together to fight for a range of civil rights, not only in the workplace but also in courts, schools, and places of public accommodation. Although it would take the massive post-1965 immigration to establish a strong pan-ethnic Latino identity, the seeds of this change were planted during the hard times of the 1930s.

See Also: CHAVEZ, DENNIS; LATIN AMERICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; MIGRATION; MIGRATORY WORKERS; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement was especially important during the last years of prohibition and the first half of the Great Depression, a period that saw a wave of violence and well-publicized criminal activity. Homer Cummings, Franklin D. Roosevelt's attorney general from 1933 to 1939, declared that, "We are now engaged in a war that threatens the safety of our country—a war with the organized forces of crime."

The 18th Amendment, which was passed by Congress in 1917 and went into effect in 1920, prohibited the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcoholic beverages. Prohibition was expected to reduce the consumption of alcohol and thereby reduce crime and poverty, and improve the quality of life. In fact, prohibition led to an explosive growth of crime. The Great Depression compounded the problem as some poor Americans resorted to crime as a way to provide food, clothing, and other necessities.

The crime rate at the end of the 1920s nearly doubled from that of the pre-Prohibition period.



During the Depression police were often called to control disturbances caused by angry strikers. This striker scuffled with a police officer in San Francisco in 1934. FRANKLIN

DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Serious crimes, such as homicide and assault, increased nearly 13 percent during the Prohibition era. According to Mark Thornton's "Policy Analysis: Alcohol Prohibition was a Failure" (1991) the crime rate increased because prohibition destroyed legal jobs, created black-market violence, diverted resources from enforcement of other laws, and increased the prices people had to pay for prohibited goods. In large cities the homicide rate went from 5.6 percent (per 100,000 population) in the pre-Prohibition period to nearly 10 percent during Prohibition. By 1932, banks were being robbed at a rate of twelve to sixteen each month across the country, and during the earlier two years kidnappings and extortions had increased to what was considered epidemic proportions. Nearly three hundred kidnappings were reported nationally in 1931.

State and local law enforcement officials, who were insufficient in number, poorly trained, and poorly paid and equipped, were unable to deal with the increasing illegal activities that occurred during the Depression years. They were further restricted by laws that prohibited them from chasing suspects across city, county, and state lines, and from inconsistencies in federal and states laws that prevented federal agents from helping local officials track criminals.

Beginning in 1925, the new director of the Bureau of Investigation (the word *Federal* was added in 1935), J. Edgar Hoover, began to reform the problem-plagued agency. He searched for talented, honest men, hired the best of them, and put them through a rigorous orientation program in order to assemble an elite group of specialized in law enforcement agents. The bureau made positive advances at strengthening its crime-fighting capabilities, by, for example, conducting surveys of banks and bank robberies, using laboratories and scientific methods to examine crime evidence, and training police officers in modern investigative methods.

As American citizens grew increasingly alarmed at the epidemic of lawlessness and after local law enforcement officials proved unable to deal with it, the Bureau of Investigation was called to "go to war" against crime. In May 1934 Congress approved an anti-crime package that included the Anti-Racketeering Act, which prohibited extortion through the mail or telephone; the Fugitive Felon Act, which prohibited suspected criminals from crossing state lines to escape prosecution; and the National Firearms Act, which gave the FBI the right to collect taxes on weapons, restrict weapons importation, and require firearms registration. By 1935 Roosevelt had signed seven new crime bills that provided the FBI with comprehensive crime-fighting powers.

During this time, the U.S. attorney general promoted a nationwide public relations campaign to glorify the G-man, or government-man, and to undermine criminal activity. Soon, Americans were reading newspaper articles describing the daring exploits of Hoover's G-men as they battled with gangsters. Children all over the country began wearing tin G-Man badges and playing with toy

Tommy guns. Hollywood even produced a movie called *G-Man* (1935) that starred James Cagney, previously noted for his roles as gangsters, as federal agent James "Brick" Davis. By 1935, federal agents had succeeded in arresting or killing a number of notorious criminals, including John Dillinger, "Baby Face" Nelson (Lester Gillis), George "Machine Gun" Kelly, Bonnie and Clyde (Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker), Charles Arthur "Pretty Boy" Floyd, and Al Capone.

See Also: BONNIE AND CLYDE (BONNIE PARKER AND CLYDE BARROW); CAPONE, AL; CRIME; CUMMINGS, HOMER; HOOVER, J. EDGAR; PROHIBITION.

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WILLIAM ARTHUR ATKINS

LEAGUE FOR INDEPENDENT POLITICAL ACTION

The League for Independent Political Action represented one of the last in a series of attempts to unite workers, farmers, and intellectuals into a viable political organization. In December 1928, Paul H. Douglas, Sherwood Eddy, and Norman Thomas assembled fifty-three activists to form a clearinghouse to coordinate information on existing organizations, while developing a program for a new party. In 1929 a national committee, consisting of numerous well-known progressives, was established, selecting John Dewey, whose political and economic views paralleled the League's own, as chairman,

and Howard Y. Williams as executive secretary. Williams organized some 2,500 members into ninety chapters in thirty-five states. The League emphasized political action as the way to secure a cooperatively-managed, consumer-controlled, planned economy marked by full employment, equal distribution of wealth, and a "Cooperative Commonwealth" based on production for use. The League for Independent Political Action viewed itself as pursuing a pragmatic middle course between the moribund Republican and Democratic parties and the Marxist left.

In 1930, spurred on by the worsening Depression, the League for Independent Political Action endorsed Republican and Democratic candidates only when there were no third-party candidates. Half of these League-supported candidates were elected. The League's second goal, creating a broad-based national party, however, proved more difficult. After the election, Dewey unsuccessfully encouraged Senator George Norris (Republican-Nebraska) to lead Progressive Republicans into a new party. Undaunted, in January 1932 the League issued a "Four Year Presidential Plan" advocating many long-standing reforms, including federal relief and public work programs, more progressive tax rates, old-age pensions, and public ownership of public utilities. The document, which anticipated many New Deal programs, and the League itself attracted only modest support. In July, fewer than one hundred delegates attended a League-sponsored National Progressive Conference. The conference endorsed the Socialist ticket of Norman Thomas and James H. Maurer, a League vice-chairman, and called for another gathering in 1933 to again try to establish a new party. Despite the endorsement, many members of the League, along with many other progressives, eventually supported Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Ultimately the League for Independent Political Action, with a membership under ten thousand, and viewed by some as dominated by an intellectual elite, neither gained broad support nor developed an appealing political vision for radical agrarian and labor groups. Always close to the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party, the League organized the Farmer-Labor Political Federation in 1933, and two

years later created a more broadly based American Commonwealth Political Federation to continue local organizing and build a new party. Unable to differentiate itself from competing groups, and facing internal strife and shifting allegiances, these efforts proved futile. In the wake of Roosevelt's 1936 landslide victory, the League for Independent Political Action and its successor groups disappeared as viable political organizations.

See Also: MINNESOTA FARMER-LABOR PARTY.

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JOHN SILLITO

LEDBETTER, HUDDIE ("LEADBELLY").

See MUSIC.

LEGAL PROFESSION

The Depression had varying effects on the different segments of the legal profession. Urban lawyers who typically practiced on their own or in association with one or two other lawyers representing individuals suffered severe losses of income. Small-town lawyers struggled to sustain practices based on local businesses and estate planning. Lawyers who represented large corporations found their practices changing from negotiating contracts to negotiating the terms of bankruptcies, but managed to sustain their practices at pre-Depression levels, although large law firms reduced or suspended hiring new lawyers.

The New Deal's regulatory programs also had varying effects. Lawyers had to develop the legal

structures for implementing the New Deal's programs and defend those programs against constitutional attack. Substantial numbers of young lawyers joined the administration in Washington, finding in the new regulatory programs legal opportunities they lacked in private practice and hoping to fulfill the professional ideal of public service. Harvard law professor Felix Frankfurter channeled some of his most accomplished students toward government service in Washington. Many Depression-era lawyers became prominent figures in the Roosevelt administration, and later, some, such as Thurman Arnold, the head of the antitrust division at the Department of Justice, helped to found major Washington law firms.

Lawyers representing business interests faced a conflict: Their clients required them to oppose the New Deal's initiatives, and many elite lawyers did. Leaders of the American Bar Association regularly denounced the New Deal in terms that associated the New Deal with tyrannical regimes. The American Liberty League organized a lawyers' committee to provide legal support for constitutional challenges to New Deal programs. John W. Davis, a former solicitor general, 1924 Democratic presidential candidate, and a leader of the elite New York bar, led bar association attacks on Roosevelt's court-packing plan.

The New Deal's regulatory programs generated legal work on the business side because corporations needed advice about how to comply with the new statutes. In that sense, the New Deal created the modern corporate law firm. Corporate lawyers reconciled the conflict between their clients' interests and their own professional interests by developing legal theories that accommodated the new administrative agencies to traditional notions of the rule of law by fitting the agencies into a model based on court procedures. Based on those theories, elite lawyers proposed new statutes to regulate the agencies. Eventually their proposals were reshaped and then adopted in the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946, whose procedural code for administrative agencies encouraged the agencies to act like courts.

In response to attacks on the New Deal by the elite bar, leftist lawyers formed the National Law-

yers Guild in 1936 as a vehicle for promoting progressive views within the legal profession. The public interest law movement of the 1960s was foreshadowed between 1931 and 1933 when the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) used a foundation grant to develop a strategic plan for challenging segregation. The plan as proposed was never carried out, but the idea of strategic litigation for social change eventually became an important component of the legal profession's understanding of its social role.

See Also: ARNOLD, THURMAN; FRANKFURTER, FELIX; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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MARK TUSHNET

LEHAND, MARGUERITE (MISSY)

Officially, Marguerite "Missy" LeHand (September 13, 1898–July 31, 1944) was Franklin D. Roosevelt's confidential secretary from 1920 until 1941. Unofficially, she was much more. At a time when personal secretaries were often "office wives," she performed many tasks commonly associated with spouses including handling Roosevelt's finances, overseeing domestic help, and serving as his hostess when Eleanor Roosevelt was away. LeHand's proximity to Franklin D. Roosevelt, coupled with her skill, judgment, and tact, also made her an influential player in his inner circle, particularly after he became president. Beyond this behind-the-scenes influence, she became a public figure in her own right. The *New York Times* reporter Arthur Krock even described her as the president's conscience, a title usually applied to Eleanor. Certainly Franklin D. Roosevelt relied on LeHand's abilities. He also counted on her companionship. Historians have speculated about the exact nature of their rela-

tionship, but most agree that LeHand devoted her life to Roosevelt. Her closeness to him inevitably caused tensions with Eleanor, but for the most part the two women maintained an amicable relationship.

LeHand was born in Potsdam, New York, and was raised in Somerville, Massachusetts. After graduating from high school and secretarial school, she worked in a variety of clerical and secretarial jobs before joining the Democratic National Committee's staff in 1920. There she met Franklin D. Roosevelt, who was then running for vice president. After losing that race, he hired LeHand to help him with his mail. She soon began to undertake other duties and quickly became indispensable, especially after Roosevelt contracted polio in 1921. Serving as a combination secretary-housekeeper-hostess, she accompanied him on his travels as he sought to regain his health, and she actively opposed his return to public life because she feared it would impede his recovery. However, once Roosevelt decided to run for governor of New York in 1928, LeHand supported his career, moving into the governor's mansion and later the White House.

The physical and emotional demands of working around the clock for Roosevelt ultimately undermined LeHand's always fragile health. She suffered two minor breakdowns in the 1920s. In each case, she recovered quickly. However, a severe stroke in 1941 left her an invalid. Although he paid all her medical bills and provided for her in his will, Roosevelt saw LeHand only occasionally after her stroke. When she died of a cerebral embolism in 1944, he did not attend her funeral.

See Also: ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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Missy LeHand (center) with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt in 1929. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

edited by Otis L. Graham and Meghan Robinson Wander. 1985.

MARY JO BINKER

LEHMAN, HERBERT

Herbert Henry Lehman (March 28, 1878–December 5, 1963) was a New York businessman who served as governor of New York and United States senator. Lehman was born and grew up in New York City. The son of one of the founders of Lehman Brothers, he worked at the family's investment banking firm and engaged in philanthropy after graduating from

Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. A lifelong Democrat and party fundraiser, he was elected as Franklin D. Roosevelt's lieutenant governor in 1928. Four years later he was elected governor of New York, a position he held for ten years.

Under Lehman's leadership, New York state adopted a package of reforms that won recognition as the country's premier "Little New Deal." Some programs, such as public housing, involved state-federal cooperation, but most were exclusively state operations that benefited groups hard hit by the Depression. While some state reforms resembled federal measures, in several cases, notably unemployment insurance and a minimum wage law, New York acted before Washington. In other in-

stances, such as creation of the State Labor Relations Board, New York programs were copied almost verbatim from federal statutes. New York also established a system of price supports for dairy farmers. Other state reforms included restrictions on child labor, as well as state aid, as part of Social Security, for needy people burdened by unemployment, old age, physical disabilities, or fatherless families. Through these programs, New York laid the foundations for a welfare state that became a model for other states.

The Depression provided much of the impetus for New York's reform movement by revealing the impersonal causes of poverty and stimulating a rising demand for government action. Some proposals had been suggested before, but the Depression, which devastated so many people, made the reforms more acceptable. New York proved fertile ground for reform, in part because of its progressive traditions and because it had access to greater taxable wealth than most states. Herbert Lehman also contributed to the success of welfare state reforms, guaranteeing a minimum standard of living to many groups. Despite his wealth, Lehman was genuinely interested in the plight of those in need, seeing "no inconsistency between being a business man and a liberal." Thus, he welcomed the suggestions of social workers and union leaders and in his quiet manner fought doggedly for enabling legislation. On January 6, 1938, the *New York Times* credited the "modest, hard-working and undramatic governor" with guiding passage of "a labor and social program transcending any ever executed in America."

Lehman's reputation as a liberal reformer later helped him win a seat in the U. S. Senate, where he served from 1949 to 1957 and became an outspoken opponent of controversial Republican Senator Joseph R. McCarthy.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1932.

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ROBERT P. INGALLS

LEISURE

Americans have always been of two minds about leisure: Too little leisure perhaps makes a dull person, but too much suggests laziness, a lack of purpose. The Depression caused people to question old attitudes about leisure because millions found themselves deprived of work and with time on their hands. Unemployment reached a high of 24.9 percent in 1933; the average workweek simultaneously declined from forty-eight to forty hours. Since women constituted only about one-third of the workforce, more men faced unemployment. Women who worked at home had long since learned to deal with leisure time, but newly unemployed men faced a new challenge. The New Deal attempted to reduce unemployment while at the same time providing outlets for the jobless by creating agencies to address this excess of leisure time. The National Recovery Administration (NRA) instituted employee work codes and fair practices. Despite good intentions, these moves reduced hours at the job, especially overtime. By 1935, two-thirds of NRA-protected employees worked fewer than forty hours a week and thus had increased free time on their hands.

In 1935, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) received the mandate to create meaningful jobs for unemployed citizens. To assist young people, the Roosevelt administration created the National Youth Administration (NYA), which employed thousands of young men and women across the nation. To provide leisure outlets, the government also built parks, playing fields, and recreational areas around the country. Many cities constructed municipal golf courses and softball became popular; late in the decade, five million Americans were playing softball regularly, and almost a quarter of them were women. Millions more attended as fans, and sports equipment manufacturers saw a sales upturn. Swing music, which peaked in popularity during the Depression, encouraged dancing. The jitterbug, along with a host of novelty dances and traditional steps, caused millions to try their skills in the country's many pavilions and dance halls.

Nevertheless, by the early 1930s over a million unemployed people—men and women, young and old—could be found wandering the country. Such roaming hardly qualified as recreational travel, but it resurrected the old frontier custom of moving on in search of something better. At the same time, many other Americans enjoyed jobs and the wherewithal to travel. Tourism prospered, whether by car, bus, train, plane, or luxurious ocean liner—a sharp contrast with the desperation shown by those not so fortunate. Traveling by trailer gained adherents, with thousands of families visiting autocamps and similar sites.

High unemployment and reduced working hours meant that hobbies of every description boomed. Municipalities sponsored hobby clubs, classes, and community garden plots on the theory that regular activities in a structured setting reinforced the work ethic for everyone, even the jobless. Leisure emerged as a form of substitute employment, and newspapers and magazines featured countless how-to columns. Such leisure time activities provided a sense of self-worth to participants, and working at a hobby proved fulfilling. Children who could not afford commercially made toys during the Depression found substitutes. Homemade playthings fashioned from such discarded items as crates, tin cans, old tires, and rope could be one-of-a-kind originals; children passed toy-making ideas on to friends, or found plans and designs in magazines.

Movies also rose in popularity during the Depression, and an average of over seventy-five million Americans, regardless of race or ethnicity, attended the movies every week, often as families. To keep audiences coming during difficult times, theaters cut prices and offered discount passes, premiums, and double features. In addition to movies, a marked rise in sedentary, solitary pastimes occurred. Radio, for example, attracted a growing audience. Approximately six hundred stations broadcast to some twelve million receivers in 1930; by decade's end over eight hundred stations filled the airwaves, and more than fifty-one million sets picked up their signals.

Reading also satisfied leisure needs. Books and magazines of all kinds sold well. By the late 1930s,

over 1,200 weekly and some two thousand monthly periodicals vied for the public's attention, jointly circulating 150 million copies, a figure that exceeded the nation's population. In addition, virtually everyone read a daily newspaper, especially the "funnies." With wide distribution and a broad audience, comic strips and comic books constituted a new national literature. In addition, book clubs such as the Literary Guild and the Book-of-the-Month Club flourished. A theme of escapism runs through much of what people read during the Depression, since few wanted reminders of the troubles facing them. Hollywood produced many films based on best sellers, confident that screen images briefly helped audiences escape reality.

Games of every variety thrived. Jigsaw puzzles proved popular, and by 1933 people were buying some ten million a week. The game Pick Up Sticks, introduced in 1936, sold three million sets in less than a year. Board games also saw increased sales; Monopoly, the undisputed champion, made its debut in 1935. Card games, especially contract bridge, likewise rose in popularity; by 1931, over 500,000 individuals had enrolled in bridge lessons at YMCAs, parks, and other locales. Conservative estimates had twenty million people playing the game.

Gambling of various kinds appealed to many. Churches staged bingo in their parish halls, and slot machines, punchboards, and pinball machines gave Americans opportunities to win easy money. A 1939 poll claimed that one-third of the population admitted to occasional gambling.

The value and importance of steady work has long been stressed in American culture. The Great Depression challenged the jobless and the underemployed to deal with the stigma of being out of work, and forced them to learn to manage increased quantities of free time and to find leisure activities that carried meaning, reinforced self-esteem, and distanced them from idleness.

See Also: COMICS; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; LITERATURE; MONOPOLY (BOARD GAME); MUSIC; RADIO; SPORTS; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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WILLIAM H. YOUNG

LEWIS, JOHN L.

John Llewellyn Lewis (February 12, 1880–June 11, 1969), the son of Welsh immigrants, was raised in poverty in the coalfields of Lucas County, Iowa. In the 1890s the family relocated for several years to Des Moines, but upon the family's return to Lucas County, Lewis began work in the mines and in 1901 became secretary of his United Mine Workers (UMW) local. Lewis married the daughter of a local physician, Myrta Bell, and in time the couple raised three children. By 1907 the Lewis family had resettled in the mining town of Panama, Illinois. Three years later Lewis became president of Panama's large Local 1475, which was a springboard for his union career.

Lewis was a stalwart supporter of UMW president John White, who appointed him union statistician in 1917. By the end of that year, White had resigned, and his replacement, Frank Hayes, named Lewis UMW vice president. When Hayes himself resigned in January 1920, Lewis became head of the nation's largest union. Lewis would hold the post of UMW president for the next forty years.

The 1920s and early 1930s were disastrous for the UMW. Facing fierce competition from non-

union coalfields, union operators demanded wage reductions. In dealings with operators Lewis pursued a failed policy of "no backward step." Miner militancy could not overcome market forces that generated low wages and unemployment. As membership plummeted, Lewis faced challenges to his leadership. In 1926 the attack came to a head when John Brophy ran against Lewis for the union presidency. Lewis showed no hesitation in centralizing his authority, red baiting his opponents, and stuffing ballot boxes to defeat Brophy.

Although a Republican, Lewis exploited Franklin Roosevelt's 1932 electoral victory. Lewis played a critical role in securing the labor provision of the National Industrial Recovery Act (1933), and he used the law's section 7a to organize miners in the southern coalfields. Throughout the Depression years, Lewis demonstrated skill in bargaining with both employers and the state, and he used the NRA's code hearings to extend membership, reduce regional differentials, and increase wage rates. UMW success under the New Deal fueled Lewis's ambition to expand unionism dramatically in mass-production industries. He urged the craft unionists who dominated the American Federation of Labor (AFL) executive council to abandon their narrow interests and launch vigorous campaigns in automobiles, steel, rubber, electrical appliances, and other industries. When craft unionists refused to sanction the industrial union campaign at the 1935 AFL convention, Lewis foreshadowed the future of American labor by punching the Carpenters' president Bill Hutcheson in the face.

In November 1935 Lewis and others formed the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), an industrial union pressure group within the AFL. With Lewis in the limelight, the CIO erected permanent unions in the major mass-production industries and established Labor's Non-Partisan League to re-elect Roosevelt in 1936. In early 1937 Lewis played decisive roles in both the United Automobile Workers' successful sit-down strike against General Motors, and the collective bargaining agreement signed between U.S. Steel and the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC). On the heels of these major victories, however, came several setbacks. The spring 1937 "Little

Steel" defeat of SWOC, the 1937 to 1938 recession, and the 1938 AFL decision to expel the CIO killed the aura of invincibility that had surrounded Lewis and the CIO.

After the CIO recast itself as the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1938, Lewis became increasingly disillusioned with other CIO leaders and with the Roosevelt administration. One week before the November 1940 presidential elections, Lewis urged union members to support the Republican candidate, Wendell Willkie. After Roosevelt's victory, Lewis resigned as CIO president, although he remained a pivotal figure in the labor movement as president of the UMW.

During World War II and the late 1940s Lewis repeatedly used the strike weapon to advance UMW interests. Although he voiced support for labor's "no strike pledge" during the war, he violated that pledge in 1943 with mining strikes that roused the enmity of politicians and led directly to passage of the Smith-Connally Act. In the late 1940s mining strikes were commonplace, sometimes resulting in union advances but at other times yielding stiff fines and threats of state takeover of the mines. In the 1950s Lewis's strategy shifted to one of collaboration with employers, and the earlier patterns of authoritarian rule and corruption became increasingly prominent. When Lewis retired in 1960, the UMW was in decline, reflecting the increasingly poor health of the coal industry and the corruption that had seeped into the administrative apparatus. Lewis died in 1969 in Washington D.C.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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CRAIG PHELAN

LINDBERGH, CHARLES

In 1927 Charles Lindbergh (February 4, 1902–August 26, 1974) was the first pilot to complete a transatlantic flight. He was born in Detroit to Evangeline and C. A. Lindbergh, a lawyer who served as a U.S. congressman from Minnesota. In his early twenties, Lindbergh briefly studied engineering and learned to fly a plane. In 1923, Lindbergh, along with hundreds of others, bought surplus World War I Curtiss Jenny airplanes from the U.S. Army, which he used to barnstorm and entertain the American public. In 1925, he became the chief pilot for Robertson Aircraft in St. Louis, Missouri, and began to fly the airmail. Two years later, backed by a group of St. Louis businessmen, Lindbergh built a special plane called the Spirit of St. Louis. On May 20, 1927, he flew solo in his new plane from New York to Paris in thirty-three and a half hours.

Four million people welcomed him when he returned to New York, and Lindbergh was an instant hero and attractive celebrity. The media and public focused on his achievement and later his marriage and travels with his copilot wife, Anne Morrow. Lindbergh's flight catapulted America into an aviation frenzy. According to aviation historian Henry Ladd Smith, investors rushed to buy into an industry that was not yet necessary to the public, investing nearly \$400 million dollars in 1929 alone. The industry collapsed in the summer of 1929.

In March 1932, Lindbergh's infant son was kidnapped in what became known as the "crime of the century." Two years later, Bruno Richard Hauptmann, a German carpenter, was arrested, tried, and executed for the kidnapping and murder of the baby. Many have questioned the fairness of the trial, arguing that Lindbergh's tremendous popularity may have influenced the outcome.

Lindbergh, a Republican, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt came into public conflict over two issues during the 1930s. In 1934 Lindbergh and Roosevelt disagreed over the "Spoils Conferences," a series of airmail contracts granted to new airline corporations in 1930. Lindbergh, who was employed by one of the airlines, accused Roosevelt of damaging the industry when the president broke the contracts and assigned the Army to fly the mail.

With Lindbergh's support, the Black-McKellar Act returned the airmail to the commercial airlines, a defeat for the President.

Between 1935 and 1939, Lindbergh lived in Europe and visited Germany, publicly meeting with leaders of Germany's Luftwaffe. In 1939, Lindbergh advised the U.S. Army Air Corps to develop high-speed aircraft to deter attacks by other powers. A second conflict with Roosevelt ensued when Lindbergh, a spokesman for the America First Committee, regularly broadcast his isolationist views on the radio. In response to his speeches, the administration questioned Lindbergh's patriotism and intimated that he had a relationship with the Nazi government. In April 1941, Lindbergh resigned from his position as a colonel in the U.S. Air Corps Reserves. That September he accused the British, Jews, and Roosevelt of pushing the country toward war, a move that significantly damaged his image with the American public.

Throughout the Depression Lindbergh was a hero to the American public because of his famous flight and his image as a handsome, intelligent, and resourceful individual. For many, Lindbergh symbolized the possibilities of new technology, ideas about American manhood, and, with his wife and son, modern marriage and family. His isolationist views, while initially shared by many Americans, diminished his popularity. After the Depression, Lindbergh worked with military and commercial aviation interests and engaged in nature conservation efforts until his death in 1974.

See Also: HEROES; ISOLATIONISM.

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LIESL MILLER ORENIC

LITERATURE

Few events have had a more immediate impact on the cultural life of the United States than the Great Depression. When the stock market crashed in October 1929, American literature was in the closing days of a now legendary renaissance, a period in which some of the most significant writers of the twentieth century—T. S. Eliot, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Langston Hughes, and Robert Frost, to name but a few—first came to prominence. Yet, despite the fact that many of these figures expressed sincere hostility toward the commercial values prevalent in the culture of their day, the writers of the 1920s were deeply dependent on the booming economy of the decade, often for their subject matter as well as for material support. The economic upheaval of the thirties changed that situation fundamentally. Not only did the stagnant economy shake up the publishing industry, leading to important, long-term changes in the literary profession, widespread and persistent suffering forced American writers to question their basic assumptions about the United States and its cultural and political values and brought new ideas and voices to the fore. In the words of the prominent critic Edmund Wilson, "the economic crisis" had been "accompanied by a literary one." As a result, the Great Depression gave rise to a new cohort of important American writers. John Dos Passos, Zora Neale Hurston, William Faulkner, John Steinbeck, Thomas Wolfe, and Richard Wright all did their most important writing in the thirties. Oftentimes their work spoke directly to the social and political conflicts that had been created by the era's economic catastrophe.

LITERATURE AND POLITICS

Perhaps the most evident and controversial feature of Depression-era writing was the self-conscious politicization of literature. For many American writers, as Alfred Kazin explained at the time, the Depression was "an education in shock." Struggling to come to grips with the stagnation and confusion they saw throughout American society, many assumed that capitalism and liberal democracy had not merely suffered setbacks, but had been

proven conclusive failures. Many looked to communism or socialism for the promise of a better world, and, hoping to make art more than a diversion or a refuge, many writers sought to make their work a useful tool for improving society. In the words of the radical writer Joseph Freeman, they strove to overcome “the dichotomy between poetry and politics,” so that “art and life” might be “fused.”

One consequence of that politicization was that throughout the thirties the American literary world was divided by fierce battles between contending factions on the left and by antagonistic theories of literature. At the extreme end of the spectrum stood writers associated with the Communist Party who, advocating a controversial program of “proletarian literature,” demanded that art become “a class weapon.” Looking to the Soviet Union for the model of a rationally planned society, these writers celebrated the resilience of the working class and extolled the solidarity, enlightenment, and “revolutionary élan” promised by communism. In novels such as Michael Gold’s *Jews without Money* and Clara Weatherwax’s *Marching! Marching!*, or in plays like Clifford Odets’s *Waiting for Lefty*, they described a capitalist world that was exploitative, unjust, and corrupt, and told stories of how their long-suffering protagonists came to see the truth and join the struggle. Their underlying vision was always revolutionary, and their stories typically ended with the promise of cataclysm and violent transformation. “O workers’ Revolution,” Gold’s novel concludes, “You will destroy the East Side when you come, and build there a garden for the human spirit.”

Despite the fervor of its proponents, however, the movement for “proletarian” literature never took deep hold in American letters. It was most successful in the field of drama, where the revolutionary demand for immediacy and action revitalized the theater and nurtured such writers as Odets and directors as Harold Clurman, whose influence would be felt long after the 1930s ended. Proletarian poetry, on the other hand, and, in particular, proletarian fiction, where the movement staked its greatest hopes, were far less successful. With the exception of *Jews without Money*, which went

through eleven printings when it was published in 1930, very few proletarian novels found a wide readership, and most lacked the genuine power and eloquence of Gold’s often nostalgic account of growing up in the tenements of New York’s Lower East Side. The best-selling novels of the thirties—historical romances like Hervey Allen’s *Anthony Adverse* and Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with The Wind*—dealt with the Depression in a different way, by allowing readers to escape into another time, where spunky individuals triumphed over great adversity. Proletarian writers, who preferred to stress the significance of class struggle, never reached a popular audience. Nor were they successful with sophisticated readers, who were often offended by the dogmatic simplicity of novels that tended to see workers as inherently good and the bourgeoisie as evil. After 1935, proletarian literature died a quick death, the victim of both Communist Party policy (which, following the directives of the Soviet Comintern, turned away from advocating revolutionary struggle and toward supporting a “Popular Front” of communists, socialists, and liberals against fascism) and the success of Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal. Radical writers now spoke not of proletarian, but of “people’s literature,” and claimed that the central issue of the day was not class struggle, but the contest between fascism and democracy.

Yet, though a small and short-lived phenomenon, the proletarian movement exercised disproportionate influence over the literature of the 1930s because radical writers spoke with energy and conviction when so many of their peers were confused. For many writers, the misery of the Depression made literature seem a useless luxury. Defenders of “proletarian” literature like Gold—who was a harshly polemical critic as well as a novelist—provided an emphatic answer to this anxiety. They repudiated the subtlety and literary sophistication that characterized much of American writing in the 1920s and demanded instead that literature deal “with the real conflicts of men and women.” Almost regardless of their political allegiance, American writers tended to share that conviction and to be impressed by the commitment of the era’s radicals. Many worried that in the pursuit of technical excellence, American literature had become too

preoccupied with aesthetic problems and too narrowly focused on the concerns of a small and highly privileged segment of society. Indeed, shaken by the Depression and increasingly troubled over the course of the decade by the growing threat of fascism in Europe, many writers who had achieved renown during the 1920s adopted left-leaning political views and shifted their work to follow suit. In *Tender is the Night*, for example, F. Scott Fitzgerald continued to write about characters who longed for glamour and wealth, but he now saw their world less as the romantic vision he described in *The Great Gatsby* and more as a crumbling edifice built atop a structure of economic exploitation. Similarly, in his novel about the Spanish Civil War, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, Ernest Hemingway turned from the individual alienation he had portrayed in such "lost generation" novels as *The Sun Also Rises* and now celebrated his hero's commitment to "absolute brotherhood" in the struggle against fascism. Many of their contemporaries followed a similar path. Even Wallace Stevens, perhaps the most aristocratic and purely aesthetic writer of his generation, declared in 1935 that he hoped his poetry was "heading left."

The proletarian movement also helped inspire a widespread interest in the literature of social protest by writers who were less radical or less doctrinaire than the artists associated with the Communist Party. Among the most impressive literary achievements of the decade, for example, was John Dos Passos's trilogy of novels, *U.S.A.* Dos Passos's massive effort to depict the whole of American civilization was far more complex and politically ambiguous than any example of proletarian literature, but it shared the proletarian writers' sense that American society had been profoundly damaged by capitalism and harshly divided along class lines. "They have the dollars the guns the armed forces the power plants," Dos Passos charged with grim satisfaction, "all right we are two nations." Something similar was true of the most explosive work of the decade, Richard Wright's bestselling novel *Native Son*, which sold 215,000 copies in the first three weeks after it was published and went on to become an extraordinary best seller. Wright's portrait of the simmering Black anger exemplified by his protagonist Bigger Thomas deliberately rejected

Communist Party orthodoxy in favor of Bigger's dreams of "personal" freedom and self-assertion. But Wright's career had been nurtured invaluablely by the proletarian movement, and his work reflected genuine sympathy for the Marxian vision of interracial, working-class solidarity. In his most utopian moments, Bigger imagines himself "standing in the midst of a crowd of men, white men and black men and all men" as "the sun's rays melted away the many differences, the colors, the clothes, and drew what was common and good upward toward the sun."

THE PEOPLE, YES

Other prominent writers sought to address "the real conflicts of men and women" in still more direct ways, embracing a documentary realist style of writing that aimed to transmit true reports of Depression conditions. The atmosphere of crisis had created a great demand for reliable information about the suffering and the political attitudes of ordinary Americans, and throughout the decade a new genre of non-fictional literature flourished in which writers sought to answer that need by searching out representatives of the figure Franklin Delano Roosevelt had famously called "the forgotten man." In such works as Sherwood Anderson's *Puzzled America*, Louis Adamic's *My America*, and James Agee and Walker Evans's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*, writers traveled the nation's back roads and hinterlands and reported to their readers about the neglected, real people they had found there.

Over the course of the 1930s, the desire to search out, to celebrate, and sometimes to sentimentalize ordinary people became an ever more prevalent feature of American literature. It was encouraged by the Popular Front and, more importantly, by the New Deal, which not only celebrated the common man, but which, through the Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA), paid writers to chronicle the nation's local cultures and regional differences. But the widespread literary yearning to connect with ordinary people and, as Michael Gold put it, plant "roots in something real," also reflected a more deep-seated reaction to the Depression. Believing

that economic collapse had revealed the destructiveness of America's competitive society and the failure—or, still worse, the parasitism—of the nation's elite, many writers looked to plebian Americans for the vitality and good will that seemed otherwise absent from the national culture. Carl Sandburg brought this trend to its apotheosis when he published his much-loved book of poems *The People, Yes* in 1936. Likewise, believing that the Depression had revealed the emptiness and disorganization of urban civilization, many other writers searched for visions of deep-rooted, meaningful ways of life and found them in the nation's folkways and rural communities.

That search was evident in many places during the thirties, as writers eagerly sought out diverse folk cultures across the various regions of the nation. It was apparent, for example, in a new interest in stories by and about ethnic Americans, as such writers as James T. Farrell, Pietro DiDonato, Henry Roth, and William Saroyan chronicled the distinctive cultures of the nation's immigrant communities and their struggles to enter the American mainstream. It was still more evident in the new vogue for Southern literature. In his great novels of the 1930s—*As I Lay Dying*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, and *Light in August*—William Faulkner created the era's most complex and tragically divided portrait of the South's unique cultural inheritance. But many other writers of the moment offered less ambivalent accounts. Among them was the movement of "Agrarian" writers led by Allan Tate, John Crowe Ransom, and Robert Penn Warren. Echoing the decade's left-wing writers, the Agrarians denounced America's industrial civilization, but against it they advocated a highly conservative vision of an "organic" society that they believed survived in Southern culture. Zora Neale Hurston's fiction focused on the exuberant vitality that Hurston perceived in the region's Black peasantry, but especially in her great novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Hurston also praised the distinctive folkways and communal life that persisted in the rural South. So, too, in varying degrees did a whole crop of new Southern writers, including James Agee, Carson McCullers, Erskine Caldwell, and, not least significantly, Margaret Mitchell.

The celebration of folk culture and of popular resilience took on its most emphatic form, however, in John Steinbeck's hugely successful novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, which is in many ways the most representative of American literary works from the 1930s. Telling the epic tale of the "Okie" migration from the dust bowl of the southwest to southern California, *The Grapes of Wrath* is a protest novel like Dos Passos's *U.S.A.* and Wright's *Native Son*. It indicts the callousness of a social system that rendered millions homeless and that left hungry people to starve while farmers who could not sell their crops were forced to destroy them. And, at its ideological center, in a portrait of a government camp that offers Steinbeck's protagonists a brief respite in their hopeless search for home and work, it provided a defense of the New Deal programs that sought to address the nation's farm crisis. But the true heart of the novel lies in its stirring vision of the goodness and brotherhood among ordinary people struggling to survive. As Steinbeck's Ma Joad says in one of the novel's most celebrated lines, "We're the people—we go on."

A PORTRAIT OF AMERICA

In the long run, the most important achievement of American literature during the Great Depression may have been the way works by Steinbeck and Wright, Faulkner and Hurston, Gold and Dos Passos combined to create what the New Deal administrator Harry Hopkins called, in his praise of the Writers Project, a new "portrait of America." Over the course of the twentieth century, the United States had become an increasingly complex and culturally diverse society. But it was not until the 1930s that American literature began to reflect and, indeed, to glory in that diversity. In fact, one of the most significant literary consequences of the Great Depression was the way the atmosphere of crisis and, more importantly, the federal funding for the arts first provided by the New Deal, brought to prominence many new authors, from previously neglected segments of the population. During the 1930s, those writers contributed to the creation of a new, populist vision of America as, at its best, a multiethnic and fraternal society. But even after the Depression had passed and that populist vision had disappeared along with it, American literature

would remain the broad based and diverse field that it had only first become in the thirties.

See Also: ADAMIC, LOUIS; AGEE, JAMES; CALDWELL, ERSKINE; COMMUNIST PARTY; DOS PASSOS, JOHN; EVANS, WALKER; FAULKNER, WILLIAM; *GONE WITH THE WIND*; *GRAPES OF WRATH, THE*; HURSTON, ZORA NEALE; POETRY; POPULAR FRONT; SOCIALIST PARTY; STEINBECK, JOHN.

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SEAN MCCANN

LITTLE CAESAR

Mervyn LeRoy's 1930 film (released in January 1931) about an aspiring criminal who works his way up through the underworld hierarchy, following an alternate path toward the American dream of success, became the prototype for the gangster film genre that blossomed in the early years of the Great Depression.

There had been several films about urban crime in the silent era, but *Little Caesar*, with the tough-talking, ruthless, self-centered Cesare Enrico Bando ("Little Caesar"), masterfully portrayed by Edward G. Robinson, set the tone for the genre in the era of sound. The film was such a hit that in 1933 critic Dwight MacDonald called it "the most successful talkie that has been made in this country."

Robinson's Rico, unlike other gangster protagonists, such as those portrayed by James Cagney in *The Public Enemy* (1931) and subsequent films, is unsympathetic. Rico's ruthless self-aggrandizement clearly associated him with the business tycoons of the 1920s, who had just fallen into public disfavor as the Depression was tightening its grip on the nation. Little Caesar's purposes in life are to make money and dominate others—to "be somebody." His selfish, amoral ways parallel those the public was increasingly associating with the business world. At one point in the film, Rico makes this connection explicit by proclaiming, "I ain't doin' too bad in this business, so far." His rapid rise and even more rapid fall parallel the trajectory of business from the late 1920s into the early 1930s.

Rico is a classic tough guy, but with a twist. He is very much concerned with demonstrating masculinity and avoiding anything that might make him seem "soft." "Dancin' . . . ain't my idea of a man's game," Rico says to his friend Joe Massara (Douglas Fairbanks, Jr.). "Ahh, love—soft stuff!" Rico says with disgust. Yet Little Caesar never shows any manly interest in women and there are clear, if subtle, indications that he has a homosexual desire for his friend Joe. Rico's decline begins when he refuses to shoot Joe, and he analyzes his own fall tellingly when he says, "This is what I get for likin' a guy too much."

As the conventions of the time required, *Little Caesar* told its audiences that crime doesn't pay by having Rico killed at the end. Significantly, though, in terms of its message to Depression-era viewers, the biggest criminal of them all, the top business executive, who is referred to simply as the Big Boy, is left untouched.

In a famous closing line, as he dies after taking a hail of police bullets, Little Caesar cries, "Mother



Edward G. Robinson in Mervyn LeRoy's 1931 film *Little Caesar*. THE KOBAL COLLECTION

of Mercy, is this the end of Rico?" Rico's end marked the beginning for a hugely successful genre that reflected the anti-business and anti-government attitudes of the early 1930s.

See Also: GANGSTER FILMS; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; ROBINSON, EDWARD G.; VALUES, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. McELVAINE

LITTLE STEEL STRIKE

In the wake of several remarkable labor victories in 1937, unionization of the steel industry seemed to be simply a matter of time. But the determined and ultimately successful resistance of Republic Steel, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, and Inland Steel—collectively known as the Little Steel firms to distinguish them from the giant U.S. Steel—in a devas-

tating standoff sent the burgeoning Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) into an unanticipated retreat. Coming at this crucial moment, the Little Steel Strike revealed the limitations of organized labor and federal labor policy. Along with the recession of 1937 to 1938, it temporarily halted the growing economic and political power of industrial workers.

The success of the chaotic sit-down strikes in the automobile industry in early 1937 had led U.S. Steel chairman Myron C. Taylor to negotiate with CIO president John L. Lewis an orderly recognition of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) as its members' sole bargaining agent. The resulting contract, signed on March 2, 1937, led to union recognition at several other companies. Jones & Laughlin, a company known for its aggressive anti-labor practices, capitulated in May after only a two-day strike and a Supreme Court ruling against it, a ruling that also definitively upheld the National Labor Relations Act. Having successfully resisted independent unions in the past, the remaining Little Steel firms, however, refused to be bullied. As SWOC prepared for a strike, Republic and Youngstown Sheet and Tube stockpiled weapons and hired additional guards.

On May 26, 75,000 steelworkers walked out of their plants across the Midwest. Tensions culminated in Chicago, where Republic kept its mill in operation with strikebreakers. At a rally on May 30 police fired into an unarmed crowd of strikers and their sympathizers, killing ten and wounding another thirty, including two women and a child. The Memorial Day Massacre, as it was known, galvanized organized labor. In June SWOC members walked out of Bethlehem Steel's Johnstown, Pennsylvania, plant. Claiming that the Little Steel firms violated the National Labor Relations Act in their refusal to collectively bargain with their workers' representatives, SWOC and CIO leaders sought federal assistance. President Franklin Roosevelt's refusal to intervene beyond appointing a powerless Federal Steel Mediation Board marked a shift away from his tacit support of the CIO, whose participation in Labor's Non-Partisan League had greatly contributed to his re-election.

Efforts by state and local officials to find a compromise also proved fruitless. A national public re-

lations campaign attacked Lewis's vocal presence in the strike as divisive, while back-to-work drives and citizens' committees organized by businessmen slowly swung public opinion in local communities against the strike. Discouraged by the lack of progress and continuing violence (eighteen steelworkers died that summer), strikers returned to work by the end of July. While defeated in the Little Steel Strike, SWOC eventually won its case before the National Labor Relations Board, which granted recognition, back pay, and reinstatement of fired union members. By 1942 further organizing drives secured collective bargaining agreements at all four companies. Still, union leaders had learned that federal protection would not be as vigorous as they previously had expected.

See Also: BLACK METROPOLIS; COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE; ORGANIZED LABOR; STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC).

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EDUARDO F. CANEDO

LOMAX, ALAN

Alan James Lomax (January 31, 1915–July 19, 2002), folk song collector, folk music scholar, and one of the founders of modern ethnomusicology, was born in Austin, Texas. He received his early background in folk music from his father, John Avery Lomax, with whom he went on collecting expeditions throughout most of the United States in the early 1930s. Much of their work included the re-



Among the many American musicians whom Alan Lomax recorded and photographed was Wilson "Stavin' Chain" Jones, photographed in 1934 in Lafayette, Louisiana. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, LOMAX COLLECTION

recording and publication of cowboy songs from the American West and songs of prisoners and other subcultural groups in the South. They also helped establish the popularity of Huddie Ledbetter ("Leadbelly"), Jelly Roll Morton, and other ethnic American performers.

In the mid- to late 1930s, the elder and younger Lomax served as curator and associate curator, respectively, of the Archive of American Folksong at the Library of Congress, in Washington, D.C. That repository, founded in 1928, had been supported entirely by private contributions and consisted of only a few small collections prior to the arrival of the Lomaxes. Under their direction, it began receiving government endowments and was greatly expanded, in no small measure by the hundreds of recordings that they had made on their collecting

expeditions. Those recordings remain among the most valuable primary sources for the study of American folk music.

Alan Lomax completed college at the University of Texas in 1936, then returned to Washington and the Library of Congress. Beginning in 1939, he hosted "Wellsprings of America" and "Back Where I Come From," both on CBS Radio.

Lomax served in the U.S. Armed Forces in World War II. In 1947, he was appointed director of folk music at Decca Records and continued his folk song collecting. During the 1950s, he helped produce several series of folk song recordings on a number of different labels.

While much of Lomax's most valuable work dates from after the Great Depression, both his interests and his personal views underlying his later efforts were forged during the Depression. Beginning in 1959, he set out to elucidate fully American Southern folk music, especially that of marginalized racial and economic groups. His efforts culminated in the eighty-hour, seven-volume *Southern Heritage Folk Series* that later was re-released as a four-CD set titled *Sounds of the South*.

Lomax also was one of several investigators who revolutionized ethnomusicology during the 1960s by championing the study of folk and non-western music in ways that did not involve comparisons to European and Euro-American art music. His greatest contribution to musical scholarship was the systematic linking of music to its social context. During the 1960s and early 1970s he developed a means of assessment and classification known as cantometrics. The central thesis of that system is that vocal musical performance practices reflect the characteristics of the culture from which they emerged. Lomax died near Tarpon Springs, Florida, on July 19, 2002.

See Also: GUTHRIE, WOODY; MUSIC.

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J. MARSHALL BEVIL

LONDON ECONOMIC CONFERENCE OF 1933

The London Economic Conference of 1933 had its origins in President Herbert Hoover's 1931 call for an international conference to discuss how to raise prices and to reduce tariffs. The internationalists in Hoover's cabinet hoped that once these issues were addressed economic recovery would set in. Interest overseas in the proposal grew in Europe in the summer of 1931 amid speculation that Hoover's administration had finally recognized that reparations and war debts were interconnected. The British government took the lead in securing a final reparations settlement at the Lausanne Conference of July 1932, with the expectation that a settlement on war debts with the United States would soon follow. To bring the Americans on board, the call for an economic conference was enshrined in Article Five of the Lausanne Conference.

Preparations for the meeting began in October 1932. Britain's departure from the gold standard in the summer of 1931 ensured that much of the preparatory discussions for the monetary portion of the agenda focused on the question of how to persuade Britain back onto gold. But the monetary landscape changed significantly after the U.S. dollar left gold in April 1933. As a consequence, European countries still committed to gold found their currencies under renewed pressure and begged Britain and the United States to do something about it.

In May 1933, the United States offered to negotiate a temporary stabilization agreement between the world's leading currencies so that deliberations at the London Conference would not be disrupted by speculation against particular currencies on the world's exchanges. However, France rejected the U.S. offer, demanding instead a permanent stabilization agreement. The issue remained unresolved as representatives from sixty-five different countries, plus assorted international agencies, trooped into London's Geological Museum on June 15, 1933 to begin their deliberations.

Within a matter of days, the world's attention switched from the conference hall to the Bank of England where negotiations for a new temporary stabilization agreement were underway. The bankers thought a deal was within their grasp when Franklin Roosevelt's infamous "bombshell message," made public on July 3, 1933, arrived. In it the president condemned the "old fetishes of so-called international bankers" for the gold standard and underlined his commitment to currency depreciation as a means of invigorating the international economy. The message also demonstrated Roosevelt's growing frustrations with European nationalism. France had persisted with its stubborn advocacy of gold standard orthodoxy, while Britain continued to call for the abolition of war debts. Britain also rejected Secretary of State Cordell Hull's ground-breaking proposal for a Reciprocal Tariff Act Agreement (RTAA) between Britain and the United States based on a flat rate reduction of 10 percent of existing barriers. The RTAA formally became law in 1934, but it took until 1938 for the United States to overcome Britain's political and economic objections to an Anglo-American RTAA. The RTAA became a major plank of U.S. economic foreign policy. By 1945, twenty-nine RTAA treaties had been secured, reducing U.S. tariffs by around 45 percent.

U.S. planning for a new economic order to be established after World War II was shaped by the experience of the London Conference. The U.S. administration was now determined to take the lead and "force" countries to cooperate together for the good of the international economy. In sharp contrast to 1933 it also demonstrated leadership and attempted to break away from the *ad hoc* character of interwar economic cooperation by creating international institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to help the world to work together in times of crisis.

See Also: EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; GOLD STANDARD; INTERNATIONAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; MONETARY POLICY.

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PATRICIA CLAVIN

LONG, HUEY P.

Huey Pierce Long (The Kingfish; August 30, 1893–September 10, 1935) served as governor and United States senator from Louisiana. Born into a large, contentious, middle-class family in Winnfield, Louisiana, Long became the most famous figure in Louisiana politics. During the era of the Great Depression he energized politics, ingrained corruption in an already corrupt state, and served as a disruptive force in the national Democratic party. Long was planning to challenge President Franklin D. Roosevelt for the presidency when he was assassinated in 1935.

Long gained a rudimentary education at Winnfield high school and in Shreveport schools, relying on his prodigious memory rather than consistent study. Honing his future political skills as a traveling salesman, Long married Rose McConnell, a Shreveport secretary, when he was nineteen years old. The couple had three children: Rose, Palmer, and Russell. Russell Long served a long career in the U. S. Senate, becoming one of the nation's more powerful politicians during the 1960s and 1970s.

Without attending college, Huey Long took courses at the Tulane University Law School for less than a year and was admitted to the bar at twenty-one after passing a special oral examination. Returning to Winnfield, he established a small law practice and won his first political office in 1919, election to the Railroad Commission, which regulated transportation, utilities, and pipelines. Long earned a reputation by championing independent oil companies and attacking the near-monopolistic Standard Oil Company, the state's largest corporation.

GOVERNOR OF LOUISIANA

Long ran for governor in 1923 and finished a close third statewide, but he finished first in the rural sections of the state. In 1928 he ran again and won. At thirty-four, he was the second youngest governor in Louisiana's history. Long owed his political success largely to motivation and drive, a brilliant mind, ruthlessness, unlimited ambition, and after 1928, repression and corruption. The 1928 election was the only relatively fair election the Long machine won.

Louisiana was polarized into rural and urban factions. The rural faction, which was much larger, was fragmented by region, religion, class, and ethnicity, and had never united under a single politician. Long gained support by out-promising his opponents: He vowed to give free schoolbooks to children, build an improved road and bridge system, and furnish cheap natural gas to New Orleans. The other half of his appeal relied on his personal charisma, invective against opponents, and relentless energy.

Long built the most tightly controlled state-level political machine in the United States. He employed nepotism, patronage, vote stealing, repression (once calling out the state guard to cow New Orleans), personal magnetism, kidnappings, and a vast political campaign chest. The Long machine maintained a "deduct" box consisting of compulsory contributions deducted from the salaries of state workers. Long's abuses and powerful enemies, such as Standard Oil, combined to lead to his impeachment by the Louisiana House of Representatives in 1929. The Senate adjourned without voting on the charges after Long produced a round-robin petition signed by more than one third of the senators, who vowed they would not vote to convict regardless of the evidence. Two thirds of the vote was needed to convict.

Long's enemies, and critical historians, have focused largely on his corrupt methods and obsession with power, while his supporters, including some historians, have pointed to his accomplishments. In the context of the Great Depression, the public works he constructed loomed large. Long browbeat the creaky Louisiana legislature into enacting his program, which included new highways and brid-

ges, free textbooks, cheaper gas for New Orleans, a new governor's mansion, a new state capitol, and increased appropriations for Louisiana State University. The governor wanted to finance more public works with a massive bond issue presented at a special legislative session in 1930.

UNITED STATES SENATOR

After the legislature balked, Long decided to run for the office of U. S. senator in the 1930 Democratic primary against the incumbent, James E. Ransdell. Ironically, Long based his campaign for national office on state issues, calling the election a referendum on his state program. Long defeated Ransdell easily, his program passed the legislature, and the opposition surrendered. He was truly Kingfish of Louisiana, a nickname he applied to himself after listening to the popular radio program *Amos 'n' Andy*.

At odds with his lieutenant governor, Long did not take his seat in Washington for nearly two years, ostensibly remaining both governor and senator-elect. Even after taking the oath as U.S. senator in 1932, he continued to control Louisiana through his puppet governor, O. K. Allen.

In his brief national career, Long gained notoriety, but little actual power, by emphasizing a single issue, maldistribution of wealth, which he blamed for the Great Depression. The Louisianan worked for the nomination and election of New York Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt because he believed Roosevelt shared his views on breaking up huge fortunes and wealth sharing. The two soon broke, however, because Roosevelt considered Long dangerous, erratic, and a disloyal Democrat. Long came to detest Roosevelt as an aristocrat whose 1932 promise to dismantle large fortunes had been made in bad faith. More important, Long coveted the presidency, but to become president, he had to challenge Roosevelt, which he planned to do in 1936. Long planned to seek the Democratic Party's nomination, failing which he planned to run as a third party candidate, drawing away enough votes from Roosevelt to elect a conservative Republican. After the Republican wrecked the country as Herbert Hoover had purportedly done, the voters would be ready to elect Huey Long in 1940.

Long used the U.S. Senate as a platform for his promises to share the wealth. He failed to enact a single bill; the most votes any of his bills attracted was twenty in a chamber of ninety-six senators. The Louisianan thrilled the galleries with his attacks on millionaires, but the Democratic leadership disliked him. Roosevelt and Long met only twice, and Long was charmed by the New Yorker, but their relationship foundered on competing ambitions. Each loved power too much to coexist comfortably with the other. Roosevelt began funneling New Deal patronage to Long's political opponents in Louisiana and resumed an investigation into tax evasion by Long and his allies that had been initiated by the Hoover administration.

The Kingfish believed he could obtain power by appealing directly to the people, beyond the reach of Roosevelt and the Democratic party. Long delivered radio speeches, published an autobiography, and forecast the actions of a Long presidency in *My First Days in the White House*. Long's most effective tool in national politics was his Share Our Wealth Society, incorporated in 1934. It was based on a plan to solve the economic problems of the nation by restructuring income and assets from the top down. By confiscating yearly income above \$1 million and total assets beyond \$5 million, Long would provide every family with a home, an automobile, and a radio worth at least \$5,000, an annual income of \$2,500, and free college educations. There would also be a veterans' bonus and a war on disease led by the Mayo brothers. No one would pay taxes except millionaires.

All one had to do to join the Share Our Wealth Society was to write to Long. There were no dues, but Huey accepted donations. Members received Long's autobiography, speeches, buttons, and instructions on how to create local affiliates to work for enactment of the plan. Long hired Gerald L. K. Smith, a Shreveport minister and bombastic orator, as his national organizer. The Society gained 200,000 members within a month and by the spring of 1935 boasted seven and a half million members. Long received more mail than all other senators combined, even more than the president. Long hoped that the society would serve as the engine for a potent national vote-gaining machine in 1936,

particularly if Long found allies in other dissidents, such as the radio priest Father Charles E. Coughlin and Dr. Francis E. Townsend, an advocate of pensions for the aged.

LONG'S IMPACT

Long never had the opportunity to test his national political prowess. Returning to Louisiana in September 1935 to whip the Louisiana legislature into line, he was shot in the state capital, probably by a lone assassin, a young physician, Carl Austin Weiss. The dynasty Long founded continued on the state level until 1960, when racial issues replaced the bifactionalism of those who supported and opposed Long's program. Long's influence lasted even longer on the local and national levels, where Long remained a magic name to Louisiana voters. Huey's younger brother Earl served three terms as governor.

The Longs remain controversial and aspects of Longism are still debated. Many do not accept the conclusion that Carl Austin Weiss alone assassinated Huey Long. Some claim Long's bodyguards accidentally or deliberately killed the Kingfish, possibly after Weiss punched him. They point out that Weiss did not fit the typical assassin's profile of an alienated loner, but was a happy young man with much to live for. The 1935 state police investigation that blamed Weiss was reopened in 1993, the murder weapon and some accompanying bullets found, and Weiss's body was exhumed and his remains examined for clues to the assassination. State police captain Don Moreau, who headed the new investigation, concluded that his findings did not change the basic conclusions of the earlier investigation. As to motive, Weiss knew that Long was gerrymandering his father-in-law, Judge Benjamin Henry Pavy, a state judge, out of office; moreover, Weiss might have learned that Long had circulated rumors that the Pavy family was part black.

A further issue is Long's place in history. Early biographers tended to be highly critical, comparing the Kingfish to European fascist leaders. In 1969 historian T. Harry Williams won a Pulitzer Prize for his biography of Long, which was based upon prodigious research that included about three hundred interviews. Williams's depiction of Long as an earli-

er version of a 1960s radical gradually lost favor, although it remains influential. Later biographies by Alan Brinkley, William Ivy Hair, and Glen Jeansonne were more critical of Long's abuses of power in the wake of Watergate and the Vietnam War. Jeansonne has observed that Long might have had bipolar disorder, a chronic mental disorder believed to be inherited through the female line. This observation is based on the facts that Huey's brother Earl was diagnosed with the illness and that Long had classic symptoms: insomnia, supercharged energy, mood changes, rapid speech, and a quick wit coupled with impatience. If this is the case, Long's untreated condition explains in part many of his liabilities and assets, including his lack of inhibition, his charisma, his capacity to hate, and his relentless drive. If so, it might lead scholars to be less judgmental of Long and provide insights into his motivations and accomplishments.

See Also: COUGHLIN, CHARLES; SMITH, GERALD L. K.; TOWNSEND PLAN.

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GLEN JEANSONNE

LOUIS, JOE

Joe Louis (May 13, 1914–April 12, 1981), heavy-weight champion and one of the most admired prizefighters in history, was born near Lafayette, Alabama, the seventh of eight children of farmer Munn Barrow and Lillie Barrow. He first took up the sport of boxing as a young teenager in Detroit, Michigan, where his divorced mother had moved with him and his siblings. He fought as an amateur for two years, establishing a reputation as an extraordinarily gifted boxer and powerful puncher.

Louis turned professional in 1934. Under the direction of his trainer and good friend Jack “Chappie” Blackburn and his managers John Roxborough and Julian Black, Louis fought many memorable bouts and suffered only three losses over a career that spanned seventeen years. He captured the world heavyweight championship in 1937 against James Braddock, and defended the title a record twenty-five times. In 1938 Louis knocked out Max Schmeling in the first round, avenging a loss to the German heavyweight just two years earlier. In 1941 Louis recorded a thrilling last-round knockout of Billy Conn and six years later earned a controversial decision over Jersey Joe Walcott. Louis retired as champion in 1949, but monetary burdens eventually forced him to return to the ring, where he lost to new champions Ezzard Charles and Rocky Marciano.

Louis’s numerous ring triumphs were of great symbolic importance to the African-American com-

munity in particular and American society more generally. Although some African Americans were seemingly troubled by what they viewed as Louis’s acquiescence to the white establishment, the large majority of African Americans considered Louis a champion of heroic proportions. In the throes of the Depression, when white citizens were exhibiting racial intolerance and ignoring the needs of the African-American community, Louis became a much-needed example of black achievement and a symbol of possibility. To African Americans caught in the midst of economic crisis, Louis appeared messianic—a great champion who dramatized the black struggle against white aggression and indifference. African Americans gathered at local stores and in neighbor’s homes to hear the broadcasts of his fights, vicariously shared in his victories, and honored his ring triumphs with literally hundreds of songs and poems. Richard Wright, Charles Johnson, and other African-American intellectuals wrote of being inspired and filled with hope by Louis’s apparent invincibility in the ring. Tellingly, Louis’s ring triumphs were often applauded by whites as well. His 1938 victory over Max Schmeling was crucially important to Americans of all races who viewed the German’s defeat as a symbolic triumph of American values over Nazi racism and totalitarianism. In large measure, Louis became America’s national representative, something no African American, athlete or non-athlete, had ever experienced before. Louis was introduced to American soldiers during World War II as “the first American to K.O. a Nazi.”

Unfortunately, like many boxers, Louis’s life outside the ring was often filled with disappointment and heartache. Married four times, Louis experienced persistent financial problems as a result of bad investments, poor advice, and lack of marketable skills. At one point, he owed some \$1,250,000 in back federal taxes. Once his boxing career was over, Louis attempted to support himself financially and maintain a meaningful existence through a series of jobs and business opportunities. He was for a time a pro wrestler, operated a failed fast-food business, and acted as a front man for boxing promoter James Norris. In 1970, Louis’s life seemingly hit rock bottom and he was committed for five months to a psychiatric hospital. He spent

Joe Louis, 1941. CREDIT: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, CARL VAN VECHTEN COLLECTION. PHOTOGRAPH BY CARL VAN VECHTEN. REPRODUCED BY PERMISSION OF THE ESTATE OF CARL VAN VECHTEN

the last few years of his life as an official greeter at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LEISURE; OWENS, JESSE; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS; SPORTS.

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DAVID K. WIGGINS

LUCE, HENRY

Henry Robinson Luce (April 3, 1898–Feb. 28, 1967), editor and publisher, was one of the most innovative figures in American magazine publishing in the twentieth century. As head of Time Incorporated, Luce presided over an empire that included *Time* magazine, *Fortune*, *Life*, and *Sports Illustrated*, as well as the “March of Time” radio and newsreel programs, book publishing companies, and broadcasting stations.

Born in Tengchow, China, to missionary parents, Luce in later years strongly attacked communism and, in particular, Communist China. After attending boarding school in England and the Hotchkiss School in Connecticut, he graduated from Yale University in 1920 and studied at Oxford University. In 1923 Luce co-founded *Time* as a new kind of weekly newsmagazine with an opinionated style.

In spite of the Depression Luce succeeded at media ventures. He had a sure sense of his audience’s interests. Though Luce was surprised by the stock market crash in 1929, he went ahead and launched *Fortune*, an expensive monthly magazine, in February 1930. Aimed at business executives, the magazine succeeded by reporting on American capitalism’s surmounting economic woes. Recognizing public interest in broadcasting and film, Luce started a weekly radio show in 1931, followed by a monthly newsreel in 1935. Both were called “The March of Time,” and reenacted news events. His greatest achievement was creation of the immensely popular *Life* magazine, begun in 1936, which specialized in photojournalistic essays that appealed to ordinary Americans. Initially a supporter of Franklin D. Roosevelt, Luce disagreed with New Deal ideas on business and became an avid Republican, using his publications to attack Roosevelt’s third-term reelection bid in 1940. His second wife, Clare Boothe Luce, a playwright, was a Republican member of Congress from 1943 to 1947. Although well known, Luce himself had little influence on public policies during the Depression.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS.

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MAURINE H. BEASLEY

LYNCHINGS

Lynching, the practice of illegal killing by a mob of three or more persons motivated by notions of justice, race, or tradition, persisted into the 1930s. The rate of lynching had been declining since the first decade of the twentieth century. However, during the early and mid-Depression years, the practice briefly surged and several well-publicized mob killings occurred outside of the South. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) continued efforts begun in the 1910s to lobby for a federal anti-lynching bill. Although southern Democrats in the Senate thwarted the passage of anti-lynching legislation, lynching waned in the latter years of the Great Depression due to large-scale trends that discouraged lynching violence.

Thousands of mob killings occurred during the Reconstruction era after the Civil War and again at the end of the nineteenth century. Lynching was concentrated in the South, where white southerners collectively murdered blacks they accused of resisting white supremacy and of interracial criminality. Yet a significant number of lynchings also occurred in the West and Midwest, as whites skeptical of legal process collectively killed whites, Mexicans, Native Americans, Chinese, African-Americans, and Sicilians. After a great frenzy of lynchings in the 1890s, the frequency of mob violence had steadily declined, with a brief exception during the heightened social and racial tensions of the World War I era.

The United States averaged nearly seventeen reported lynchings per year in the mid to late 1920s, but the number of mob killings spiraled to twenty-one in 1930, to twenty-eight in 1933, and then to twenty in 1935, with lesser tallies of mob victims in



Men and women stand silently in front of the Daughters of the American Revolution Memorial Hall in Washington, D.C., in 1934 to protest the failure of the attorney general's national conference on crime to include lynching on its program. BETTMANN/CORBIS

the years in between. Most of the lynchings in the early 1930s occurred in the South. But highly-publicized lynchings performed by crowds of thousands in Marion, Indiana, in August 1930; in Maryville, Missouri, in January 1931; in Princess Anne, Maryland, in October 1933; and in San Jose, California, in November 1933 raised fears that mob violence was not only growing in frequency but also spreading once again beyond the boundaries of Dixie. However, after 1935, the rate of lynching declined markedly; an average of six persons a year were reported lynched between 1936 and 1940.

The dramatic increase in lynchings in 1933 inspired the NAACP, under the leadership of Walter White, to push anew for Congress to pass anti-lynching legislation. The effort in the mid to late 1930s focused on the Costigan-Wagner and Gavan anti-lynching bills, which stipulated fines and prison terms for law officers that abetted mobs or

failed to protect prisoners, and fines for counties where lynchings occurred. Anti-lynching bills passed in the House in 1937 and 1940, but were defeated in the Senate by filibuster, or threat of filibuster, by southern Democrats. Some of the failure to enact a federal anti-lynching law was due to the tepid public support offered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Although Roosevelt occasionally spoke publicly against lynching and at times voiced support for such legislation behind the scenes, he refused to alienate southern Democrats by officially endorsing these measures. The federal anti-lynching bill was also hindered by the ambivalence of southern white liberals who opposed lynching, such as Dr. Will Alexander and the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, and Jesse Daniel Ames and the Association of Southern Women for the Prevention of Lynching, who feared that a federal approach would alienate white southerners.

The Great Depression initially precipitated social disruption and a heightened ambivalence toward governmental authority that may have contributed to the surge in lynching. Yet long-term trends that discouraged lynching continued and intensified during the era. An emerging mass culture and media integrated the country and sapped the localistic tendencies in which lynching had flourished; lynchings were now immediately publicized throughout the country and could be an embarrassing stain on a state's image. By the end of the decade, lynching went underground, as smaller secretive mobs performed the fewer collective killings that occurred. Moreover, through the New Deal, Americans in the 1930s came to accept a greater role for the federal government, state authority, and law in their lives. Lethal punishment performed by a mob without due process of law came increasingly to be seen as an unbearable anachronism. Finally, the liberal currents of the New Deal contributed to an increasing awareness of how racial injustice,

particularly the oppression of African Americans in the South, mocked the ideals of American democracy. Happily, 1935 would be the last year of the twentieth century in which more than ten persons were lynched in the United States.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ANTI-LYNCHING LEGISLATION; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP).

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MICHAEL J. PFEIFER



MARCANTONIO, VITO

Vito Anthony Marcantonio (December 10, 1902–August 9, 1954) was the most successful U.S. radical politician of the twentieth century. The eldest child of a first-generation immigrant working-class family, Marcantonio was elected to Congress from New York’s ethnically Italian and Puerto Rican East Harlem district; he held office longer than any other third party radical, serving seven terms from 1934 to 1950. Colorful and controversial, Marcantonio captured national prominence as a powerful orator and brilliant parliamentarian. Often allied with the U.S. Communist Party, he was an advocate of civil rights, civil liberties, labor unions, and Puerto Rican independence. He supported social security and unemployment legislation, calling for what later was called a *living wage* standard. And he annually introduced anti-lynching and anti-poll tax legislation a decade before it became respectable. Marcantonio also opposed the House Un-American Activities Committee, red baiting, and anti-Semitism, and he fought for the rights of the foreign-born Americans.

Marcantonio was a shrewd tactician in the labyrinth of New York politics, managing the mayoral election in 1933 of Fiorello La Guardia, organizing political coalitions, and ultimately becoming Manhattan’s preeminent political power broker as lead-

er of the American Labor Party (ALP). Like his mentor La Guardia, Marcantonio first ran for office in 1934 as a Republican, in opposition to the corrupt Democratic Tammany machine. Marcantonio was defeated for reelection in 1936 in the Roosevelt New Deal landslide (an irony, in that Marcantonio was among the most fervent supporters of New Deal legislation). Out of office and growing more radical, he served two years as president of International Labor Defense, the Communist-aligned civil rights and trade union support organization known for its defense of the eight “Scottsboro Boys.” In 1938 he returned to Congress, running as both the Republican and ALP candidate, and he became an enrolled member of the ALP. Although Marcantonio developed a system of service for his impoverished constituents that was nationally acclaimed, his focus remained local. He never abandoned his neighborhood or his friends—even some who were organized crime figures. Marcantonio’s career was finally destroyed by the anti-Communism of the Cold War 1950s.

In many ways Marcantonio was an exemplar of the insurgent New Yorker when the city itself was a metaphor for national aspirations. In the post-Depression, postwar years, those visions were lost—transfigured as much by middle-class affluence and suburbanization as by anti-unionism (Marcantonio was one of the House floor managers

in the failed fight against the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act) and anti-Communism. Marcantonio continued to plump for political empowerment and equal opportunity. He demanded practical improvements in the quality of life: affordable housing, quality education, health care, and the right to a job. Despite a fervid campaign for the mayoralty of New York in 1949, Marcantonio lost. In 1950 he was defeated for reelection to Congress, but only when Democrats and Republicans united behind another candidate. Out of office, Marcantonio served as defense counsel for leftist union officials, Puerto Rican nationalists, and, most notably, for W. E. B. Du Bois. Planning a comeback, Marcantonio died of a heart attack in 1954 at the age of fifty-one.

See Also: AMERICAN LABOR PARTY; DU BOIS, W. E. B.; CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; LA GUARDIA, FIORELLO H.

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JOHN J. SIMON

MARX BROTHERS

A madcap comedy team, the Marx Brothers—Leo (Chico, 1887–1961); Adolph (Harpo, 1888–1964); Julius Henry (Groucho, 1890–1977); and Herbert (Zeppo, 1901–1979)—began their careers in vaudeville before becoming motion picture stars in the 1930s. Born in New York City, the sons of German-Jewish immigrants, the brothers received a boost in their career from their uncle, Al Shean of the comedy duo "Gallagher and Shean." Billed as "The Four Marx Brothers" they worked in vaudeville until 1925, when they starred in the Broadway production of *The Cocoanuts*, a musical comedy written ex-

pressly for them by George S. Kaufman and Irving Berlin. Another Broadway hit followed with *Animal Crackers* in 1928. Though their screwball, improvisational style of comedy had evolved in front of the live audiences of vaudeville and Broadway, the Marx brothers made a successful transition to motion pictures with the release of a film version of *The Cocoanuts* (1929), followed a year later by *Animal Crackers* (1930). Their first two films were shot at Paramount's Long Island studios so that the brothers could continue to work on the New York stage. But for their third film, *Monkey Business* (1931), they relocated to Hollywood, California, where they would spend the rest of their careers.

Throughout the 1930s the Marx Brothers produced a string of successful motion pictures that rank among the most celebrated of Depression-era comedies: *Horse Feathers* (1932), *Duck Soup* (1933), *A Night at the Opera* (1935), *A Day at the Races* (1937), *Room Service* (1938), *At the Circus* (1939), and *Go West* (1940). They also displayed distinct comic personas: Chico was a wisecracking clown with an Italian accent; Groucho, with grease-paint mustache and cigar, often impersonated authority figures, maintaining a constant stream of one-liners and comic asides; Harpo, garbed in fright wig, trench coat, and crushed top hat, renounced speech altogether, preferring a bicycle horn and an absurdist sense of visual humor; Zeppo, the youngest brother, was the good-looking foil and occasional love interest in their films. Chico and Harpo were also accomplished musicians, and each of their films included a scene in which they performed, often to audiences of adoring children. Such moments punctuate the fast-paced verbal and visual humor of their films with intervals of musical and emotional poignancy. But the popularity of the Marx Brothers was based primarily upon the team's ability to lampoon authority figures and skewer the pretensions of the wealthy and powerful.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; HUMOR.

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Groucho Marx (standing) with Chico and Harpo (sitting right) in the 1937 film *A Day At the Races*. BETTMANN/CORBIS

Marx, Groucho, and Richard J. Anobile. *The Marx Brothers Scrapbook*. 1973.

Marx, Harpo. *Harpo Speaks!* 1961.

JOHN PARRIS SPRINGER

MARXISM

The era of the Great Depression saw the rejuvenation of Marxism as a legitimate article of political faith, but also the emergence of Marxist theory as an intellectual and even academic endeavor for the first time. The predictions of Marxism seemed, throughout the decade, to have been legitimated by the severity of economic decline and the scant pros-

pects for capitalist revival, and intellectuals as well as many workers, including pockets of African Americans along with immigrants and the children of immigrants, were drawn toward various parts of the Left. During the early Depression years, movements of unemployed workers and campus antiwar activities were among the most dramatic manifestations, yielding to struggles for industrial unionism. The Socialist and Communist parties held onto only a small fraction of those who moved in and around their extended circles; but they (especially the Communists, from 1935 onward) were able to exert influence far beyond their numbers by providing a framework and talented activists.

An acute section of the generation of intellectuals coming of age during the 1920s and early 1930s

plunged into organizing activities on broad fronts, trained themselves or were trained in college classes or leftwing academies, and even studied the Marxist classics while preparing to write films. But creative approaches had only begun in various theoretical areas when the era came crashing to an end. War approached and future repression lay dead ahead.

Ideas about Marxism in the United States before the 1930s had been primitive at best, mainly diluted reiterations of European views since the 1870s. Communist emphasis on theory was negated by the drift toward rigidity and the virtual exclusion of competing views from circulation. The first (non-Yiddish) Marxist journal of note, *The Marxist Quarterly*, quickly dissolved over political differences, and a successor of sorts, *Science and Society*, survived only by adapting to shifting Communist moods.

Yet, on a practical level, assorted adaptations of Marxism rapidly became extraordinarily useful in many ways. The Communist International's shift to the Popular Front in 1935 legitimated positive approaches to American historic themes, and the burst of creativity that spread from radical theater to Works Progress Administration arts programs, modern dance, and even Hollywood inspired thousands of the nation's most energetic young artists and intellectuals. The rash of dramatic strikes in 1934 and the subsequent rise of industrial unionism seemed to lend further credence to the central Marxist notion of working-class self-realization.

These successful uses of Marxist ideas brought a small handful of intellectual classics. W. E. B. DuBois's *Black Reconstruction* (1935) stands foremost, but several other works can also be counted as having fairly predicted the trends of Marxist thought to follow, including Sidney Hook's *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* (1933), an early exploration of the master's theoretical background; Granville Hicks's *The Great Tradition: An Interpretation of American Literature since the Civil War* (1933); and arguably the first edition of John Howard Lawson's classic *Theory and Technique of Playwriting* (1936). The selected proceedings of the League of American Writers and Congress of American Artists, as well as the pages of better-remembered and less-

remembered journals, respectively, the *Partisan Review* and *New Theater*, contain much fascinating and highly creative discussion.

Marxism had not entered the mainstream of intellectual life in the United States as it had in many other societies. But its influences could be surprisingly subtle, as it was in the shrinking but still considerable world of Yiddish culture, or within immigrant working-class groups from Eastern or Southern Europe and from Puerto Rico. Marxism had entered the wide world of arts and criticism, not only at upper levels but most importantly at the levels of popular presentation, theater and film to music (both folk and jazz) and murals. In a society where "politics" remained suspect and popular culture substituted for political discussion, this counted greatly. Marxism deeply influenced many of the Depression era's most important artists and intellectuals, including Dashiell Hammett, Dorothy Parker, Clifford Odets, Woody Guthrie, Aaron Copland, and DuBois. It was, in short, a monumental advance in a short time.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; DU BOIS, W. E. B.; LITERATURE; POPULAR FRONT.

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PAUL BUHLE

MASON, LUCY RANDOLPH

Lucy Randolph Mason (July 26, 1882–May 6, 1959) was a southern reformer and labor rights activist. As general secretary for the National Consumers' League (NCL) from 1932 to 1937, Mason linked the women's reform work of the Progressive years to the broader labor and civil rights activism of the New Deal era. She saw the New Deal as an opportunity to secure protective and minimum wage laws for workers. When the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) launched its drive to organize

southern textile workers, Mason became the publicity and public relations representative for the CIO in the South. She belonged to the group of progressive southerners who believed interracial unionism, along with New Deal reforms, could transform the region's politics and race relations.

Born in Alexandria, Virginia, Mason was the daughter of an Episcopal minister and was a descendant of George Mason, author of the Virginia Declaration of Rights, the model for the Bill of Rights. Mason, however, emphasized that she had not been "born with a silver spoon" in her mouth. Her parents instilled in her strong religious convictions and a sense of social responsibility. As a young woman, Mason participated in women's suffrage activities and became interested in improving conditions for workers. Mason served as industrial secretary for the Richmond Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) from 1914 to 1918, and as general secretary of the Richmond YWCA from 1923 to 1932.

By 1937, Mason desired to leave the NCL and return to the South to work directly with workers and interracial groups. As CIO public relations director, Mason traveled throughout the region, speaking to union members, investigating civil rights violations, and educating local community leaders about the labor movement. Mason also served on the Southern Policy Committee that wrote the *Report on the Economic Conditions in the South*, and she helped to organize the Southern Conference for Human Welfare in 1938.

See Also: CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW).

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LARISSA M. SMITH

MAVERICK, MAURY

Fontaine Maury Maverick (October 23, 1895–June 7, 1954) was a U.S. Congressman, mayor of San Antonio, Texas, and a federal bureaucrat during World War II. His last name described his political agenda. Maverick was a liberal Texas Democrat who vociferously advocated civil rights for Mexican Americans and African Americans, defended the rights of blue-collar workers, and argued against the centralization of the economy. His political style was often abrasive, winning him few allies and making it difficult to transform his vision of social justice into legislative reality.

After being admitted to the state bar of Texas, serving with distinction in World War I, and undertaking a business career, Maverick became the tax collector for Bexar County, Texas, winning election to that post in 1929 and 1931. He spent much of the early Depression working for local relief. His efforts included the establishment in 1932 of the Diga Colony, a communally organized relief camp for World War I veterans. The camp was built about five miles from San Antonio on land Maverick leased from Humble Oil Company for one dollar a year. Housing for the residents was constructed from abandoned boxcars. Maverick hoped that the residents would be radicalized by their poverty and would work for long-term systemic reform; he was disgruntled when he discovered that they cared more for food, employment, and shelter. The Diga Colony disbanded in 1933.

In 1934, Maverick was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he became known both as an avid New Dealer and as a leader of insurgent liberals and radicals who found the president's relief agenda too tame. His efforts were largely rhetorical; however, he did force the U.S. Census Bureau to count the Mexican-American population of his district as white, rather than "negro." Furthermore, he was a constant supporter of federal anti-lynching legislation and other civil rights measures. Defeated for reelection in 1938 because he angered conservative power brokers within San Antonio and the state, Maverick returned to San Antonio where he was elected mayor in 1939. Promising expanded public housing and public

health programs, Maverick accomplished little because conservatives in the city blocked his efforts. His support for a Communist speaker's right to address a local audience ended his political career as mayor. He was defeated in his reelection bid. Maverick spent the war years working with various federal agencies, including a stint as director of the Smaller War Plants Corporation. He returned to Texas after the war and was a vocal leader of the liberal faction of the state's Democratic Party.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1934; LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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NANCY BECK YOUNG

MCWILLIAMS, CAREY

Carey McWilliams (December 13, 1905–June 27, 1980) was a writer, lawyer, and administrator, and one of the most important leftists in Depression-era California. McWilliams was born in Colorado, but moved to southern California in 1922. Like many other intellectuals, McWilliams became attracted to left-wing ideas during the Great Depression. At the beginning of the 1930s, McWilliams worked as a lawyer at a conservative Los Angeles firm, but he wrote literary criticism in his free time. By the end of the decade, he was a prominent activist, journalist, and government official who was well known for his advocacy of civil liberties, racial equality, and labor unions.

McWilliams's involvement in California's agricultural labor conflicts transformed his life. The organization of farm workers in the state during the 1930s met with resistance so intense that McWil-

liams later dubbed it "farm fascism," referring to the brutal and illegal suppression of a predominantly minority workforce. In the early 1930s, under the auspices of the American Civil Liberties Union, McWilliams performed pro bono legal services for Mexican-American farm workers. In the mid-1930s, he traveled across the state reporting for magazines on the conditions of agricultural labor. In 1939, he published *Factories in the Field*, a best-selling history of farm labor in California. The book received widespread attention as the nation was then becoming attuned to the plight of California's Dust Bowl migrants and it was seen by many as the nonfiction counterpart of John Steinbeck's wildly popular novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, which was published the same year. Yet, unlike Steinbeck, McWilliams stressed the structural and racial aspects of the exploitation of migrant farm workers.

Though best known for *Factories in the Field*, McWilliams's activities were not limited to his work on agricultural labor. For instance, during the 1930s, he advocated full citizenship rights for Asian immigrants, wrote a pamphlet criticizing anti-Semites in Los Angeles, helped organize the left-wing Western Writers' Congress, and worked with Hollywood's Popular Front liberals to support the antifascist side in the Spanish Civil War. In 1939, California governor Culbert Olsen appointed McWilliams chief of the Division of Immigration and Housing, a post he held until 1943. McWilliams's radicalization during the Great Depression shaped the rest of his long and important career. In the 1940s, he wrote a number of significant works on the issue of race in America, notably *Brothers under the Skin* (1943), and also authored two important histories of California. In 1950, McWilliams left California for New York City, where he served as editor for the liberal weekly *The Nation* from 1955 to 1975.

See Also: LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; MIGRATORY WORKERS.

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DANIEL GEARY

MEANS, GARDINER C.

Economist Gardiner Coit Means (June 8, 1896–February 15, 1988) challenged orthodox economic ideas about corporations, prices, and economic planning. Born in Windham, Connecticut, as the son of a Congregational minister, Means entered Harvard University, graduating in absentia in 1918. After joining the army in 1917, Means worked for the Near East Relief helping Armenians in Turkey after the war. In the early 1920s, he founded a blanket making company. In 1924, Means went back to Harvard to study economics formally, earning a master's degree in 1927 and a Ph.D. in 1933.

Means accepted a 1927 invitation from Adolf A. Berle, Jr., at Columbia Law School to assist in researching *The Modern Corporation and Private Property* (1932). They argued that by 1930, two hundred U.S. corporations controlled half of corporate wealth and 43 percent of corporate income. While only two thousand men out of 125 million Americans managed these corporations, real control lay in the hands of several hundred managers. The corporate revolution separated ownership and control. Concentration and control by managers (not stockholders) suggested that competition, individualism, self-regulation, and stockholder control were outmoded.

In the 1933 to 1934 period, while working with the Department of Agriculture and the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration, Means researched prices to develop his theory of "administered pricing." Two forms of pricing existed. Small businesses and farmers changed prices in response to changing market demand. Concentration in some industries, on the other hand, meant managers set prices based on profit concerns rather than market demand or price competition. Farm prices had declined drastically since

1929, yet many industrial prices had remained stable due to administered pricing. Social responsibility and even market forces had given way to profit maximization.

Between 1934 and 1940, Means worked with the Industrial Committee of the New Deal planning agency (the National Resources Planning Board). Building an economic model based on research on consumer income and industrial structure, Means argued for government industrial policy making. He wanted to adopt multi-industry planning to counterbalance corporate control. After New Deal planners opted for compensatory spending policy, Means went to work for the fiscal division of the Bureau of the Budget in 1940 and 1941.

After 1941, Means engaged in research, writing, and speaking. Between 1943 and 1958, he worked for the Committee for Economic Development, a private sector economic research institution. On February 15, 1988, he died in Vienna, Virginia. Means's work on corporate concentration, separation of ownership and control, administered pricing, and national economic planning represented an alternate path for New Deal economic policy.

See Also: BERLE, ADOLF A., JR.; CONSUMERISM; NEW DEAL.

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Andrew Mellon (left) with Ogden Mills outside the United States Capitol in Washington, D.C., in 1927. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

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PATRICK D. REAGAN

MELLON, ANDREW

Andrew William Mellon (March 24, 1855–August 26, 1937) was a financier, public official, art collector, and philanthropist who was best known as the longest serving secretary of the treasury in U.S. history. Mellon was lauded during much of his tenure

as the greatest treasury secretary since Alexander Hamilton.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, one of five surviving sons of Thomas and Sarah Jane Negley Mellon, he attended Western University of Pennsylvania (later the University of Pittsburgh), before joining his father's private banking firm in 1874; he assumed control of T. Mellon and Sons in 1882. Six years later, Mellon became trust executive for the \$4 million family fund. The following year, he helped found Union Trust Company and Union Savings Bank of Pittsburgh.

Mellon financed and advised new enterprises in steel, coal, coke, oil, aluminum, and synthetic abrasives. In 1900, he married Nora McMullen of the Guinness Stout family. They had two children—Ailsa born in 1901, and Paul in 1907—before their divorce in 1912. In 1902 T. Mellon and Sons became the Mellon National Bank, which rapidly came to dominate financial institutions in western Pennsylvania; it later merged with Union Trust. As a memorial to their father, Mellon and his brother established the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research in 1913 to foster cooperation between scientific research and industry to create new and improved consumer products; in 1967, the institute merged with the Carnegie Institute of Technology to form Carnegie-Mellon University.

Active in local and regional Republican Party politics, Mellon led local fundraising activities and served as a delegate to the presidential nominating convention in 1920. President Warren G. Harding chose him as secretary of the treasury, a post he retained during the administrations of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover.

Harding and Coolidge deferred to Mellon on financial policy. Mellon's primary goals, articulated in the "Mellon Plan" presented to the House Committee on Ways and Means in November 1923, called for reduction of the national debt, curtailment of government expenditures, and lowering of taxes. He further explicated his ideas in 1924 in *Taxation: The People's Business*. Mellon believed that reducing taxes on those in the upper income brackets would encourage investment that would lead to increased production and, with it, more jobs and an improved standard of living. The Revenue Acts of

1924, 1926, and 1928 significantly altered the tax structure; they reduced inheritance taxes from 40 to 20 percent, repealed capital stock and gift taxes, reduced income taxes by 25 percent, and dropped the surtax by more than half. The national debt had exceeded \$24 billion in 1920; by the end of Mellon's time at the Department of the Treasury, it was down to \$16 billion. Government expenditures had been reduced by half. Meanwhile, corporate profits and dividends rose by more than 60 percent between 1921 and 1929.

Consistent with his opposition to what he regarded as government interference in the economy, Mellon favored limitations on antitrust activities and resisted federal involvement in the development of hydroelectric power at Muscle Shoals in Alabama, the problems of particular industries, and the mounting agricultural depression.

Mellon remained aloof from the stock market, both in his personal investments and in policy matters. Since the market was subject to the laws of the state of New York rather than the federal government, Mellon found no need to comment publicly on runaway stock prices. Congressional investigation of questionable banking and investment practices did not begin until 1932, as his time at the Department of the Treasury ended.

With the onset of the Great Depression, President Hoover resisted Mellon's advice to allow wholesale liquidation. Hoping instead to stabilize business, industry, banking, labor, and agriculture, Hoover increasingly relied on Undersecretary Ogden Mills, who was named secretary when Mellon became ambassador to Great Britain in February 1932, a post he held until the change of administrations in 1933. While in London, Mellon proved helpful to American oil interests in the Middle East.

Government investigations of Mellon's finances in the 1930s revealed his enormous wealth, but suits for back taxes uncovered no fraud and a grand jury refused to indict him. A collector of fine art since 1880, Mellon devoted his last years to the creation of the National Gallery of Art. He provided initial funds, was influential in the selection of architect John Russell Pope, supervised construction of the building on the mall in Washington, D.C., established a foundation to maintain the Gal-

lery, and donated a collection of art valued at more than \$35 million. The National Gallery opened in 1941, with Mellon's longtime assistant David Edward Finley as its first director. Mellon's children continued his benefactions to the National Gallery.

See Also: BUSINESSMEN; LAISSEZ-FAIRE; STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929).

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SUSAN ESTABROOK KENNEDY

MEMORIAL DAY MASSACRE

In the midst of the Great Depression many industrial workers clung to their vision of the American dream while continuing their daily struggles for survival. To achieve both goals they turned to strikes, unionization, and labor politics. However, these initiatives provoked violent reactions by some big businessmen and their allies. The Little Steel Strike of 1937, which included the Memorial Day massacre, exemplified this trend.

Although violence characterized many labor struggles during the 1930s, the Memorial Day massacre became a major and enduring symbol, particularly to partisans of the Committee for Industrial Organizations (CIO), of a system that condoned the use of firearms by company guards and police in subduing heroic and peaceful working-class demonstrators. Most workers at Republic Steel's South Chicago mill struck as a protest against their terrible working conditions and the autocratic de-

meanor of company president Tom Girdler. Girdler not only refused to sign a written contract with the Steelworkers Organizing Committee (SWOC), but he used nonstriking workers to continue production. In addition, company officials and the Chicago police collaborated on a policy to protect the new labor force, to stifle mass picketing, and to defeat the strikers.

Lacking sufficient resources to cope with management's wealth and power, the strikers and SWOC sought external allies. They contacted President Franklin Roosevelt, but he rejected their request for a federal investigation. Chicago mayor Edward Kelly's support of the city's police added to the strikers' woes.

Nevertheless, on Memorial Day over fifteen hundred strikers, family members, and supporters demonstrated for the right of strikers to picket peacefully. Well-armed guards and a large contingent of Chicago police confronted them. Soon a few rock throwers targeted a cluster of police, who responded with tear gas and gunfire. Some marchers evaded the police, but ten demonstrators died and sixty more suffered severe wounds. All the police escaped death and serious injury.

The incident climaxed a series of clashes between workers and the police, and heightened their mutual antagonism. Both parties sought to gain public approval; in this contest, the police had decisive advantages, including the support of Mayor Kelly, the approval of the state's attorney, and the concurrence of the coroner's jury. These sources legitimated the self-image of the police as innocent victims of a violent mob unleashed by the inflammatory rhetoric of communists and other "outside agitators." Newspapers, especially the *Chicago Tribune*, disseminated this official version of the incident, which won widespread acceptance from the mainstream press, the public, and members of Congress.

The strikers and the SWOC gained support from John L. Lewis and other top CIO leaders, from the magazines the *Nation* and the *New Republic*, and from Chicago liberals and progressive clergy. Senator Robert M. La Follette Jr.'s Subcommittee on the Violation of Free Speech and the Rights of Labor, which was investigating the denial of civil liberties

to dissidents, provided confirmation of the strikers' criticism. Many committee witnesses, workers, and journalists, rejected the police version of the incident. However, the most dramatic evidence supporting the strikers' perspective was a Paramount newsreel that graphically displayed police violence and showed that many of the dead and wounded had injuries on their backs. Nevertheless, this evidence failed to persuade the public and the majority of politicians because of the late release of the newsreel footage and the continuing adherence of the mainstream press to the official version.

The Memorial Day massacre and its aftermath seriously undermined the South Chicago strike, contributed to strike losses in other venues, and damaged the reputation of the CIO. The massacre joined the Railroad Strike of 1877 and the Haymarket affair of 1886 as prime examples of the pro-business sympathies and propensity for violence of the Chicago police. Finally, the partnership of Lewis and Roosevelt, best exemplified by the 1936 presidential election, began to unravel as Lewis supported the strikers, while Roosevelt condemned both sides. In response, Lewis castigated Roosevelt for his failure to see that the election and the strike were interconnected elements of their mutual fight against "economic royalists," Roosevelt's term for authoritarian and greedy big businessmen.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; LITTLE STEEL STRIKE; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC); STRIKES.

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IRWIN M. MARCUS

MEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

In one of his more memorable lines, Franklin D. Roosevelt spoke in a 1932 campaign radio address of “the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid.” In fact, large numbers of men during the Great Depression had good reason to feel forgotten—or worse.

FORGOTTEN MEN?

The Great Depression had, of course, extremely adverse effects on large fractions of the population of both sexes, but those effects were not entirely alike. The types of employment that had traditionally been classified as “men’s work,” particularly manufacturing jobs in heavy industry, were hit especially hard by the economic collapse and a resultant sharp drop in demand for most manufactured products. Many of the occupations previously defined as “women’s work,” on the other hand, such as teaching, clerical work, and domestic service, were not as hard hit. This differential left men facing problems beyond the direct economic ones that their loss of income produced.

It has often been argued that men’s roles in society have to be artificially created and so are fragile and in constant danger. “It is impossible to strip [the woman’s] life of meaning as completely as the life of a man can be stripped,” anthropologist Margaret Mead wrote in 1932. For many men, the Great Depression went a long way toward stripping their lives of meaning. What had traditionally given meaning to men’s lives were their roles as providers and protectors. Unemployment—or even the serious threat of soon becoming jobless, a potentiality that could be readily seen all around the men who did manage to hang onto their positions—quickly eroded one of these key components of male self-definition. If a man could not provide, was he really a man?

As John Steinbeck put it in *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), men are more “breakable” than women. “Women and children knew deep in themselves that no misfortune was too great to bear if their men were whole,” Steinbeck wrote. “The women

watched the men, watched to see whether the break had come at last.”

For many men in the 1930s, the break did come. Men who could not provide for their families during the economic Depression often fell into psychological depression. “Pa and Uncle John standing helplessly gazing at the sick man” at the end of Steinbeck’s novel symbolizes the situation in which many men felt the Depression had left them. The women, Steinbeck indicated, could continue to do what they were supposed to do, which the author symbolized by having Rose of Sharon breast-feed an old man. The men, though, felt helpless. “I ain’t no good any more,” Pa Joad says earlier in the novel. “Funny! Woman takin’ over the fambly. Woman sayin’ we’ll do this here, an’ we’ll go there. An’ I don’t even care.”

MEN AT HOME AND ON THE ROAD

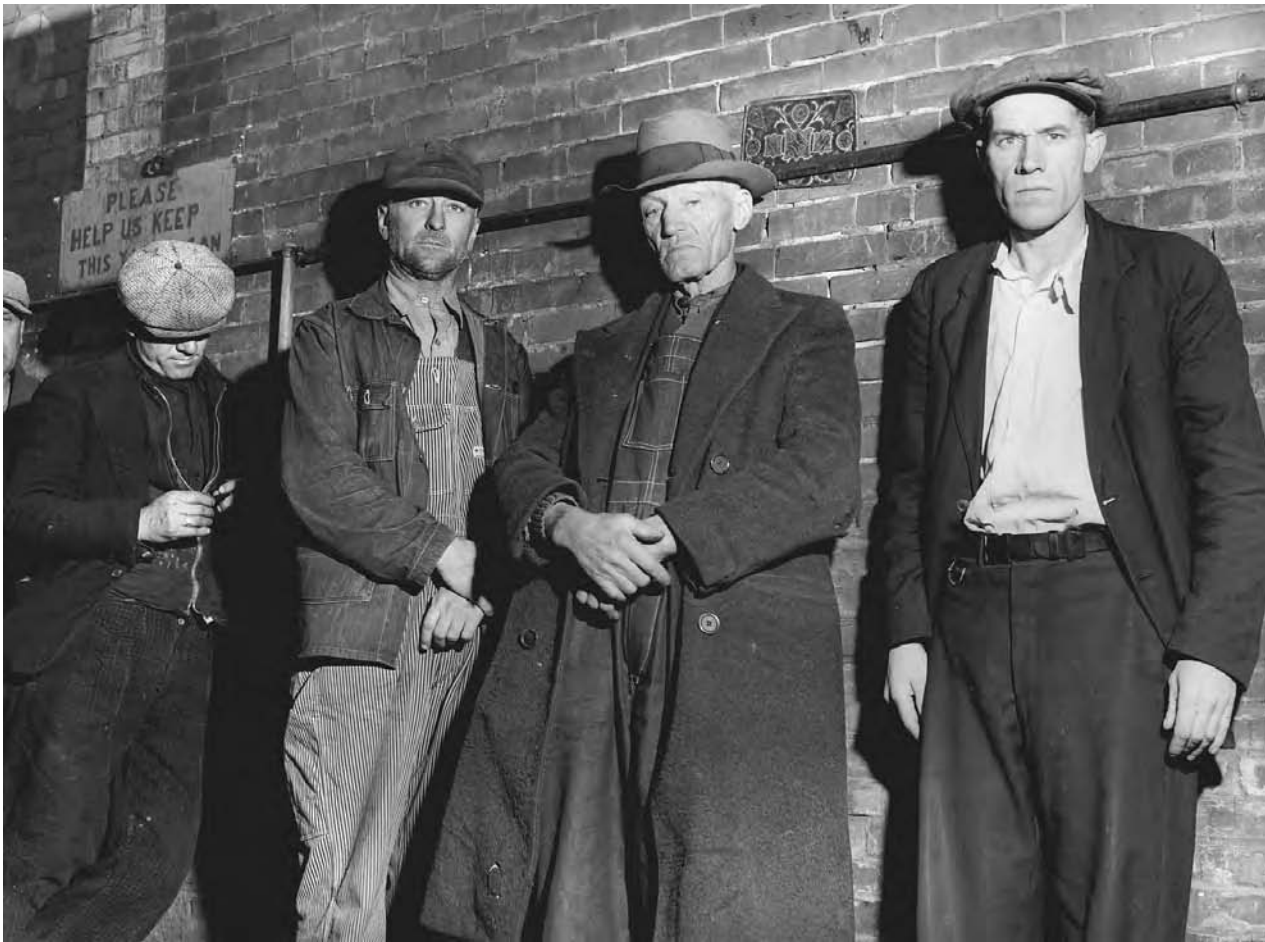
Filled with self-blame, their sense of being “real men” beaten down, many men spent more time at home, in the sphere that was traditionally the woman’s place. Their presence there both increased the chances for friction between spouses and underscored the man’s apparent inability to fulfill his expected role. He would not, after all, be hanging around at home during normal working hours if he were doing what a “real man” was expected to do.

“My father he staying home,” a twelve-year-old Chicago boy wrote in a 1936 letter to the president and first lady that nicely captures the desperate and unaccustomed position into which many American men fell during the Depression. “All the time he’s crying because he can’t find work. I told him why are you crying daddy, and daddy said why shouldn’t I cry when there is nothing in the house. I feel sorry for him.” A man whose son feels sorry for him is not one who is likely to see himself as a “man” in the traditional sense.

Many married men took to the road, initially seeking work, but also escaping from the reminders that home and family constituted of their lack of success in their expected roles. Although most husbands who left home to try to find work presumably did so with the intention of returning, it was not unusual for them to disappear permanently. Desertion by men of their families increased markedly during the 1930s.



During the Depression many fathers became desperate to provide for their children. This young father, a Missouri sharecropper, was evicted from his farm in 1939 after drought caused his crops to fail. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION



Transient men wait in line for the evening meal at a Dubuque, Iowa, mission in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

For those men who were not yet married, avoiding such responsibilities at a time when they had scant prospects of being able to meet them often seemed to be the most prudent course. And many young women did not seek to marry men who could not fulfill their traditional role. “I don’t want to marry. I don’t want any children. So they all say. No children. No marriage,” writer Meridel LeSueur said of young women in a 1932 article. “The man is helpless now,” she wrote. “He cannot provide. If he propagates, he cannot take care of his young.”

A WORLD WITH NO PLACE FOR KNIGHTS

Men under such circumstances longed to return to what they believed to be the proper role for

their sex. As “forgotten men,” they wanted to be remembered—and restored to what they took to be their rightful position. That desire of men during the years of the Depression for a return to “the way things ought to be” in terms of the traditional roles of the sexes can be seen in a wide variety of the decade’s popular culture. In the late-1930s Los Angeles depicted in Raymond Chandler’s classic detective novel, *The Big Sleep*, Philip Marlowe finds himself in an environment that does not value traditional male virtues. He yearns for a world with a place for knights—a world in which men can play their roles as protectors, a world of damsels in distress, a world in which there are two kinds of women and a man can separate the virgins from the whores. He wants to be able to live up to his ideal-



Many unemployed men found work with the Civilian Conservation Corps. This CCC member planted trees as part of a reforestation project in Montana's Lolo National Forest in 1933. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

ized male role, which he perfectly expresses as: "I work at it, lady. I don't play at it." To his deep dismay, he finds instead that "knights had no meaning in this game. It wasn't a game for knights." The game in which men found themselves by the 1930s was one in which the male-drawn line between virgins and whores had been blurred to the point where the only women in distress seemed to be whores. Chandler does not give us any of the more complex women who fit into neither category: From his binary perspective, if the weak, pure, helpless virgins are gone, all women must be whores. What Chandler wanted was what so many other men in the 1930s wanted: that people would "Remember My Forgotten Man." The song of that

title, from the Warner Brothers movie *Gold Diggers of 1933*, well stated the male view of the way things ought to be: "Ever since the world began, a woman's got to have a man."

Men who felt threatened and insecure in their masculinity were prone to lash out, and a common target of their wrath was women. Women, Steinbeck wrote, "knew that a man so hurt and perplexed may turn in anger, even on people he loves." In his 1937 song, "Me and the Devil Blues," Mississippi bluesman Robert Johnson sang, "I'm gonna beat my woman, till I'm satisfied." The long-standing denial of the customary perquisites of manhood that led some African-American males to express such sentiments was spreading to a much

larger segment of the male population as unemployment undercut the masculinity of millions of American men. Reflective of this change was the fact that men hitting women became a staple in Depression-era films, especially in the late 1930s. It seems that such vicarious assertions of masculinity struck a chord with men who were feeling insecure because of the Depression's undermining of their positions.

THE NEW DEAL AND THE VISION OF PROPER MASCULINITY

For its part, the New Deal, despite its progressivism in some areas (and notwithstanding the efforts of Eleanor Roosevelt to influence policy in ways that took the varying needs of women more into account), took a very traditional view of the proper roles of men and women. Although there were exceptions, New Deal programs were for the most part designed to provide work and income for men and to restore their position as "breadwinners." New Deal art often depicted such an ideal.

The psychological crisis that men faced during the Great Depression created a pent-up desire for a return to "normal" masculinity. World War II provided an outlet for this desire for a large number of men, but the postwar construction of a hyper-traditional family in which "every woman needs a man" was a significant legacy of the unsettling effects the Great Depression had on men.

See Also: CHANDLER, RAYMOND; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GRAPES OF WRATH, THE; PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; "REMEMBER MY FORGOTTEN MAN"; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

MENCKEN, H. L.

Henry Louis Mencken (September 12, 1880–January 29, 1956) was a newspaperman, magazine editor, literary critic, political pundit, language scholar, and curmudgeon. He was known as the "Sage of Baltimore," the city where he was born and where he died. Mencken resisted all attempts to lure him away from his native town to more lucrative literary pursuits in New York. He hated New York, loved Baltimore, and wrote of it with affection, nostalgia, and at times brutal honesty. He remains one of the city's most famous authors.

Mencken began his journalistic career in 1899 as a reporter for the Baltimore *Morning Herald*, and when that paper folded in 1906 he joined the Baltimore *Sun*, where he remained for the rest of his life. In 1908 he became book editor of the *Smart Set* magazine, and in 1914 he and his friend and colleague, George Jean Nathan, became its co-editors. They left the magazine in 1924 to found *The American Mercury*, which Mencken continued to edit until 1933.

Mencken's bludgeon-like, hammer-blow style, which he used to attack democracy and the "gentle tradition" in American literature, made him the most famous (and also the most hated) critic of the 1920s. But while engaged in these demolition projects he was also turning out edition after edition of a great scholarly work, *The American Language* (first published in 1919), in which he studied the way that English had developed in the United States.

Mencken's popularity and immense influence came to an end with the Depression for the simple reason that he refused for a long time to admit that anything had happened. When he could no longer ignore the Depression, he claimed that its effects were being greatly exaggerated by the "incompetent unemployed." His fanatical hatred of Franklin

D. Roosevelt made him reject and ridicule all the New Deal programs to restore the economy; he blamed Roosevelt for saddling the country with an impossible load of debt and for dragging it into World War II. But Mencken paid a heavy price for this attitude: By the mid-1930s his lone dissenting voice was largely ignored and forgotten.

Mencken came back in the early 1940s with three delightful volumes of autobiography (the *Days* books) and a new edition and two huge supplements of *The American Language*. These brought him a new, more solid reputation and a wider audience. But the publication of his *Diary* in 1989, with its blatant anti-Semitism, turned him once more, thirty-three years after his death, into a highly controversial figure.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS;
LITERATURE.

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CHARLES A. FECHER

MEXICO, GREAT DEPRESSION IN

The Great Depression had a profound and long lasting impact on Mexico's economy and society. Proof of this is the drastic redirecting of the Mexican government's economic, labor, and social policies in the 1930s from an essentially passive view of the responsibility of the state in economic matters to a direct commitment to promote growth. Mexican foreign policy also experienced a marked change during this decade. In particular, the nation's relationship to the United States made a 180-degree turn towards friendship, in contrast to the open hostility that prevailed in the 1920s.

The Great Depression in the United States was to the New Deal what *Cardenismo* was to Mexico. The term *Cardenismo* is associated with the period (1934–1940) in which Lázaro Cárdenas (1895–1970) served as president of Mexico. Cárdenas led the na-

tionalization of the foreign owned oil industry in 1938, fomented a radical agrarian reform, encouraged the creation of national industrial unions, and promoted socialist public education. Most of these measures had been fought for during the Mexican Revolution of 1910 to 1920, but they had only been partially and timidly put into practice. In a sense, the impact of the Depression operated as an accelerator of the revolution itself.

From a Latin American perspective, the impact of the Great Depression in Mexico did not reach the dramatic character of Cuba's or Chile's experience. Those countries suffered more because of the extreme dependence of their economies on a single raw material, sugar in Cuba and copper in Chile. For Latin American countries, the "merchandise-lottery" of their typical exports, as the economist Carlos Díaz Alejandro put it, explained a lot about the performance of their economies as a whole. Mexico, like Brazil and Argentina, and to some degree Colombia, Peru, and Costa Rica, implemented programs of import substitute industrialization, processes that accelerated during the isolationist period of World War II and continued well into the 1960s.

In Mexico, the Great Depression had lasting effects in various key areas of the national economy: agriculture (particularly in regions linked to production for export); mining; various branches of manufacturing, especially the textile industry; and the reorganization of labor markets, especially with regard to the dislocation caused by unemployment and waves of migration, both internal and external

ECONOMIC DECLINE

Measuring the Mexican gross national domestic product (GDP) during the 1930s reveals little about the dominant economic situation because a large amount of the economic activity was not officially recorded, as in the case of subsistence agriculture, which did not follow the commercial channels. Nonetheless, the domestic product, as recorded, had negative growth figures between 1928 and 1939: -3.33 percent in 1929, -6.77 percent in 1930, and a surprising -16.22 percent in 1932. In the early 1930s, approximately one-fifth of the domestic product was composed of goods relating to



Mexican President Lázaro Cárdenas (center) meets with oil labor leaders in the Tamaulipas state in 1938. BETTMANN/CORBIS

agricultural or livestock. Mining and petroleum made up nearly 9 percent of the GDP, a proportion that dropped to approximately 7 percent in the latter part of the decade. Meanwhile, manufacturing and the public sector significantly increased their share of the total economic activity, rising from 11 percent to 15 percent and from 5 percent to 7 percent, respectively, of the GDP. This helps explain the emphasis that has been placed on both the process of industrialization brought on by the Depression and the small but significant increase in the state's influence on total economic activity. Yet, how did the Depression spread into the Mexican economy? The eye of the hurricane was located, no doubt, in the external sector.

The volume of Mexico's exports contracted 37 percent between 1929 and 1932. The impact of this contraction was magnified by the deterioration of the *terms of trade* (the relationship of export prices

to import prices) an additional 21 percent, reaching a nearly 50 percent cut in the buying capacity of Mexican exports. Moreover, given the structural dependence of Mexican fiscal policy on export taxes, the decline of the external sector produced tremendous pressure on government income, which fell from 322 million pesos in 1929 to 179 million in 1932, despite every effort made to increase domestic revenues. This impact, however, should not be overemphasized. The army's expenses were still a large part of the government budget: The forced cuts in this sector represented one of the structural outcomes of the Depression. However, the state was not yet able to significantly influence overall mechanisms of economic development.

Agriculture. The majority of agricultural products were affected by the crisis, although those products having principally foreign markets, such as cotton,

sisal (a plant grown for fiber), and coffee, were especially affected. As for corn, its production level was essentially tied to domestic factors, the most relevant of which was political instability arising from the uncertainty of land ownership. With several crops the drop in prices would nullify the increase in volume produced; such was the case with sugar, for which the price in 1931 was 42 percent less than it had been on average during the five-year period from 1925 to 1929, with coffee down 12 percent, corn down 23 percent, and wheat down 41 percent. Credit was simply frozen. Although the average bank interest rate was 12 percent, private and non-bank interest rose to more than 60 percent. The typical farmer could not count on any security.

The behavior of export oriented agricultural products was heterogeneous between 1928 and 1939. With such crops as sisal, a combination of long-term factors, including the substitution of synthetic fibers, determined the drop in international demand. On the other hand, cotton, one of the products most seriously affected by the crisis, was able to recover toward the later part of the decade.

Political instability in several agricultural regions was rendered sharper by the Depression and facilitated the implementation of Cárdenas's radical agrarian reform program. Although the precedent for the demand for land had been set during the armed revolution, the political and military defeat of the most important peasant leaders (Emiliano Zapata and Francisco Villa) had introduced an impasse in reform efforts, with the exception of states like Morelos, where the guerrillas never entirely disappeared. During the Great Depression—and this fundamentally in connection with commercial export crops—land lost its previous value, and this facilitated the expropriation projects of *Cardenismo*. It is no coincidence that the geography of the great *Cardenista* nationalization drive toward collective *ejidos* (nationalized land that could only be worked by agricultural families living on the land) corresponded to the commercial agricultural zones—cotton in La Laguna and Valle del Yaqui, Sonora; sisal in the Yucatán Peninsula; sugar in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, and Morelos.

Manufacturing and mining. The crisis was also manifested in the manufacturing sector through a pre-

dictable channel: a reduction in domestic demand. At the end of the 1920s, virtually all of the manufactured products in Mexico were being consumed domestically. The impact of manufacturing on exports was practically nil; thus, the fluctuations of international protectionism during the Great Depression had no direct effect on Mexican industry. One of the unique aspects of the crisis in manufacturing was the greater impact suffered by the subsector dedicated to the production of consumer goods compared to the subsector oriented toward the production of intermediary goods, especially cement and steel. These managed to sustain acceptable levels of production based on government support through public works.

The crisis generated a process of classical industrial concentration in several cases, such as tobacco and the brewing industry, already an important branch of Mexican manufacturing. As for its regional impact, the manufacturing sector most affected by the crisis was the cotton textile industry. Textiles was the oldest manufacturing industry in Mexico. Its origins during colonial times in the so-called wool mills or *obrajes* was in large part in response to the demand for cloth and clothing for the remote mining centers and farms. During the nineteenth century, the struggle between liberals and conservatives over protectionism and free trade exposed the limits of technological development in the textile factories. Always lagging in efficiency compared to industrialized countries, Mexico's textile industry principally served the domestic market. Thus, the textile industry experienced a type of turnaround through a drop in demand for cloth and clothing as a result of a drop in the income of the middle and lower classes. This drop began to cause warehouses to fill up. The decline in employment in this sector was relatively mild—around 15 percent between 1929 and 1932. Cuts were made, especially in the number of hours worked, with the customary forty-eight hour workweek sometimes cut in half. The years that followed were characterized by a combination of defensive solutions, such as the cut in working hours, throughout industry, with the active participation of the workers, usually at the shop floor level.

The pattern—a profound impact from the economic crisis, forced readjustments, and rapid recov-

ery—repeated itself. In general, workers did not wait passively for the recession to end. Instead, Mexico experienced militant resistance to the recession. One important result of the decade's labor struggles was the approval and later implementation of a new Federal Labor Law, proclaimed in 1931, which included the legal right to strike, maximum work hours, and minimum wage limits among its provisions. Granted, these advances were long fought for by workers at the shop floor level, as Jeffrey Bortz has shown, but the catalyst for federal approval was the Great Depression (as it was in many countries around the world).

The railroads. A logical result of the contraction of the export sector—of mining in particular and of the trade of raw materials in general—was the reduction in the volume of freight transported by the railroads. Mineral products represented one-third of the total freight moved by this mode of transportation around 1929 and 1930, when the decline in activity became apparent. The remainder of the freight was divided more or less as follows: 25 to 27 percent was agricultural products, 9 to 10 percent was timber products, 7 percent came from processing industries, and the rest (20 to 23 percent) was inorganic products, such as oil, asphalt, lime, cement, and salt. The 14.3 million tons of freight transported in 1929 were reduced to 9.2 million in 1932; similarly, the figure of 21.1 million passengers transported in 1929 dropped to 15.2 million in 1932, or 28 percent less. The number of passengers per kilometer fell by an estimated 43 percent; train cars were often half empty, and the average income from passenger fares dropped by 20 percent. As one analyst put it, from 1930 to 1932 the administration of the railroads not only dispatched the trains, but it also dispatched thousands of workers. The drop in employment throughout the economy was undoubtedly the most significant negative result, from a social perspective, of the crisis. The difficulties of the labor market were reinforced by the massive repatriation of Mexicans from the United States.

The repatriates. The incoming wave of Mexicans expelled from the United States reached a minimum of 300,000. To put this figure in perspective, it is helpful to consider that Mexico's total population in

1930 was 16,526,000, of which only 5,352,000 were economically active, and of these a mere 692,000 were employed in industry.

There was tremendous insecurity concerning work on the part of Mexican residents in the United States. A conservative estimate places at 28 percent the average number of Mexican residents in the United States who had either resorted to repatriation or had found themselves without work and with few expectations of finding any. Reports from Mexican consulates in the United States become repetitive when evaluating the almost nonexistent job options, repeated city by city, county by county. For example, a special envoy in Phoenix, Arizona, reported that "in not one of the places belonging to this district does there exist even the remotest possibility that Mexicans will find work." In Galveston, Texas, people applying for jobs had to not only vouch for their nationality, but also provide proof of having paid taxes to the United States Treasury. The selection criteria for obtaining work put emphasis on the payment of taxes, both income and sales, as well as the location of purchases.

Most Mexican repatriates ended up with their paternal or maternal families, who had to share their scarce resources with their relatives. The majority of the special projects initiated by the Mexican government in agricultural settlements in the country's interior were failures. In addition, the incorporation of the displaced people created intense family tensions between the repatriates and the heads of households who took them in. Whereas the recently arrived family members had aspirations linked to a material culture based on a wage ethic (a car, a radio, clothes), those taking them in had expectations based on working the land. This tension caused many repatriates to decide to repeat the adventure of emigration to the north.

One of the paradoxical aspects of this mass exodus that has received little attention was the repatriates' loss of property in the United States. As job possibilities disappeared, principally in the suburbs of such cities as Los Angeles or San Francisco, the families who undertook the return to Mexico had to abandon land and homes that had been obtained after much effort. Many lost their houses and small properties because they could not make mortgage

payments; others were forced to sell their homes and land at extremely low prices. That these purchases had been made in territory that had previously belonged to Mexico strengthened the immigrants' sense of frustration. The repatriation process vividly showed the international impact of the Depression. Nationalistic responses, both popular and elite based, appeared in every country, exacerbating the suffering of the "foreign" poor.

Oil. The oil industry was another important sector of the Mexican economy in which the Great Depression caused a decline. Mexico's oil production, built almost entirely by and for U.S. and British capital, had already gone through one period of spectacular growth and another of sharp decline during its brief existence. The period of its peak performance coincided with the increase in the price of oil from less than \$1 per barrel to more than \$3 between 1915 and mid-1920. From this point on there began a slow but persistent drop to approximately \$1.15 per barrel between 1928 and 1930. Throughout the 1930s the price of oil increased slowly. It did not experience a new boom until the period between 1946 and 1958.

At the beginning of the 1920s, the Mexican oil industry was highly concentrated in the hands of a few multinational firms. The three giants—Huasteca Petroleum Company, the *Compañía Mexicana de Petróleo El Aguila* (British), and the Penn Mex Fuel Company—represented nearly three-fourths of production in 1918. Of course, the Depression had a major impact on new oil field exploration and the crude oil extraction rate. As a whole, whereas in 1920, the peak of the Mexican oil boom, the industry employed around fifty thousand laborers and other personnel, by 1935 the number had dropped to fifteen thousand. Even in 1938, the year the petroleum industry was expropriated, it had a mere 17,600 workers, 2,800 of whom were temporary.

Nationalization of the oil interests was made possible by such factors as the decline in the value of the fields, the closeness of the *Cardenista* project to the U.S. New Dealers (one of which, Josephus Daniels, was ambassador to Mexico during that time), and the growing fear of war in Europe. In addition, the support of Mexican workers for the mea-

sure was virtually unanimous, and oil became an important engine to internal industrialization.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

The severity of the impact of the crisis in numerous sectors of the economy affected the economic policies that the Mexican government implemented. Financial pressures on the budget, in particular, had two long-lasting effects: the postponement of payments to international financial creditors—that is, a moratorium on the public debt service; and the reduction and subsequent reorganization of the state's bureaucratic apparatus. Pressure to create new state-sponsored institutions followed and became the origin, eventually, of several developmental agencies and banks, such as those oriented towards agriculture (*Banco de Crédito Ejidal*), housing (*Banco Nacional Hipotecario*), and small enterprises (*Nacional Financiera*). Public education became a high priority through the *Secretaría de Educación Pública*, and agrarian reform was pushed forward through irrigation works and new highways.

These policies, which would later be defined as Keynesian, took shape as a pragmatic response to the Depression rather than as a result of some intellectual vision. After two years (1930–1932) of disastrous orthodox fiscal policies, the Ministry of Finance applied new anti-cyclical policies that resembled the orientation of the United States's New Deal. Years later, in lectures prepared for the department of economics at the National University, Mexico's secretary of the treasury from 1935 to 1946, Eduardo Suárez, would severely criticize the previous orthodox policy—the "balanced budget approach." According to that view, money "would have to be kept in refrigerators and isolated from any vibration with the same care given to keeping the platinum and iridium bar in the International Office of Weights and Measures in Paris that serves as the basis of the decimal metric system." Mexico, instead, joined the proactive policies of a group of countries in Latin America and elsewhere that responded to the Depression by increasing the state's intervention in the economy, taking advantage of the social mobilization that was taking place in the countryside and in the cities. However, the pecu-

liarity of the Mexican case was that the import substitutive industrialization was combined with significant social reforms that were pushed forward from below.

See Also: CANADA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; LATIN AMERICA, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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MARCOS T. AGUILA

MICHEAUX, OSCAR

In a career that began in 1919, Oscar Micheaux (January 2, 1884–March 26, 1951) produced more than forty "race movies"—motion pictures made for African-American audiences—a record unmatched in American cinema history. What little is known of his early life is derived from scattered sources such as family lore, a few elusive public records, and autobiographical themes and sequences in several of his movies, and from seven self-published, often thinly veiled, autobiographical novels. An adherent of Booker T. Washington's ideology of black entrepreneurship and "self-help," Micheaux spent much of his youth homesteading on the Rosebud Indian reservation in South Dakota, doing a stint as a railroad porter on Pullman sleeping cars, and as the author and publisher of his novels. Beginning with his first movie, *The Homesteader* (1919), he took up themes that Hollywood filmmakers ignored: social dramas rooted in racial issues, tales of black striving and achievement, and plots that sometimes turned on false or mistaken racial identities.

At first the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing Depression stifled Micheaux and other makers of race movies. In addition to audiences shrunken by their economic plight and a paucity of sources of capital, the new medium of "talkies" also proved a daunting obstacle, at least until the Harlem theater owner Frank Schiffman backed Micheaux's reentry into production. The Great De-

pression thereafter reenergized Micheaux's work and sharpened its focus on his familiar themes of black ambition woven into episodes of his own life story. *The Exile* (1931) was typical of his work during this period in that its sources were Micheaux's own autobiographical novel *The Conquest* (1913) and a reworking of his silent film *The Homesteader*. In another instance of his using the Depression as an inspiration for a remake, Micheaux reworked *Birthright* (1924, 1938), a "story of the Negro in the South," that he derived from a novel by the white Pulitzer Prize-winning populist writer T. S. Stripling. As adapted by Micheaux, its story centered on a black Harvard graduate who struggles against Southern racial morés in an attempt to found a school for African-American children.

The Depression touched Micheaux in yet another way. He began to relocate his settings in northern cities, where he created a tension between black plight at the hands of the white South as against the new perils of life in the North, where poverty was accompanied by black crime, violence, and the breakup of the family under the stress of urban life. His heroes were often achievers and go-getters, while the heavies were criminals who preyed upon African Americans, as in *The Girl from Chicago* (1932). Or, as in *Underworld* (1937), the movies were cautionary tales warning of a too hasty rejection of the sturdy values of "the Southland" in favor of the hollow glamour of the urban underworld. Sometimes, a familiar genre such as a backstage romance in which the hero strives to crash Broadway—as in his *Swing* (1938)—also included a subplot that took up some social issue such as, in this instance, the abuse of women by black men idled by slumping urban economies even as their women became breadwinners as domestic servants.

With the onset of World War II and a consequent liberalizing of racial depictions in Hollywood movies, race moviemakers suffered. Micheaux offered his services to the government's propaganda arm, the Office of War Information, pointing out that "we are never shown on the screen in . . . the war effort," but with no recorded response from Washington. Thus Micheaux's work during the Great Depression constituted both a high moment

in the history of the race movie as well as its swan song.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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THOMAS CRIPPS

MIDDLETOWN IN TRANSITION

In June 1935 Robert S. Lynd returned to Muncie, Indiana, to conduct a second in-depth sociological study of this "typical" midwestern city. This was to be a sequel to the pioneering work he and his wife, Helen M. Lynd, carried out from 1924 to 1925. Their 1929 report, *Middletown: A Study in Modern American Culture*, had been an unexpected best-seller. Their publisher, Alfred Harcourt, encouraged them to revisit Muncie to document how the city had changed in the intervening decade, particularly from the impact of the Great Depression.

Muncie was a community of approximately fifty thousand people. The overwhelming majority were white Protestants of native stock. The city contained few immigrants or minorities of any kind. In this striking homogeneity, Muncie was hardly a representative American community. It also was more prosperous than most. Though hard hit by the Depression, its main employer manufactured glass jars for home canning—one of the few industries that thrived during hard times.

The original Middletown study involved extensive data gathering. Lacking both time and funding, the second study was less empirical and more dependent on information gained from local “informed sources.” Lynd departed after spending only three months in the field. *Middletown in Transition: A Study in Cultural Conflicts* was published in 1937. It was organized around the same six areas as its predecessor: getting a living, making a home, training the young, using leisure time, religious practices, and community activities. One innovation was an analysis of the power exercised by the Ball family (identified in the book only as “the X family”), who directly employed about 10 percent of the town’s workers and supported many of its leading institutions.

The Lynds described a community with deep class divisions. The “business class” dominated local affairs. The “working classes” lacked power and seldom openly gave voice to their grievances. Despite economic setbacks, class conflict in Muncie remained beneath the surface. Trends identified in the earlier study continued but had not altered materially. The Lynds concluded that “basically the texture of Middletown’s culture has not changed.” One must agree with the Italian sociologist, Rita Caccamo, who asked in *Back to Middletown: Three Generations of Sociological Reflections*, “What transition?”

The two Middletown studies are widely cited by sociologists as models for empirical community study. Historians have found a wealth of evidence in their pages for the growing impact of advertising and the spread of the consumer culture. The Lynds’ portrait of Middle America in the first half of the twentieth century remains a monumental work of social documentation.

See Also: ADVERTISING IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION; CONSUMERISM; MIDWEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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PAUL T. MURRAY

MIDWEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE

In major respects the Great Depression’s course and impact in the Midwest (comprising the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota) resembled its course and impact in the United States as a whole. Like other areas, the Midwest suffered from acute and persisting distress, had much difficulty in devising ways to deal with it, and underwent Depression-related reforms that affected its future development. Yet there were also differences. Although some contemporary sociologists considered the region to have more national character traits than any other, it, too, had its peculiarities, evident particularly in its cultural ideals and tensions, its mix of industry and agriculture, its institutional development, and its geographical features. All of these affected both the impact of and responses to the Depression, the result being some significant regional divergences from what was happening elsewhere.

DESCENT AND EARLY RESPONSE, 1929–1932

In the Midwest the Depression arrived more slowly than in America’s eastern cities, with conditions during the winter of 1929 to 1930 producing relatively little alarm. By 1931, however, rising unemployment, burgeoning relief needs, and shrinking farm incomes were generating considerable alarm, and by 1932 the region was suffering the severest economic contraction in its history. Unemployment approached 20 percent and in the mining areas and industrial centers was much higher. In Minnesota’s iron ranges and Illinois’s coal districts unemployment was over 70 percent, and in Chicago, the region’s unofficial “capital,” it stood at an estimated 40 percent. Midwestern cities had become scenes of suffering and want. And the rural Midwest, already somewhat depressed in 1929, now faced disaster. Farm prices had fallen to all-time lows, and farm income had shrunk by nearly 60 percent, aggravating debt and tax burdens and undermining the vitality of rural service centers.

By 1932, moreover, the inadequacy of existing relief systems was glaringly apparent. The relief ca-



Transient men say prayers before a meal at the Dubuque, Iowa, city mission in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

pacities of private charities, welfare capitalists, and local poor law overseers soon collapsed and could not be revived by the informational and coordinative agencies established at higher levels. Federal support for agricultural marketing associations and emergency stabilization corporations failed to curb rural decline. And numerous cities faced bankruptcy if new sources of funding could not be found. Daily relief allowances shrank to fifteen cents per person in Detroit, Chicago's teachers went unpaid, and in these cities and others shantytowns multiplied while scrounging in garbage cans and city dumps became common. Yet proposals for state and federal aid were still widely viewed as departures from the American way. As of mid-1932 only Illinois and Wisconsin had appropriated state relief

money, and even when federal relief loans became available in late 1932 a number of the region's states were slow to secure them.

As the economy shrank, the region's jobless and dispossessed frequently blamed themselves and retreated into resignation and apathy. Some, however, found scapegoats in the business and political establishments, and smoldering resentment could sometimes burst into violence. Hunger marches and food looting occurred in several cities. Unemployed Councils, under Communist leadership, harassed urban relief authorities, and in early 1932 a march on the Ford Motor plant in Dearborn, Michigan, demanding that it take on more workers, resulted in bloody fighting between marchers and the police. In the hinterland, moreover, particularly

the western reaches of the corn belt, some farmers were now ready to challenge established authority. In the “cow war” of 1931, Iowa used martial law to enforce regulations concerning tubercular cattle. And at Des Moines in May 1932, militants formed the Farmers’ Holiday Association, a group ready to use violence in support of farm strikes and the halting of foreclosure proceedings.

Depression discontent also threatened the regional political dominance long exercised by the Republican Party. In 1929 the Republicans controlled state government in eleven of the twelve states, all except South Dakota. But in 1930 and 1931 this dominance underwent serious erosion. A resurgent Democratic Party elected governors in Ohio, Nebraska, and Kansas and made substantial gains elsewhere. A Farmer-Labor Party won control in Minnesota, installing Floyd B. Olson as governor there. Progressive Republicans reemerged on top in Wisconsin, where Philip F. La Follette became governor. And the political climate was now such that independents could not only run for high office but also stand a chance of winning. In the Kansas election of 1930, Dr. John R. Brinkley, whose claims for the sexual rejuvenation power of goat glands had cost him his medical license, nearly won the governorship with an independent, anti-establishment campaign that appealed particularly to the state’s old populist areas.

In November 1932 the Republican rout seemed virtually complete. A region that had voted overwhelmingly for Herbert Hoover in 1928 now voted solidly against him, and in state contests most remaining Republican governors were ousted. The only winner was Alfred M. Landon of Kansas, in part because of another Brinkley run as an independent. Some special legislative sessions were also meeting now, searching for ways to trim governmental costs, raise new revenue, and provide debt relief. But the more general pattern was to wait and see what might be forthcoming from the change in national administrations. In the winter of 1932 to 1933, unemployment kept mounting, relief funds became still more inadequate, violence flared anew in the corn and dairy lands, and a new wave of bank runs, beginning in Michigan in February 1933, brought “bank holidays” in state after state. Recov-



Many farms in the Midwest, including this one photographed in 1936 near Liberal, Kansas, were rendered uncultivable by drought and soil erosion during the 1930s. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ery seemed farther away than ever and political action more necessary.

REFORM FROM ABOVE AND BELOW, 1933–1940

In the next seven years, political action brought reform and relief but recovery was elusive. Upturns in mid-1933 and on a greater scale in 1935 and 1936 proved short-lived, the result being unemployment rates that never got below 14 percent. In the Midwest, moreover, especially in its western borderlands, the period brought severe drought as well as continued economic depression. The years 1934 and 1936 were the driest that the area had known since such records had been kept, and adding now to its rural misery were seared and withered crops, scorching temperatures, starving livestock, and “black blizzards” that altered the landscape and left dust inches thick on almost everything. By 1940 the Dakotas had lost approximately 150,000 people. Not only farms but towns had been abandoned, and a substantial proportion of those left behind



A Farm Security Administration county supervisor discusses a farm plan with a rehabilitation client in Grant county, Wisconsin, in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

had been reduced to propertylessness, if not abject poverty.

Still, if hard times persisted, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal brought much more federal assistance to the area. Federal money came to the rescue in the form of relief grants, works projects, crop allotment checks, purchasing programs, and special credits for needy farmers, homeowners, and businesses. Market controls came in the guise of industrial codes, agricultural adjustment contracts, fair labor standards, bank deposit guarantees, and more federal regulators. And erected by 1940 was a new if incomplete structure of social insurance, the federal government having now joined with the states to provide employment services, old-age pensions, unemployment compensation, and expanded aid to

handicapped and dependent groups. Midwesterners, like other Americans, had become more dependent on their national government than they or their ancestors had ever been, and the result for many was a mixture of gratitude with concerns about alien influences and the loss of individual freedom, local autonomy, and cultural identity.

Throughout the region, moreover, the coming of federal relief brought significant institutional reform. To meet matching requirements and help administer the programs, the states found new sources of revenue and established a new and more professional array of emergency relief, social welfare, and intrastate regulatory agencies, a number of which became permanent additions to state government. Also serving as administrative partners

was a new complex of business and labor associations, farmer committees, and community groups, which significantly affected the area's organizational development. And while these partnerships usually involved and benefited local elites rather than the "grassroots" allegedly being mobilized, there were exceptions. Through its support of industrial unions, rural resettlement, Indian tribal councils, and greater opportunities for women and minority groups, the New Deal helped to advance a kind of democracy often opposed by the area's elites and thus to alter to some degree its power relationships.

Not all reform, however, came from above. Reform coalitions also appeared at lower levels, producing, in some states, "little New Deals" that featured greater tax equity, farm debt moratoria, small business protection, new welfare benefits, and bans on unfair employer practices. Going the farthest in this direction were the governorships of Floyd Olson in Minnesota, Philip La Follette in Wisconsin, and Frank Murphy in Michigan. Regional "wets" also helped to end national prohibition of alcoholic beverages and to shrink drastically the area still subject to state and local "dry" laws. And transforming industrial workplaces and communities was a new labor militancy grounded in the capacity of Depression woes and renewed hope to override long-standing ethnic divisions and produce working-class support for industrial unionism. The region's automobile, rubber, and steel plants became the sites of bitter conflict; its sit-down strikes, at Akron, Ohio, and Flint, Michigan, became milestones in the rise of the new Congress of Industrial Organizations; and in its leading industries and cities organized labor now emerged as a major force.

Labor's rise, moreover, seemed to be turning the Depression-induced political realignment into an enduring one. Democrats continued to win, and in 1936 Roosevelt again carried every state in the region. By this time, however, a vociferous opposition, particularly strong in the region's small cities and small towns, was also denouncing the New Deal as un-American subversion of the nation's traditional liberties and natural recuperative powers. And beginning in 1937, a new economic downturn combined with new labor difficulties, new

fears of dictatorial action, and new concerns about foreign involvement worked to undermine the area's fragile reform coalitions and return Republicans to power. Their older dominance was not completely reestablished, since the movement of blacks and labor into the Democratic Party proved relatively enduring. But by 1940 seven of the twelve states had Republican governors, and in that year seven voted against Roosevelt's reelection.

As the New Deal lost the region's support, the limited achievements of reform, whether from above or below, also became apparent. Conditions had been alleviated and progress made toward creating an organizational order capable of renewed economic growth. But the "industrial democracy" that came to the Midwest's factories operated within and was dependent upon a new bureaucratic framework. Urban political machines drew strength from New Deal programs, most notably in Chicago and Kansas City. The poor law relief system made a comeback as the federal government withdrew from providing relief for unemployables. And much of the discriminatory structure limiting opportunities for women and racial minorities remained in place. Nor did the visions of a restored and vibrant rural civilization, to be achieved through rural resettlement, ever come close to realization. Instead, the bulk of the New Deal programs worked to restart the process of rural depopulation.

CULTURAL CHALLENGE AND COMPROMISE

Long a scene of rural-urban conflict, the Midwest was also experiencing now another kind of cultural dissonance. Its "main streets" had been the strongholds of a culture primarily associated with an older middle class of local businessmen, small-town professionals, and family farmers. There, more so than anywhere else, the ideals of progress through hard work, self-reliance, and community boosterism had held sway. But now these were being undercut, one challenge coming from conditions under which meeting the idealized social responsibilities had become exceedingly difficult, another from what seemed necessary for survival. With rescue had come dependence upon new structures of power, acting through a newer middle class of administrative officials, special agents, and

trained experts with their own notions of what constituted social progress and how to engineer it. Such aid seemed essential, but accepting it seemed to require the abandonment of ideas regarded as fundamental to sensible living.

These perceived threats often underlay the region's notorious critiques of the New Deal. They became standard fare in both a conservative and a neo-populist rhetoric. Yet only a few of the critics were ready to renounce federal support. They looked instead toward compromises that could somehow combine an older independence and traditional ways with new schemes of bureaucratic order and social engineering. And given the vulnerability of the New Deal state to anti-bureaucratic critiques and small-town nostalgia, arrangements were forthcoming to incorporate local initiatives and vetoes and thus to make the new dependence seem less threatening. The elaborate participatory structures created for agricultural adjustment eased concerns about the machinations of distant planners. So did similar structures for undertaking works projects, and in some places, like Fort Wayne, Indiana, for example, pragmatic Republican regimes met New Deal needs while persuading voters that they provided needed curbs on potential tyranny.

Also helping to ease feelings of cultural loss was the emergence of a compensatory art and literature, in which satires of the small town gave way to its celebration and the folkways and traditions of the "heartland" became the true essence of Americanism. One promoter of this was the New Deal state itself, especially through its state guidebooks as produced by the WPA Federal Writers' Project and through the support that other projects gave to fostering a "people's art." But involved as well were local leaders and groups, who found solace in incorporating such art into public monuments, rituals, and commemorations. And facilitating matters was the emergence of an appropriate artistic sensibility, epitomized in what such painters as Grant Wood and Thomas Hart Benton were putting on canvas and in Sherwood Anderson's move from the grim tales of *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) to being "glad of the life on the farm and in small communities."

For some intellectuals this artistic expression was also part of a larger "revolt of the provinces,"

believed potentially capable both of saving valuable regional ways and creating a national pluralism resistant to mass culture and standardization. In this vision the Midwest and other regions were to restructure resource usage so as to support a revitalization and continuance of traditional ways, with the process to be facilitated by movement educators, artists, and planners. The Depression, it was thought, had created the necessary opening. But action consisted chiefly of academic conferences and treatises, events like the National Folk Festival in Saint Louis, and some effort to guide the federal supports for rural resettlement, river development, and cultural enrichment along this path. Intellectual regionalism in the Midwest stands as an interesting Depression phenomenon, which left behind interesting artistic and intellectual monuments. But its hopes for the region's future were to go unrealized.

The Midwest, then, was not spared the blighted lives, shrunken hopes, and other ravages of the Great Depression. Nor was it spared a degree of Depression-induced social and political transformation. Yet its experience did have regional peculiarities. Its suffering bore the peculiar marks of a pre-existing agricultural depression, a devastating drought, and exceptionally fierce commitments to an outmoded relief system. And its empowerment of new groups left room for a Republican comeback and required a complex accommodation with a sturdy and persisting system of small-town and older-middle-class values. While becoming a different Midwest, it still retained much of its earlier distinctiveness.

See Also: AMERICAN SCENE, THE; CITIES AND SUBURBS; DUST BOWL; FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT; LA FOLLETTE, PHILLIP; MINNESOTA FARMER-LABOR PARTY; MURPHY, FRANK; NORTHEAST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; RURAL LIFE; SIT-DOWN STRIKE; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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ELLIS W. HAWLEY

MIGRATION

During the Great Depression more than two and one-half million Americans, many of them poverty-stricken, took to the road. They moved from country to city and sometimes from the city back to the country, from the South to the North and from the North and South to the West, within states and from state to state, leaving one region for another, in pursuit of elusive opportunities elsewhere. Families as well as single individuals set forth with what little they had, stealing rides in boxcars, bartering their few remaining possessions to obtain gasoline for decrepit jalopies, hitchhiking down dusty highways. In general, they left areas affected by declining manufacturing output, adverse weather conditions, soil erosion, farm foreclosures, boll weevil ravages, mechanization forcing laborers off the land, and stifling racial segregation.

The trend toward interregional migration began before the Depression. Migration rates were considerably higher in the United States from 1920 to 1930 than from 1930 to 1940. In the 1920s the population of the Northeast and North Central states grew, in part because of an influx of immigrants from abroad. During the same period native-born migrants headed to the North and West, fleeing drought and other agricultural devastation in the middle and southern portions of the nation. African Americans left the South in response to both adverse changes in farming and legalized discrimination.

Manufacturing cutbacks of the 1930s brought net declines in population to the Northeast and North Central regions as closed factory doors prompted migration from industrialized states. At the same time migrants continued to head out of the South and the parched Dust Bowl of the Southwest where howling winds scooped up dry topsoil. With its promise of orange groves and fertile fields, California beckoned as a particularly attractive destination for some 400,000 migrants called *Okies*. These were farmers, blown off their land in Oklahoma and parts of Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, and Texas, who headed west on Route 66 in old automobiles.



During the Great Depression, thousands of African Americans left the South in response to both adverse changes in farming and legalized discrimination. These migrants from Florida were photographed in 1940 in South Carolina on their way to New Jersey.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

In a 1944 report, the federal Social Security Board estimated population shifts in the United States due to migration totaled more than 5,800,000 from 1920 to 1930. This figure was cut nearly in half during the Depression, with the comparable estimate given as 2,576,000. Nevertheless, the fact that migration remained significant from 1930 to 1940 showed that thousands of Americans saw no way to improve their plight except to move.

Different and confusing names characterized those who crossed state lines looking for work from 1930 to 1940. Initially, interstate migrants were somewhat differentiated from seasonal migrant laborers who traditionally had moved from place to place to harvest crops. In the early days of the De-

pression, those on the road commonly were called *transients*. They also were referred to by such terms as nonresident indigents or the unattached. Sometimes they were lumped together with hobos and tramps, social outcasts who were long-term wanderers.

When the New Deal pushed through its Federal Emergency Relief Act in May 1933, it contained provision for a Federal Transient Program to help those who had left their homes. The program lasted for two years, functioned in forty-four states, and, at its height, offered assistance to more than 300,000 persons. It ended when the Roosevelt administration changed its approach to relief from direct aid to work-oriented projects centered in local

communities. This left the floating population without legal rights to benefits, although the Resettlement Administration (which became part of the Farm Security Administration in 1937) provided some camps for migrants.

As the 1930s unfolded, the term *migrant* was used increasingly in place of the word *transient*. In 1940 the U.S. House of Representatives looked into the problems facing migrants. Its Select Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens held hearings from New York to California. Its five hundred witnesses dealt with deplorable conditions faced by transients, some of whom had become migratory agricultural workers. The hearings had little impact on legislation because the advent of World War II ended mass unemployment, but the committee's work made it plain that migration was changing the face of the United States.

DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS

The 1944 Social Security Board report provided a statistical picture of migration within the United States for the two decades prior to World War II. It pointed out that twenty-one states and the District of Columbia gained population from 1930 to 1940, acquiring a total of 2,567,000 new residents due to migration. At the same time the majority of states, twenty-seven, lost population as residents left to seek improved circumstances. In the early years of the Depression, migration in the Northeast took place from large cities and industrial areas, where workers had lost their jobs, to selected agricultural areas where migrants hoped to be self-sufficient. This trend shifted back somewhat toward the end of the decade with improvements in business and industrial conditions.

During the 1930s the industrialized Northeast and the North Central states lost population, as did most of the South with the exception of Florida. Virginia and Maryland grew in population, benefiting from the expansion of government employment in the neighboring District of Columbia. But it was the West, including both the mountain and Pacific states, that scored the biggest increase, adding a total of 1,322,000 residents. California alone gained 1,052,000 residents during the 1930s. Figures in-

cluded both foreign-born and native persons, although immigration into the United States and emigration from it offset each other from 1930 to 1940. This contrasted with the previous decade when immigrants from abroad played a pronounced role in population growth. Clearly, during the Depression, when birth rates were particularly low, states that gained population did so due to interregional migration.

From 1930 to 1940 relatively modest migration increased the population of New Hampshire, Connecticut, Indiana, Minnesota, Delaware, Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, Texas, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Nevada. Many of these states served as magnets for the unemployed from industrial areas. Only a few states added more than 100,000 individuals. These included Maryland, Oregon, and Washington, along with the District of Columbia. Florida attracted 334,960 new residents by the end of the decade.

With some exceptions these migratory trends represented a continuation of patterns already in place. The nine states that had the largest gains in population from 1930 to 1940—California, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Arizona, Indiana, Connecticut, Maryland, and Florida—also had the largest increases in the preceding decade (from 1920 to 1930). While the annual rate of migration to these states declined during the Depression, it picked up again during World War II. From 1920 through 1940 a total of twenty states had continuous losses in population—Maine, Vermont, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, West Virginia, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, and Montana; this trend also continued into World War II.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN MOVEMENT

The Depression slowed, but did not stem, the general movement of African Americans from the South to the North and from rural to more urban areas within Southern states. Journalist Lorena Hickok, an undercover investigator of Depression conditions for the Roosevelt administration, noted the latter phenomena. She reported that white Southerners claimed that New Deal relief programs

drew low-paid agricultural workers, many of them African Americans, out of the cotton fields and into nearby cities where they found little employment. More to the point, many white planters pocketed money paid to them by Roosevelt's Agricultural Adjustment Administration for taking land out of production. By refusing to share payments with their tenants and sharecroppers, as they were supposed to do, planters forced them off the land. In some cases they replaced laborers with machinery. Thus, the New Deal unwittingly contributed to displacements that encouraged migration already underway.

Nearly 500,000 African Americans fled the South from 1910 to 1920 when jobs opened to them in northern industry. The following decade an additional 750,000 exited to escape harsh economic and social conditions. During the 1930s the South lost about 350,000 African Americans, less than half the previous decade's total. The mass exodus of African Americans from the South did not come until the 1940s and 1950s when about three million people moved North and West, initially drawn by work in World War II defense plants. Nevertheless, the Depression did not halt redistribution of the African-American population outside the South, a movement that led to sweeping political changes and the end of segregation.

MIGRATION SYMBOLISM

No group of migrants captured the feel of the Depression in the popular imagination to as great an extent as the *Okies*. The documentary photographer Dorothea Lange took a widely reproduced picture of a toil-worn Okie mother and her hungry children. Titled "Migrant Mother," it appeared in *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion* (1939), a book written by Lange and her husband, economist Paul Taylor. Lange's photograph still is used to symbolize the destitution faced by millions during the 1930s.

John Steinbeck's best-selling novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), subsequently made into a popular movie, familiarized the nation with the tribulations of the penniless Joad family as they strove to find a new life in California. The Joad family's fictional travails represented those of thousands of uprooted

individuals who tried to better themselves by moving. Although many eventually established themselves in their new surroundings, the chronicles of downtrodden migrants in the 1930s remain a heart-wrenching part of American history.

See Also: DUST BOWL; GRAPES OF WRATH, THE; MIGRATORY WORKERS; OKIES; TRANSIENTS.

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MAURINE H. BEASLEY

MIGRATORY WORKERS

The images of the Dust Bowl migrants, made famous in John Steinbeck's best selling novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), tend to dominate the historical memory of migrant workers during the Great Depression era. However, while thousands of Okies and Arkies did take to the road in search of survival, they joined migrant workers who had traveled the nation in search of work long before the Depression and who would continue to do so for decades thereafter. These migrants, many of them racial and ethnic minorities, had always worked for low wages and lived in horrible conditions. The Great Depression merely exacerbated their harsh circumstances.

Assessing the absolute number of migrant workers during any decade is difficult. In 1937, sociologist Paul S. Taylor tentatively estimated that there were between 200,000 and 350,000 migrant workers traveling yearly throughout the United States. Although many migrants worked in California, where some would be displaced by incoming Dust Bowl migrants, migrant labor was not just a West Coast phenomenon. For example, thousands of Mexican and Mexican-American migrant workers toiled throughout the nation—from the cotton fields of Texas to the sugar beet fields of Colorado, Michigan, and Ohio. Thousands of southern African Americans and whites (mostly displaced sharecroppers from Georgia and Alabama) regularly worked along the Atlantic Coast, toiling in the winter months in Florida's Everglades and in the northern states during the summer. And finally, thousands of other migrant workers traveled less clear paths throughout dozens of states in search of work.

The Great Depression, which had begun in the 1920s for many of the nation's agricultural regions, worsened the difficulties migrant workers faced. While the numbers of workers in search of work rose during the Depression, the amount of land in production decreased. Moreover, farmers who also faced economic difficulties—falling prices for their crops, higher taxes, and increased debt—looked for places to cut costs, and reducing workers' wages was often the only option they had. The surplus

labor (in 1933 in California there were roughly 2.36 workers for each available job) made it extremely difficult for workers to get paid for the full value of their labor. As a result, wages throughout the nation fell during the Depression. Migrant workers in California who had been making 35 cents per hour in 1928 made only 14 cents per hour in 1933. Sugar beet workers in Colorado saw their wages decrease from \$27 an acre in 1930 to \$12.37 an acre three years later. In Texas, migrant families during the Depression could expect yearly earnings of between \$278 and \$500, hundreds of dollars below what experts at the time estimated it would cost a family of four merely to survive.

In addition to earning low wages—the lowest of any workers in the country—migrant workers also tended to live in horrible conditions. It was not uncommon for farmers to house migrant workers in shanties, shacks, chicken coops, barns, portable wagons, and even open fields. Those who found shelter inside small cabins or abandoned farm houses often had to contend with broken windows, torn screens, missing doors, and leaky roofs. Most migrants, whether living by themselves in the fields or in specially designated migrant camps, remained isolated from the surrounding communities. Often viewed as racial and class outcasts, migrant workers were shunned by the local communities.

While the nation's industrial workers could look to the New Deal to address some of their problems, migrant workers found themselves largely outside of the scope of most of the programs and legislation. When discussing the status of migrant workers in the United States, historian Cindy Hahamovitch argued that they were, in fact, "stateless." Unlike industrial workers who gained the right to organize unions and bargain collectively, migrant workers were left outside of the bounds of the most important New Deal legislation. Neither section 7a of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act nor the 1935 National Labor Relations Act included migrant agricultural workers. When Congress passed the Fair Labor Standards Act instituting minimum wage provisions in 1938, agricultural workers were once again exempted from the federal protections afforded other kinds of workers. Certainly the political clout of agricultural interests



A family of migrant agricultural workers boards a freight car near Roseville, California, in 1940 on their way to Utah where they hope to find work in the sugar beet fields. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION



A migrant agricultural worker carries a basket of peas to the weigh station in a field near Calipatria, California, in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

helped to keep agricultural workers outside of the New Deal protections. Idealistic notions about agricultural labor and rural America may have also made it difficult to pass legislation to protect or empower migrant workers. Even legislation passed explicitly to address the problems plaguing rural America—the Agricultural Adjustment Act—did little to help migrant workers. In fact, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) probably worsened the conditions for many migrant workers who saw their jobs disappear along with the crop reductions required by the AAA. In addition, the jobs of many agricultural workers were eliminated when farmers used their government stipends to

buy new machinery. The only New Deal agency that attempted to address the needs of migrant workers was the Resettlement Administration, which was replaced by the Farm Security Administration (FSA). By 1942, the FSA had built ninety-five camps, which could house approximately 75,000 workers. Many of these camps provided housing, health services, schools, laundry facilities, and adult-education programs.

With the exception of the FSA camps, when migrant workers looked to the state for relief, they faced an uphill battle. Racist private and public relief agencies throughout the nation, but especially in the South and West, often denied migrant work-



This newly constructed Farm Security Administration camp for seasonal workers, photographed in 1940 near Yuba City, California, boasted steel shelters, rather than the tents found in many older camps. The camp also included a clinic. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

ers benefits or granted them benefits much lower than those awarded to other workers. Even the federal relief agencies, including the Works Progress Administration and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, worked in conjunction with local officials to schedule relief benefits according to the growing seasons. Migrant workers often found their meager benefits cut at the same time that their labor would be needed in the fields. In this way, the federal government helped to maintain a vulnerable, low-income workforce.

Mexican and Mexican-American migrant workers felt the full force of state power during the

Great Depression. As non-citizens, many Mexicans were banned from public works projects available to other destitute workers. Moreover, communities looking for a scapegoat to explain the Depression often blamed Mexicans. Working together, private relief charities, municipal governments, and Mexican consuls helped to repatriate thousands of Mexicans and even Mexican Americans back to Mexico. Many of these men, women, and children had been migrant workers.

Even though migrant workers were excluded from the National Labor Relations Act, thousands joined unions and engaged in strikes to garner bet-

ter wages and living conditions. In fact, in the early years of the Depression, the number of agricultural unions increased, as did the number of strikes. In his exhaustively researched study on unions in agriculture, Stuart Jamieson recounted ten strikes involving 3,200 workers in 1932. The following year, 1933, over 56,800 workers in seventeen different states took part in at least sixty-one strikes. By 1935 nearly one hundred agricultural unions represented thousands of workers. Although California remained the bastion of labor organizing among agricultural workers, states in the Midwest and East, including Michigan and New Jersey, also witnessed unions and strikes. This militancy is essential for understanding the experiences of migrant workers during the Great Depression. Even though they were often viewed as the bottom rung of society, traveling from place to place and doing jobs others would not do, and even though they were excluded from the benefits awarded other workers, migrant workers nonetheless tried to make a New Deal of their own.

See Also: MIGRATION; OKIES; TRANSIENTS.

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KATHY MAPES

MILITARY: UNITED STATES ARMY

In 1929, the U. S. armed services received more funding than the armed services of any other nation, despite the absence of a discernible enemy. The 1920 National Defense Act, which was the nation's first true military policy, had authorized the War Department to recruit 280,000 enlisted personnel and 17,043 officers. Shrinking appropriations during the 1920s lowered the totals in 1930 to 136,216 enlisted and 12,000 officers. In 1935 the enlisted figure had shrunk by executive action to 118,750. The 1920 Act also federalized the 135,000-man National Guard, and by 1933 there was a National Guard Bureau within the War Department. Douglas MacArthur, who became chief of staff of the Army in 1930, could also expect, in an emergency, the activation of 101,000 organized reservists, 127,000 reserve officers, and 28,000 members of the Citizens Military Training camps. In addition, existing war plans included a civilian draft and mandated an initial 4.5 million-man Army with 225,000 officers. Such a force would require one year to assemble, and even longer to reach full production of supplies and weaponry.

Army budgets increased during Herbert Hoover's first two years as president. In 1930, a congressionally-mandated War Policies Commission, the most thorough peacetime war planning inquiry to that date, reviewed mobilization plans and procurement policies. Administered by the assistant secretary of war, prototype legislative drafts defined war rationing, a draft, and government control of the economy. In 1933, MacArthur published a new field manual that established four regular field armies, built upon the nine corps areas. He centralized authority under the chief of staff, inserted Army command over assembling divisions, and provided steps for a partial mobilization, if necessary.

As the Depression deepened, Hoover exercised executive authority to decrease expenditures, but

concern over domestic strife and Hoover's long-held theory that public works would speed economic recovery led him to treat the Army in kinder fiscal fashion than other federal agencies. During the Hoover administration, new construction from work relief funds began replacing decaying World War I facilities. The Depression also increased the purchasing power of the dollar and so augmented military funding. Only Hoover's dictated furloughs and later wage cuts for federal agencies gave the Army reason to suffer and protest. By 1935, however, wages were restored. Between 1932 and 1935, maintenance budgets protected the core of the War Department.

The military establishment struggled to absorb new technologies generated by World War I, but MacArthur's commitment to infantry in this environment of curtailed personnel and materiel led to a subordination of armor, chemicals, light weapons, and airplanes. Rather than maintain a separate tank corps, MacArthur integrated mechanized armor into the infantry and bypassed more effective models. The 1926 Air Corps Act had established a five-year plan to secure 1,800 planes. Congress approved the purchase of hundreds more of the fragile machines, but, given their quickly obsolescent designs and high number of crashes, the mandated goal was not realized until 1937. In the same year, Congress increased the number to 2,300. Furthermore, the Air Corps's growing personnel requirements continued to conflict with the General Board's infantry preference. As with the tanks, the planes were scattered among field troops. In 1935 the General Headquarters Air Force, designed as a strategic support for land forces, concentrated the Air Corps command, with a plan for dispersal at the outbreak of a war. That same year Congress passed the National Frontier Defense Act, which authorized the construction of ten huge regional airbases to strengthen security, especially in the West Coast. Work relief projects throughout the decade greatly enhanced Army air fields and land support structures.

Other events, such as the 1932 Bonus March and the use of regular and guard troops to quell strikes, soured civilian attitudes and harmed the Army's public image. In 1933, the Army vehement-

ly opposed the use of its facilities and personnel by the Civilian Conservation Corps. By 1935, however, Army leaders had discovered that the CCC was a useful source for funds to replace old expended materiel. In addition, officers such as George C. Marshall gained experience in mass mobilization as tens of thousands of CCC recruits were processed. The CCC also contributed to an improved quality of Army inductees during the Depression years.

Difficulties with procurement contracts caused the removal in 1936 of Air Corps chief Benjamin Foulois. In addition, with the exception of the B-17, the aviation industry failed to provide world-class pursuit planes and bombers, and corporate delays hampered delivery of contracted models. After severe congressional pressure, the Army moved to completely motorize the infantry and adopted a semiautomatic rifle (the M-1) in 1935. That same year, Congress authorized an increase of the Army to 165,000 enlisted men, while maintaining 11,500 officers on active duty. The Army could now fully man four divisions, each with 11,500 soldiers. Other divisions remained only partially manned until required by a war to expand. The War Department also used personnel for support bureaus, the Air Corps, and regiments to garrison the country's island possessions and the Panama Canal Zone. Recruit overcrowding and Roosevelt's fiscal fears prolonged full realization of Congress's plan for three years.

Malin Craig, who became chief of staff in September 1935, emphasized a forward vision and a greater realization of the time required for war preparation; he also argued that the shape of national defense was determined by staff decisions and congressional actions made years earlier. As the naval arms limitation treaties faded in 1936 and the Axis Powers emerged, the Army benefited from a general rearming that was led by Congress. From fiscal year 1934 onward, total annual military and naval expenditures averaged over a billion dollars. Although the War Department still estimated a year or more would be required to reach full production in the event of war, by 1939 the United States possessed a well-trained Army and increasingly modern military facilities. Infantry tactics and pilot training had advanced, although defense command

remained divided as Army and Navy feuding continued. Contemplating a two-front war, one in the Pacific and another in the Atlantic, at the end of the 1930s the U.S. military profited from excellent non-commissioned officers and a strong cadre of younger officers. The depressed job markets had encouraged the enrollment of both.

See Also: BONUS ARMY/BONUS MARCH; ISOLATIONISM; MILITARY: UNITED STATES NAVY; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION.

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HENRY C. FERRELL, JR.

MILITARY: UNITED STATES NAVY

In 1929, as its first line of defense, the United States owned the world's most balanced navy, equally developed in all its elements. The U.S. Navy possessed the most modern battleship fleet, although it was limited in tonnage by the Five-Power Naval Limitation Treaty, adopted by Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States after the 1922 Washington Conference. The U.S. Navy continued perfecting new technical applications in communications and engine designs, and under the direction of William Moffett, the Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics also cultivated the first carrier force. Develop-

ment of the fast carriers, with speeds beyond thirty knots, would doom the reconditioned but slow battleships to secondary status. Yet, both elements struggled for appropriations and personnel assignments. Congressional calls for a unified air force caused additional career anxieties among Navy professionals. Aside from these internal bureaucratic tiffs, the Department of the Navy continued its competition with the Army, and both services squabbled over whose planes would defend the coasts.

William Veazie Pratt, chief of naval operations from 1930 to 1933, promoted a plan for systematic new construction to replace the common practice of irregular and spontaneous building, and he called for the improvement of cruisers and the construction of oceangoing submarines. Pratt's endorsement of the 1930 London Naval Treaty with France, Great Britain, Italy, and Japan to limit naval armaments recognized the political reality of Herbert Hoover's intention to reduce both armaments and federal expenditures. Those who supported a larger navy attacked the president and raised questions as to the Navy's size and effectiveness. But the Navy proved more popular than the Army with the public, and Hollywood romanticized the service in a series of movies.

When Franklin Roosevelt became president in 1933, Carl Vinson, chair of the House Committee on Naval Affairs, led Congress and the Navy to initiate a massive ship replacement program. An even larger building effort followed the Japanese withdrawal in 1936 from the naval treaties. The Vinson Trammell Act of 1934 and the Supplemental Navy Bill of 1938 were benchmarks, but other authorizations, some financed by relief funds, contributed as well. Between 1933 and 1940 Congress appropriated \$4.2 billion for the construction of 238 combatant ships and forty-five auxiliaries. Personnel increases occurred regularly after 1936, and by 1939 dozens of air fields were constructed and 4,500 planes had been authorized. In addition, the Marine Corps, which averaged seventeen thousand enlisted men and one thousand officers, was intent upon developing amphibious landing techniques.

By December 1939, the Navy could call upon fifteen battleships, six carriers, eighteen heavy

cruisers, nineteen light cruisers, 185 destroyers, and sixty-four submarines. Other ships were authorized and built, but the department decided during the 1937 to 1939 period to construct six battleships at the expense of more carriers. Still, the *USS Yorktown*, commissioned in 1938, became a prototype for dozens of carriers in the next decade.

Working with Congress, William Leahy proved more effective as chief of naval operations than his predecessor, William Harrison Standley. In 1938, Leahy warned the congressional appropriations and Navy service committees of the double dangers growing in the Atlantic and Pacific, as evidenced by Japan's aggression in Asia and the sinking of the American ship *Panay* on the Yangtze in 1937. In response, the Navy developed a series of defensive schemes directed at possible opponents. The plan to deal with Japan was called Plan Orange, and it anticipated a Japanese surprise offensive that might include an attack on Pearl Harbor. According to the plan, the United States could withstand the loss of the Philippines and Guam, and would rally by moving across the Pacific, seizing Japanese bases and confronting its battle fleet and air force. In line with these projections, ship designs, especially for new cruisers, accentuated range and durability. These defensive plans served as training paradigms throughout the Depression era. In the late 1930s, the Orange Plan evolved into a series of so-called Rainbow Plans, which involved attacks by several nations, defense of the Western Hemisphere, and possible abandonment of U. S. possessions in the far Pacific. On October 14, 1939, Roosevelt agreed to this amended strategy, which moved the Navy from a defensive to an offensive stance.

See Also: ISOLATIONISM; MILITARY: UNITED STATES ARMY; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION.

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MILLS, OGDEN

Ogden L. Mills (August 23, 1884–October 11, 1937) lawyer, politician, and United States Treasury official, was born in Newport, Rhode Island. After completing an undergraduate degree (1905) and a law degree (1907) at Harvard, he entered law practice in New York City. He became active in Republican politics and won a seat in the New York state Senate in 1914. After war service in the U. S. Army, he was elected in 1920 to represent the 17th District of New York in the U.S. House of Representatives, a position he held until 1927 when he became under-secretary of the Treasury in the Coolidge administration.

President Herbert Hoover, who took office in March 1929, retained his predecessor's Treasury team with Mills as under-secretary and Andrew W. Mellon as secretary. (Mills was to succeed Mellon in the secretaryship in 1932.) Mellon was uncompromising in his opposition to unconventional interventions to stimulate a depressed economy. By contrast, Mills approached economic policy-making with much greater intellectual flexibility. He was a party to Hoover's decision in mid-1931 to declare a moratorium on debt repayments to the

United States by World War I allies if these governments temporarily waived their claims to reparations from Germany. Mills contributed to the architecture of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, (RFC), an institution created in 1931 to lend to banks (and other financial institutions) and to railroads, which was a pioneering exercise in off-budget financing. In mid-1932, Mills was the point man in a failed effort to persuade Congress to authorize RFC to function as an investment banker by lending to private businesses to fund capital formation. He was also involved in shaping legislation allowing the Federal Reserve to use government securities, rather than gold, as backing for its currency issues.

Perhaps Mills's most significant contribution to Depression-fighting occurred after he had technically left high office. In the interregnum between President Franklin D. Roosevelt's election in November 1932 and his inauguration in March 1933, an epidemic of bank failures swept over the country. The near paralysis of the financial system threatened the nation's ability to maintain gold convertibility of the dollar, a commitment that Hoover regarded as sacrosanct. Mills anticipated that this position was likely to become untenable and prepared contingency plans for executive orders to suspend gold payments and to close commercial banks until public confidence had been restored. The Bank "Holiday" declared by the Roosevelt administration in March 1933 drew heavily on the script that Mills had written.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); GOLD STANDARD; MELLON, ANDREW.

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WILLIAM J. BARBER

MINNESOTA FARMER-LABOR PARTY

The Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party still ranks as America's most successful state level third party. It began in 1919 as something of an organizational conglomerate, functioning as the electoral wing of the national Nonpartisan League (a farm protest movement that originated in North Dakota), the locally strong Minneapolis Socialist Party, and the Minnesota state Federation of Labor. As those organizations disappeared or weakened, the Farmer-Labor Party took on a life of its own as party leaders created a permanent organization known as the Farmer-Labor Association to plan the party's direction. Until the mid-1920s the Farmer-Labor Party was the Republican Party's rival for control of state's congressional delegation. In 1924 the Farmer-Labor Party also supported the independent presidential campaign of Robert La Follette.

During the second half of "Prosperity Decade," membership in the Farmer-Labor Association dropped, the state Federation of Labor withdrew its formal affiliation, and the party's newspaper was sold off. Attractive candidates stopped calling attention to their affiliation with the party. Then, in 1930, the party's 1924 gubernatorial candidate, Floyd B. Olson, ran again. Olson had served for many years as attorney for Hennepin County, a jurisdiction that includes Minneapolis. As an adolescent working as a harvest hand in North Dakota, Olson had joined the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). He also enjoyed good relations with the tightly knit Jewish community of Minneapolis. Later, Olson was an early leader in the American Civil Liberties Union, whose founders sought to protect the right of free political speech for left-wing radicals in the Nonpartisan League, the Socialist Party, and the Communist Party, and to protect the civil liberties of labor organizers and labor strikers. Photographs and films from the era show a ruddy, strapping, and evidently gregarious man. Olson had a commanding radio voice, but he was just as good in a convention hall or on the stump. He was elected governor in 1930.

Olson's political heyday ran from 1931 to August 1936, during which time he rose to national

prominence. He died in office, however, from stomach cancer. During this period the Farmer-Labor Party gained control of the state's congressional delegation, and by 1936 the party had elected, for the first time, two full-term senators. The party also made rapid progress in mobilizing voters to support candidates for all state-wide executive offices, including treasurer, secretary of state, attorney general, and lieutenant governor.

The Farmer-Labor Party permanently changed the political economy of Minnesota. The party established collective bargaining in the state and protected farmers before passage of the 1933 federal Agricultural Adjustment Act. Two other constituencies of the Farmer-Labor Party that had joined its coalition in the late 1920s and early 1930s were small business owners facing competition from chain stores, and rural bankers facing the prospect of sale of their establishments to larger banks in better condition. For them, the Farmer-Laborites backed anti-chain store legislation and discouraged the acquisition of independent banks by large Twin Cities or out-of-state banks.

In the areas of industrial relations and agricultural income security, the Farmer-Labor Party engaged in close collaboration with dynamic social movements pushing for bold new policies. They did not achieve their goals in the end, but with help from the Farmer-Labor Party, public policy moved far in the direction preferred by the leaders of these movements.

As governor, Floyd Olson used a key executive resource—command of the state National Guard—to recast industrial relations in the Twin Cities and elsewhere in the state, particularly in Duluth, on the Iron Range, and in the meat-packing and processing centers in southeastern Minnesota. American governors had historically used this authority to break strikes by enforcing anti-picketing injunctions issued by the courts, thus helping employers withhold recognition of a strike leadership's authority. In several cases, governors had used state military force to assault strike picketers directly. Olson, however, used the Minnesota National Guard during the 1934 truckers' strike in Minneapolis to unravel an "open-shop" anti-union system that had thrived in the Twin Cities for two decades.

Olson did the same in 1935, as did the two succeeding Farmer-Labor governors: Hjalmar Petersen, the lieutenant governor who assumed the governorship after Olson's death in 1936 and held office until January 1937, and former banking commissioner and U.S. Senator Elmer Benson, who held the governorship from 1937 to 1939. Minnesota's three Farmer-Labor governors established a labor record that is rare, if not unique, in the history of American gubernatorial politics. Because they transformed the state National Guard into a neutral instrument for preserving public order in a context of increased labor militancy, they essentially distanced the police power of the state government from its traditional pro-employer role. This change facilitated the rapid increase in trade union strength and the development of modern collective bargaining in Minnesota.

A similar pattern of collaboration between the party and various movements occurred in agriculture in 1932 and 1933 when many commercial farmers in Iowa, the Dakotas, Minnesota, and elsewhere in the north central states and the Plains faced mortgage foreclosure. Prices for corn, milk, and other commodities rapidly sank in the general deflation. In Iowa and Minnesota, protests emerged, partly through the Farmers Holiday Association. This association was an offshoot of the Farmers Union and had been set up to shield the union from legal liability for actions that its members might take in connection with the protest movement. The new organization named itself after the presidential moratorium on bank transactions, euphemistically called the "bank holiday." If bankers could take a holiday from their jobs in order to gain economic relief, impoverished farmers reasoned that they could do the same.

Farmers blocked roads, hoping to dramatize their plight and cause food shortages at regional farm markets. They also mobbed public foreclosure sales of farms, and would either prevent completion of sale or force sale at a ridiculously low price that the original farmer could easily afford. In addition, they organized protest marches on state capitols to bring their cause to the attention of governors and legislators.

One important response, taken by both the Republican and Farmer-Labor parties, was tax relief

through homestead exemption legislation, which provided a standard property tax exemption. In February 1933, after several months of issuing sometimes fiery statements of sympathy for the farmers' plight, Olson proclaimed a one-year moratorium on foreclosure sales in Minnesota, acting on the basis of the state's police power. Olson's actions placed considerable pressure on the state legislature; the Farmer-Labor Party controlled only one house, the House of Representatives. Nonetheless, on April 18, 1933, Olson was able to sign the Minnesota Mortgage Moratorium Act.

Harry Peterson, the Minnesota attorney general, who was elected as a Farmer-Laborite, defended the Minnesota Mortgage Moratorium Act when the U.S. Supreme Court accepted an appeal brought from the Supreme Court of Minnesota, which had upheld the statute. In describing the scope and depth of economic distress in Minnesota, the resulting distortion of mortgage contracts undertaken in different times, and the public interest in restoring order and confidence in property rights, the Minnesota attorney general played a key role in the case's presentation. The U.S. Supreme Court was persuaded to break from a tradition of strict construction of the Constitution's contract clause. In an opinion written by the chief justice, the Court affirmed the judgment of the Minnesota Supreme Court. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision, *Home Building and Loan Association v. Blaisdell* (1934), gave support to the large number of moratoria enacted throughout the country. It is today a basic undergirding of government regulation.

In contrast to this legal contribution to national policy, the Farmer-Labor Party had little effect on congressional politics, despite its control of the Minnesota delegation in both the House and the Senate. The one exception is its role in the Depression-era debate over unemployment insurance, in which a Farmer-Labor congressman, Ernest Lundeen, defined the radical end of the policy debate. Lundeen used his assignment to the subcommittee on unemployment insurance of the House Committee on Labor to publicize his plan for government and employers to replace all wages lost to unemployment, with the administration of insurance funds to occur through local workers' and farmers'

councils. Thousands of American Federation of Labor locals expressed support for the Lundeen bill. It applied to all workers and farmers "without discrimination because of age, sex, race, color, religious or political opinion or affiliation," and it covered workers who became unemployed due to maternity, sickness, accident, or old age. Remarkably, the House Committee on Labor reported the bill favorably after holding hearings on it in 1934 and 1935. However, the bill never received a rule for floor consideration after the Roosevelt administration denounced it, and the bill died when it was defeated as a proposed amendment to the Social Security Act.

The Farmer-Labor Party was a vital organization that left a deep imprint on Minnesota politics and on national regulatory doctrine. Today its vision of social security still inspires scholarly comment and research. The history of the Farmer-Labor Party shows the extent to which some Americans were willing to break from two-party traditions and allegiances if a well-organized, viable, and resilient alternative was available. That alternative ended when the party's leaders merged their organization with the Democratic Party in 1944, creating today's Minnesota Democratic Farmer-Labor Party.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1934; LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.; FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION (FHA); OLSON, FLOYD B; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

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RICHARD M. VALELLY

MISSOURI EX REL. GAINES V. CANADA

On January 4, 1936, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) launched its sustained challenge against state-imposed school segregation by filing a petition for a writ of mandamus for Lloyd L. Gaines against the University of Missouri to gain admission for him to its law school. The university had refused to admit Gaines the previous September because of his race. Missouri had no law school for African Americans, who were barred from all graduate and professional schools in the state. So Gaines's attorneys, Sidney R. Redmond, Henry D. Espy, and Charles Hamilton Houston, on March 27 filed a new suit, *Missouri ex rel. Gaines v. Canada*, to force the university to admit him.

This struggle was spurred by the NAACP's unprecedented victory in 1935 in the case of Donald Gaines Murray, a Baltimore resident, who had been denied admission to the University of Maryland Law School because he was black. Representing Murray, Charles Houston, the NAACP's special counsel, and Thurgood Marshall, a young attorney with the Baltimore NAACP branch, won a writ of mandamus from the Baltimore City Court ordering the university to admit Murray at once. The attorneys sued within the "separate but equal" concept that the U.S. Supreme Court established in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case in 1896. The university had offered to pay for Murray's education at an institution outside Maryland, but he rejected the offer. Upholding the Baltimore City Court's order, the Maryland Court of Appeals ruled that duly qualified African Americans "must at present" be admitted to the one school provided for the study of law—the law school of the University of Maryland." The university had contended that the law school was not a governmental agency and that provisions for

racial segregation in education automatically excluded African Americans. But Maryland's high court held that "there is no escape from the conclusion that the school is now a branch or agency of the state government." The university did not appeal the ruling to the U.S. Supreme Court, and Murray was admitted without further incident.

The *Gaines* case, however, did reach the U.S. Supreme Court. Gaines was a citizen of Missouri and had graduated from Missouri's Lincoln University, a Jim Crow school. Reaffirming the lower court's denial of his application, the Missouri Supreme Court explained that under state law, Lincoln University could "open any necessary school or department" its curators deemed advisable. Where no alternative had been provided, the state was required to pay the African-American resident's tuition "at any university of any adjacent state." Kansas, Illinois, Iowa, and Nebraska, it noted, all had law schools that admitted blacks. Gaines was therefore accorded equal protection of law. Thus the Supreme Court of Missouri denied him relief.

The U.S. Supreme Court, however, reversed the state court's decision. Writing for the six to two majority in what *The Crisis* considered "the most significant victory for Negro rights in the highest court of the land in the past decade," (January 1939) Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes concluded, "The admissibility of laws separating the races in the enjoyment of privileges afforded by the State rests wholly upon the equality of the privileges which the laws give to the separated groups within the State. The question here is not of a duty of the State to supply legal training, or of the quality of the training which it does supply, but of its duty when it provides such training to furnish it to the residents of the State upon the basis of an equality of right." Consequently, Gaines "was entitled to be admitted to the law school of the State University in the absence of other and proper provision for his legal training within the State." Unlike Murray in Maryland, Gaines did not enter the law school. He disappeared and was not seen again.

The precedent established the test for all educational facilities in the country and applied to the nineteen states and the District of Columbia that

maintained separate schools for the races in the section of the country where almost 80 percent of African Americans lived. The *Gaines* decision was a major step on the road to the 1954 decision in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*. The opinions in the series of cases from *Gaines* to *Brown* defined the constitutional rights of African Americans as citizens. They furthermore broadened the interpretation of constitutional rights for all citizens under the Fourteenth Amendment in ways that eventually also extended civil liberties to whites, women, the elderly, gays, and the disabled.

See Also: HOUSTON, CHARLES; NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); SUPREME COURT.

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DENTON L. WATSON

MITCHELL, ARTHUR W.

As the first black American to serve in Congress as a Democrat, Arthur Wergs Mitchell (December 22, 1883–May 9, 1968) pioneered black Americans' transition from the Republican to the Democratic Party.

Born in Roanoke, Alabama, Mitchell possessed great intelligence and ruthless ambition. He attend-

ed Tuskegee Institute for two years and received his teaching certificate from Alabama's Snow Hill Institute in 1903. Later that year, Mitchell founded the West Alabama Normal and Industrial Institute in Panola County. The school suffered from financial mismanagement and poor relations with the local black community. When a fire destroyed the school's main building in 1915, Mitchell fled with the insurance money and headed to the Armstrong Agricultural Institute in Choctaw County. At Armstrong, Mitchell's haughty behavior alienated poor blacks and whites alike, resulting in his leaving for Washington, D.C., in 1919 with \$10,000 from the school's reserves.

After a successful real estate career in Washington, Mitchell moved to Chicago in 1928 to become active in local Republican politics. Chicago Republicans, however, possessed too many established black politicians for Mitchell to move up as quickly as he desired, so Mitchell switched to the Democratic Party. Mitchell's arrival coincided with a push by local Democrats to convert Chicago blacks to the Democratic cause. Consequently, Mitchell moved up the ranks quickly, becoming in 1934 the first black Democrat to be elected to Congress.

From the start, Mitchell suffered from poor relations with his black constituents at home and across the country. Aside from his ardent support for the New Deal, Mitchell did little to address the economic deprivations blacks faced during the Depression. The black press frequently criticized Mitchell for his "lack of aggressiveness" on civil rights. He feuded with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, which he labeled a "vicious" organization. Finally, Mitchell's anti-labor sentiments led Associated Negro Press reporter George F. McCray to characterize Mitchell's labor policy as "reckless, and unenlightened."

Mitchell shifted towards a moderate civil rights stance later in his career, becoming a vocal critic of the poll tax and lynching. In 1937, after being forced to ride in a segregated railroad car in Arkansas, Mitchell defied his political bosses in Chicago by launching a personal damage suit against three Chicago-based railroad companies that observed Jim Crow seating arrangements in the South. The Supreme Court decided in Mitchell's favor in 1941,

but Mitchell's unwillingness to drop the case cost him the support of Chicago's Democratic leadership. Knowing he could not win reelection without party support, Mitchell announced his retirement and moved to his country estate in Petersburg, Virginia, in 1942.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; DE PRIEST, OSCAR; FAUSET, CRYSTAL BIRD.

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CHRISTOPHER E. MANNING

MOLEY, RAYMOND

Raymond Charles Moley (September 27, 1886–February 18, 1975) was a scholar, a New Deal public servant, a journalist, and an author. Born in Berea, Ohio, Moley grew up in Olmsted Falls. In 1906, he graduated with a bachelor's degree from Baldwin-Wallace College in Cleveland. For a short time thereafter, Moley served as superintendent of schools in his hometown. In 1909, he became ill with tuberculosis and moved to New Mexico and Colorado for health reasons. By 1912 he was cured and decided to pursue his education again, first getting his master's degree in political science at Oberlin College in Ohio, and later his Ph.D. at Columbia University in New York. He taught for a short time at Western Reserve University in Cleveland, then returned to Columbia in the 1920s.

In 1919, Moley became director of the Cleveland Foundation, where he studied and wrote on the court system and the criminal justice system. He eventually became a member of the New York State

Crime Commission, where he participated in the Seabury investigation into corruption in the New York City government. While in New York, Moley met Louis Howe, who introduced him to Franklin D. Roosevelt, then governor of New York. Moley and Roosevelt came to know each other better, and Moley offered to help Roosevelt in his 1932 presidential campaign. At the instigation of Samuel Rosenman, Moley put together Roosevelt's famous Brains Trust. Consisting of Moley, Rexford Tugwell, and Adolf Berle, the Brains Trust was designed to help educate Roosevelt for the 1932 campaign and to keep him informed on the most current solutions being offered to resolve the Great Depression. The three men also served as speech-writers for Roosevelt, and it was Moley who actually coined the term *New Deal*. Moley was particularly helpful in drafting Roosevelt's "Concert of Interests" speech in 1932. During the campaign, Moley emphasized the need for business and government to cooperate in overcoming the economic crisis. After the election, Moley continued calling for such cooperation, while working closely with Roosevelt in both domestic and foreign policy matters. Officially, Moley became assistant secretary of state to Cordell Hull, with whom he disagreed on numerous policy matters.

Moley's star began to fall rapidly during 1933 London Economic Conference. Disagreeing with the president on monetary and world issues, Moley was undermined by Roosevelt's famous "bombshell" message to the Conference announcing that the United States would pursue a domestic program to solve the Depression. Angered and hurt, Moley returned home and gradually began to move out of the Roosevelt inner circle. By 1936, Moley had turned towards Herbert Hoover and the Republican Party. In 1939, he published his memoirs, *After Seven Years*, criticizing Roosevelt, and in 1940 he openly supported Republican candidate Wendell Wilkie for the presidency. Thereafter, Moley, working as an editor at *Today* and an associate editor at *Newsweek*, continued to support Republican candidates and often attacked Roosevelt and the Democratic Party. He died in 1975.

See Also: BRAIN(S) TRUST; LONDON ECONOMIC CONFERENCE OF 1933; NEW DEAL.

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

MONETARY POLICY

In the United States, heterodox proposals for monetary manipulation tend to flourish in times of economic crisis. The farm lobbies, in particular, have been disposed to back such measures when seeking relief from agricultural distress. They had done so in the 1870s when supporting the Greenback movement to expand the currency issue. They did so again in the 1890s when rallying behind the Populists and then William Jennings Bryan's campaigns for "free silver."

In 1932, this tradition took on a renewed vitality. The argument for inflationary policies to pump up farm prices was now articulated in more sophisticated form. Through the research of Cornell University agricultural economist George F. Warren and his collaborator, F. A. Pearson, doctrines that could formerly be dismissed as the work of "cranks" and "amateurs" were given at least a pseudoscientific veneer. From their base at the state of New York's land grant college, Warren and Pearson enjoyed proximity and visibility to the state's political establishment. And they had won converts to their views among some who would later occupy high positions in President Franklin D. Roosevelt's administrations—most notably, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., a future secretary of the treasury.

Warren and Pearson rested their arguments on elaborate statistical investigations of the behavior of commodity prices, on the one hand, and the price of gold, on the other. Their findings suggested that there was a high positive correlation between the two. It thus seemed to follow that the answer to depressed farm prices could be found in raising the

price of gold. This approach to policy, however, would be incompatible with a U. S. commitment to gold convertibility of the dollar at a fixed parity.

Another version of this line of argument was supplied by Yale University's Irving Fisher, an economist recognized for his analytic ingenuity, though one who was also regarded as a bit suspect for his eccentricities (such as his ardent advocacy of prohibition and the eugenics movement) and for his unfortunate pronouncement in September 1929 that the stock market had reached a permanently high plateau. Fisher's empirical studies in the mid-1920s had indicated that the general price level—with a lag of seven months or so—led changes in the volume of aggregate economic activity. More specifically, a rising price level stimulated the volume of trade, and a declining price level depressed it. Since 1930, the American economy had experienced severe deflation: It was thus not surprising that the Depression had deepened. By 1932, Fisher was convinced that the remedy for this condition was to be found in "reflating" the general price level back to its pre-Depression elevation. When the targeted price level had been reached, the price level should be stabilized and the economy would thereafter enjoy stability. He insisted that monetary expansion—when no longer constrained by the gold standard—could produce the needed reflation. Raising the price of gold should be one of the measures deployed for this purpose.

The state of the American financial system when Roosevelt was inaugurated in March 1933 provided a moment of opportunity when suspension of the dollar's gold convertibility was both necessary and acceptable. Between his election in November 1932 and his assumption of the presidency, the nation had experienced unprecedented runs on banks and drains on the country's gold reserves serious enough to threaten their exhaustion. In the face of this crisis, Roosevelt was obliged to declare a "bank holiday" and to suspend gold convertibility, which he did by executive order as his first substantive official act. Measures taken in the months immediately thereafter effectively nationalized the monetary gold stock by outlawing private holdings.

Rupturing the tie to gold meant that economic policymakers had a much freer hand to experiment.

Congress further widened the president's range of options with the passage of an amendment to the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 (known as the Thomas Amendment, in recognition of the Oklahoma senator who sponsored it). This legislation conveyed discretionary power to the president to: (1) issue up to \$3 billion in greenbacks (a currency without metallic backing); (2) establish the gold content of the dollar with the restriction that it could not be reduced by more than 50 percent; and (3) fix the value of silver and provide for its unlimited coinage and establish bimetallism. It was not clear, however, which of these powers (if any) would be exercised.

GOLD AND SILVER PURCHASE PROGRAMS

On October 22, 1933, Roosevelt announced that he had ordered a government agency to buy gold "at prices determined from time to time," that "this was a policy and not an expedient," and that this action was "not to be used merely to offset a temporary fall in prices." (The presence of Warren and of James Harvey Rogers—a Yale economist who shared Fisher's views—when this initiative was launched indicated that reflation of the price level was the objective of the exercise.) On each business day in the ensuing weeks, Roosevelt met with Morgenthau to fix the day's buying price. When price-elevating bidding was terminated in January 1934, the price of gold had reached \$35 per ounce, at which point it was pegged. Before the country left the gold standard, its official price had been \$20.67. Despite this activity, the general price level had not risen as the advocates of the gold purchase program had predicted.

In early 1934, the Roosevelt administration was confronted with mounting political pressures—particularly from senators representing silver-mining constituencies—to do something to raise the price of silver. There was a fundamental difference between the gold purchase program mounted in the autumn of 1933 and the silver purchase program that was later adopted. The former was an instance of a deliberate policy of preference that allegedly had some analytic mooring. The latter was undertaken reluctantly in response to congressional pressures that were difficult to contain. Administra-

tion officials counted it as a success that they had at least managed to forestall enactment of legislation that would mandate purchase of prescribed quantities of silver. The agreement struck with Congress in May 1934 instead set out a general goal: Treasury purchases should aim at an accumulation in which silver amounted to one-third of the value of the gold stock. However, no timetable for this outcome was specified. Though the Department of the Treasury was slow to implement this policy, it managed to spend \$1.6 billion on silver acquisitions between 1934 and 1941.

Between them, gold and silver acquisitions substantially augmented the nation's monetary base and made major contributions to the swelling of excess reserves in commercial banks. By contrast, the Federal Reserve's contribution to monetary ease in 1933 and 1934 was slight. The Federal Reserve—without enthusiasm—did acquire a modest quantity of government securities between May and November 1933 and then suspended open market operations until 1937. The 1933 purchases appear to have been motivated by the Board's fear that, in the absence of some activity on its part, the administration might be provoked to issue greenbacks. The discount rate, which stood at 3.5 percent in March 1933, was reduced by seven of the twelve District Banks and, in New York, it fell to 2 percent.

RESHAPING THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

The Federal Reserve's role began to change in 1935 with passage of a Banking Act that reorganized its structure. This legislation was largely the handiwork of Marriner Eccles, a Utah banker whose views on depression-fighting called for enlarged government spending financed through deficits, who had been recruited to Washington to serve as its chairman. The Banking Act of 1935 was designed to serve three purposes: (1) to change the composition of the governing body by displacing two *ex officio* members—the secretary of the treasury and the comptroller of the currency—and by restyling the Federal Reserve Board as the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System; (2) to restructure the Open Market Committee by placing its decisive weight with the Board of Governors in Washington by reducing the voting strength of the

Federal Reserve District Banks; and (3) to increase the power of the central Board over the determination of discount rates and to widen its discretionary latitude over required reserve ratios.

Eccles did not delay long in using his new authority over required reserve ratios. It was then believed that the Board's capacity to restrain lending by commercial banks would be compromised when they held abnormally large sums in excess reserves, as appeared to be the case in 1936 and early 1937. Accordingly, the Board of Governors acted to increase its leverage by exercising its newly-conveyed power to double required reserve ratios. Board action was taken in two steps: (1) required reserve ratios were raised half the distance toward the legal maximum in August 1936; and (2) increases to the full limit allowed by law were ordered in the spring of 1937. All of this was seen as precautionary and not as a retreat from monetary ease. After all, the discount rate in New York in September 1937 was 1 percent and it was set at 1.5 percent by the other District Banks. Eccles insisted that the "supply of money to finance increased production [was] ample."

THE RECESSION OF 1937 AND 1938

The Board's decisions on this matter have been faulted on grounds that they provoked the recession of 1937 and 1938, which set in when the economy was operating well below its full employment capacity. Two latter-day commentators, Milton Friedman and Anna Jacobson Schwartz, have assigned major responsibility for this sharp downturn to the Federal Reserve's actions in doubling required reserve ratios. Their argument rests on the view that excess reserves, which the Board held to be needlessly excessive, were, in fact, desired as liquidity cushions in circumstances of depression. Hence, the Board's intervention in shrinking them led banks to constrain lending activities. A different interpretation—favored by New Deal contemporaries—held that the recession had been triggered by a turnaround in government's fiscal impact on the economy: that is, from being expansionary in 1936 to contractionary in 1937.

The administration's policy response to the recession—when announced in April 1938—

emphasized fiscal stimulants in a "spend-lend program." Then, for the first time, Roosevelt embraced deficit financing as a positive good, rather than an unavoidable evil. The Federal Reserve participated by lowering required reserve ratios by one-third. Subsequently the volume of excess reserves again grew. It was not until November 1941, however, that the Board once more set required reserve ratios at the maximum level allowed by law.

See Also: BANK PANICS (1930–1933); ECCLES, MARRINER; ECONOMY, AMERICAN; FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; GOLD STANDARD; MORGENTHAU, HENRY T., JR.; RECESSION OF 1937.

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WILLIAM J. BARBER

MONOPOLY (BOARD GAME)

The Monopoly game was first published by Parker Brothers in 1935 and quickly became the nation's most popular board game. Its success was actually enhanced by the Great Depression: Millions of people from Maine to California found its vicarious promise of wealth to be irresistible, in stark contrast to the grim economic realities of their daily lives. Few realized that its board spaces were named after

A MONOPOLY® board from 1935, the year Parker Brothers first published the game.

counterparts in one specific community (Atlantic City, New Jersey), and fewer still knew that the game's predecessor dated back to the turn of the century.

Parker Brothers acquired the game from an unemployed steam-heating repairman, Charles Darrow of Mount Airey (Philadelphia), Pennsylvania. Darrow was the first to publish Monopoly, which evolved from Elizabeth Magie-Phillips's Landlord Game. Her 1903 game espoused Henry George's single tax theory (that only real estate should be taxed). Monopoly became a fixture at certain eastern colleges, and homemade copies, which usually featured street names from the maker's hometown, found their way eventually to Atlantic City, New Jersey. Darrow played this early version with his friends, then began to make and sell copies, which preserved the street names from Atlantic City, to

others. Realizing the potential to provide income for his family, Darrow invested in five hundred printed copies and sold them through a few stores, most notably FAO Schwarz toy stores and the John Wanamaker department store in Philadelphia. Word of the game's success reached Parker Brothers. The firm acquired Darrow's version and its subsequent patent. It also acquired Mrs. Phillips's patent on the Landlord Game and the rights for a few other similar games. By 1936, Parker Brothers owned a monopoly on Monopoly.

Parker Brothers, the nation's best-known game company, had been founded by sixteen-year-old George Parker in 1883, but it was on the verge of bankruptcy when Monopoly arrived in 1935. Located in the Boston suburb made famous by the witch trials of the 1600s (Salem, Massachusetts), the firm went from begging for printing business in Boston

to running its presses around the clock, seven days a week, to keep up with demand for this one game. (It requested and obtained the approval of the Catholic Church in Salem to employ its workers on Sundays.) Within eighteen months, more than two million copies had been sold. Standard editions sold for \$2.50 and deluxe editions went for as much as \$25.00.

The game published in 1935 is remarkably similar to the standard edition published today. Its object is to bankrupt all of the opposing players. Its game board features a continuous track of forty spaces, twenty-eight of which are properties represented by title deeds. Players buy these spaces and attempt to collect complete color groups in order to charge ever-higher rents by building houses and hotels on them. (Players are obligated to pay rent when landing on an opponent's properties.) Trading of properties is encouraged. Many believe that Monopoly owes its enduring appeal to what happens off of the game board—the social interaction amongst its players. Nearly two hundred million copies of Monopoly had been sold worldwide by the year 2000.

See Also: FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LEISURE.

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PHILIP E. ORBANES

MORGAN, J. P., JR.

John Pierpont Morgan, Jr. (September 7, 1867–March 13, 1943) was a prominent American banker and financier who served as head of the Morgan investment banking house for thirty years. John Pierpont Morgan, Jr., or “Jack,” was the eldest son of John Pierpont Morgan, the most powerful American banker and financier of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The most important American financier of his day, Jack was the target of both politicians' barbs and an assassin's bullets during his career.

After graduating from Harvard University in 1889, Jack joined his father's firm in 1892 and worked in the firm's London branch for eight years. When his father died in 1913, Jack took over the firm. Morgan secured billions in loans during and after World War I for Britain and France. Unabashedly pro-British in his public sentiments, in July 1915 Morgan was the target of a mentally deranged German sympathizer who shot and wounded him. In 1929, Morgan served on the Committee of Experts to advise the Reparation Commission about Germany's war reparations.

At the onset of the Depression, Morgan's firm helped prevent retail banks from closing their doors and tried to save several companies from failing. Nonetheless, Morgan was frequently the subject of suspicion and conspiratorial rumors and he became a leading target of politicians who sought scapegoats for the nation's economic woes. Even Nazi anti-American propaganda accused Morgan of contributing to Germany's problems. Morgan's public statements supporting laissez-faire business views did little to help his image or that of the banking industry. From 1933 to 1941, congressional committees conducted a series of investigations into Morgan-managed foreign loans. The Senate Banking and Currency Committee, which retained Ferdinand Pecora as special counsel in 1933, launched an investigation into the activities of the securities business and the stock market. The Pecora Committee was dismissed by some as political theater, but not before Pecora tried to discredit Morgan by publicly examining his business affairs in an attempt to find wrongdoing. Pecora's efforts failed to turn up anything illegal, but he did succeed in tarnishing the reputation of both Morgan and his company. The committee's finding that the twenty Morgan partners had paid nothing in federal income tax for the previous two years (all perfectly legal but seen as somehow dishonest and immoral) contributed to the passage of the Glass-Steagall banking bill, which separated investment from commercial (deposit) banking. The Morgan firm elected to become a private commercial bank.

In 1934 allegations surfaced that the financial community had been instrumental in maneuvering the United States into World War I on the side of

the Allies. Some argued that American bankers did this in order to protect the huge loans they floated to the Allies. Senator Gerald P. Nye, chair of the Munitions Committee, spent a month closely questioning Morgan and two of his associates over their role as “merchants of death.” The Nye Committee finally decided that there was no evidence of wrongdoing. The stress of the hearings may have directly contributed to the heart attack Morgan suffered four months later. In all, Morgan and his firm faced at least four congressional investigations.

By the time of the Nye Committee, Morgan was semi-retired from the day-to-day operations of his company. As war approached, he scaled back his holdings as he watched his fortune continue to shrink. In 1940, he turned J.P. Morgan & Co., a private banking firm, into J.P. Morgan & Co., Inc., a publicly traded corporation, to help protect its assets. The change also lightened his workload considerably. He spent his remaining years traveling and working.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); BUSINESSMEN; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933.

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JAMES G. LEWIS

MORGENTHAU, HENRY T., JR.

Henry T. Morgenthau, Jr., (May 11, 1891–February 6, 1967) was secretary of the treasury from 1934 to 1945 under presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and (briefly) Harry S. Truman. Morgenthau’s father was

from a German-Jewish family that immigrated to the United States in 1865. Henry Morgenthau, Sr., amassed a considerable fortune through investment in real-estate properties in the New York City boroughs of the Bronx and Harlem. He and his wife, Josephine Sykes, were activists in the Democratic Party and in social welfare causes, including the Henry Street settlement, the Bronx House, and fire safety conditions in New York City. Henry Morgenthau, Sr., also served as head of finance for the Democratic National Committee in 1912 and again in 1916, and as ambassador to Turkey during World War I.

Henry Morgenthau, Jr. was born in New York City, the third and only son of four children. He entered Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire in 1904 but did not do well, completing his college preparation at the Sachs Collegiate Institute in New York City. In 1909 he enrolled at Cornell University to study architecture, but completed only two years. His father then found him work at various jobs, including volunteer service with Lillian D. Wald at the Henry Street Settlement.

In 1911 Morgenthau contracted typhoid fever and went to Texas to recuperate. Life in rural Texas convinced him that he wanted to build a career as a gentleman farmer, even if that meant defying his father’s wish that he take up the family businesses. After another brief stint at Cornell, and a tour of farming districts throughout the United States, he returned to New York, where he acquired some 1,700 acres in Dutchess County, New York. There, at age twenty-two, he began a career in agriculture, working hard to make his largely depleted lands along the Hudson River productive and profitable. During World War I he accepted a largely honorary commission as a naval lieutenant, and after the war helped Herbert Hoover’s U.S. Food Administration provide tractors to French farmers.

By 1915 Morgenthau had met a neighbor, Franklin Roosevelt, who unsuccessfully urged him to get involved in politics. Their common Democratic Party and humanitarian interests nonetheless helped in forging a close relationship, the younger Morgenthau becoming intensely loyal and devoted to Roosevelt and eager to promote his friend’s political career. In 1916 Morgenthau married a child-

hood friend, Elinor Fatman, a highly able and accomplished graduate of nearby Vassar College. Elinor Morgenthau and Eleanor Roosevelt also formed a close friendship, working together in various welfare and educational activities.

In 1922 Morgenthau purchased a failing journal, the *American Agriculturalist*. Through the journal he became known as a leading advocate of progressive scientific farming. It thus was almost predictable that when Roosevelt was elected governor of New York in 1928 he named Morgenthau chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Committee, asking him in addition to work at strengthening the Democratic Party in the economically depressed rural areas of the state. In 1930 Roosevelt moved Morgenthau to the post of conservation commissioner for the state. There Morgenthau worked closely with Harry L. Hopkins, helping to establish a state reforestation project that created employment for thousands of men and served as a model for the popular New Deal Civilian Conservation Corps.

Morgenthau was deeply disappointed in 1933 when the newly-elected President Roosevelt did not appoint him secretary of agriculture. He nonetheless accepted a post as head of the Federal Farm Board. In November the illness of William Woodin led Roosevelt to appoint Morgenthau acting secretary of the treasury. Within a few months it was clear that Woodin could not return and Morgenthau became secretary. He continued as secretary of the treasury for the next eleven years, longer than any of his predecessors except Andrew Mellon.

Morgenthau led the Department of the Treasury through perhaps the most turbulent era since the Civil War, that of the Great Depression and World War II. He had unparalleled access to the president, the two taking lunch together each Monday. His was a major voice in encouraging the president to devalue the dollar in late 1933 and early 1934, a policy recommended by the inflationist monetary theories of Cornell agricultural economists George F. Warren and Frank A. Pearson.

Well-schooled in progressivism, the secretary of the treasury was devoted to efficiency and economy in government. He saw a balanced federal budget as the best indicator of success in both and



Henry Morgenthau, Jr., with Franklin D. Roosevelt in Ithaca, New York, in August 1931. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

took upon himself the task of accomplishing it. Early in 1937 the economic indices were suggesting that the recovery was solid, and Morgenthau began plans for balancing the budget. That fall, however, the economy took a serious plunge. Morgenthau responded by insisting even more strongly that the budget be balanced, now not as a happy consequence of, but as an instrument of, recovery. When Roosevelt ignored him and took the advice of Harry Hopkins and Federal Reserve Chairman Marriner S. Eccles to renew spending in April 1938, Morgenthau threatened to resign.

World War II involved the Department of the Treasury continuously in key issues. Morgenthau opposed the relocation of West Coast Japanese Americans in 1941. He was an early advocate of American aid to the allies, and helped to establish the War Refugee Board to assist Jews and other refugees from Europe. Most controversial, however, was his Morgenthau Plan for dealing with postwar

Germany. The secretary proposed the complete demilitarization of Germany, the dismantling of its industries, and its division into two agricultural states. The plan was opposed by President Truman and others, whose argument that a strong postwar Germany was needed for stability in Europe carried the day. Morgenthau was a key participant in the Bretton Woods Conference of July 1944, which led to the establishment of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

Finding that Truman opposed the Morgenthau Plan, and resentful that the president did not invite him to attend the Potsdam Conference, Morgenthau resigned in July 1945, returning to his farm in Dutchess County. After his wife Elinor died in 1949, he married Margaret Puthon Hirsch. In retirement he devoted much of his time to philanthropies, directing the United Jewish Appeal between 1947 and 1950, and chairing the board of governors of the American Financial and Development Corporation for Israel from 1951 to 1954. He died in Poughkeepsie, New York, in 1967.

See Also: DEFICIT SPENDING; MONETARY POLICY; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

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DEAN L. MAY

MOSES, ROBERT

During the 1930s, Robert Moses (December 18, 1888–July 29, 1981), acting under the title commissioner of parks, not only dotted New York City with hundreds of new parks, playgrounds, and swim-

ming pools, but also permeated much of New York state with his vision of public recreational facilities linked by parkways, causeways, and bridges. From 1933 to 1939, Moses probably exercised control over a greater amount of public funds than any unelected official ever had. And the elected officials he “served” were glad to let him do it.

Moses’s strong-minded and independent mother, Isabella, gave him his most salient personality traits. He was an extraordinarily industrious student at Yale from 1905 to 1909, despite the fact that being Jewish left him at the edges of Yale society. After Yale he went to Oxford, where he decided to focus on public administration and made himself an expert on the British colonial system, which he saw as a model of efficient government.

Though he was a lifelong Republican, Moses rose to power under Democratic administrations in New York, particularly those of Al Smith and Franklin D. Roosevelt. Having grown up during the height of the Progressive era, Moses was always to remain an idealist. Thus, he was able to maintain his early value as a public official through his judicious and successful sponsorship of reform measures, particularly in the area of banking in the first years of the Depression. It also did not hurt that the studious Moses knew more about the issues at hand than anybody else did. When federal money poured into New York City in the mid-1930s under the auspices of the Public Works Administration, Moses was given almost total freedom to build his most ambitious projects to date. These included the building of the Triborough Bridge, an expansion of the subway system, the construction of the city’s first public housing project, and an extensive renovation of the city’s parks.

Moses’s reclamation of part of Long Island as a 118-mile-long public playground in the late 1920s set the model and tone for how he would work during the 1930s and after. First, he would think big, fitting every detail of his plan into his macrocosmic vision. Second, he would see potential in tracts of land that others had dismissed as unworthy of development. His Jones Beach project was exemplary in this regard. Third, he would overcome all opposition to his plans, even though this opposition often came in the form of powerful estate owners and

politicians. Lastly, he would consolidate the authority for all of these public works under himself. This led to greater efficiency in administration, but left him open to charges of autocracy. The primary example in this regard is the Triborough Bridge Authority, over which he took complete charge when he was appointed city parks commissioner by Mayor Fiorello La Guardia in 1934.

Critics of Moses have pointed out that his parks, roads, and public facilities have subsequently led to unexpected blights upon the landscape, and to greater congestion in places where he had hoped to create a free flow of movement. However, these problems might have been caused by factors of urban (and suburban) expansion that were beyond even "The Commissioner's" extensive control. Robert Moses finally left state government in 1968 when Nelson Rockefeller shuffled the cards of the New York bureaucracy and forced him out. However, by then Moses had left his indelible stamp upon the city and state, and had become the most influential environmental planner of the twentieth century.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; HOUSING; PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION (PWA); TRANSPORTATION.

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MICHAEL T. VAN DYKE

MOSKOWITZ, BELLE

Belle Lindner Israels Moskowitz (October 5, 1877–January 2, 1933) was a social and industrial

reformer and a political strategist. As New York Governor Alfred E. Smith's strategist during the 1920s, Belle Moskowitz helped develop Smith's legislative and administrative policies. These policies later influenced the state's early responses to the Great Depression under Smith's successors, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Herbert H. Lehman. Moskowitz also ran Smith's reelection and 1928 presidential campaigns, working through a post she created in 1924—publicity director of the New York State Democratic Committee. In the process she trained Democratic Party women, including Eleanor Roosevelt and Mary (Molly) Dewson, in campaign techniques they later used to win support for the New Deal.

Belle Lindner was born in Harlem and educated at city schools, at the Horace Mann High School for Girls, and for a year at the Teachers' College of Columbia University. She worked in a social settlement on Manhattan's Lower East Side before marrying Charles Israels, an architect, in 1903. While raising her children she pursued social reforms, primarily through the Council of Jewish Women. In 1912, she joined the Progressive Party and served as a ward captain. From 1913 to 1916, she worked as a grievance arbitrator in the dress and waist trade.

In 1914, three years after her first husband died, she married Henry Moskowitz, a former settlement worker and industrial pacifist. In 1918, because of Smith's strong pro-labor record, the couple decided to support him for governor. Belle Moskowitz organized the women's vote for Smith and after his victory she proposed a reconstruction commission to plan the state's peacetime economy. Smith accepted Moskowitz's idea and appointed her the commission's executive secretary. Its reports formed the core of Smith's legislative program.

After Smith's defeat in 1928, Moskowitz tried to help him retain party leadership. She produced the publicity for the Empire State Building, a symbol of hope in the growing Depression. She also organized Smith's attempt to win the nomination in 1932. Franklin D. Roosevelt's capture of the nomination, and Smith's increasing bitterness over his political failures, were deeply disappointing to her. Her health declined, and while recovering from a

fall she suffered an embolism and died. In 1936 Henry Moskowitz publicly announced that he could no longer support his old friend Al Smith, who by then was vigorously opposing the New Deal.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1928; SMITH, ALFRED E.

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ELISABETH ISRAELS PERRY

MR. SMITH GOES TO WASHINGTON

Released by Columbia Pictures Corp. in late 1939, this 126-minute film (screenplay by Sidney Buchman) was directed by Frank Capra, then at the height of his renown. Leading players were James Stewart as the eponymous hero, and Jean Arthur, Claude Rains, and Edward Arnold. The film is a classic example of "Capra corn"—the director's populist paen to an America in which "the little people" triumph.

Stewart portrays Jefferson Smith, a naïve but dedicated young man who heads the Boy Rangers in his state and is appointed to the unexpired term of a deceased U.S. senator. In Washington he is assigned a savvy, cynical secretary (well-played by Arthur), who initially mocks Smith's enthusiastic idealism but is won over. Smith's naïveté results in a cynical press corps drubbing him cruelly. His idol, the state's senior senator (Rains), worked with Smith's murdered father for many a worthy but lost cause, now is secretly in cahoots with the state's corrupt boss (Arnold).

Attempting to escape the "honorary stooge" label pinned on him by the press corps, Smith introduces a bill that would create a national Boys Ranger camp, at a site that would interfere with the boss's pocket-lining real estate deal. Smith rebuffs

attempts to have the camp placed elsewhere. The senior senator is part of the boss's maneuver to frame Smith and get him expelled from the Senate. Smith undertakes a filibuster in hopes of arousing public opinion in his state, but the boss manages to keep the truth about his graft from the state's citizens. After twenty-four hours of his one-man filibuster, Smith collapses on the Senate floor. His former idol's conscience having been revived by the filibuster, the senior senator attempts suicide, confessing that everything Smith had said about corruption and graft in the state is true. It is a victory for Smith and what he stands for.

The film garnered very positive reviews, winning eleven Oscar nominations, and has since been judged "among the foremost 'message' films of 1930s Hollywood." But there was a darker side to its contemporary reception. The American media praised the film, but the Washington press corps took umbrage at how it was presented, and various senators attacked the film, among them Alben Barkley (D-KY), who called its portrayal of the Senate "silly and stupid," and James Byrnes (D-SC), who labeled it "outrageous."

See Also: CAPRA, FRANK; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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DANIEL J. LEAB

MUMFORD, LEWIS

Lewis Mumford (October 19, 1895–January 26, 1990) was a New York humanist, intellectual, architectural critic, journalist, and the author of numerous critically acclaimed works on architecture and the history of urban culture. In 1923 Mumford co-founded the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA), and for much of the twentieth



James Stewart (right) as an idealistic young senator in Frank Capra's 1939 film *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*. THE KOBAL COLLECTION/COLUMBIA

century he provoked America to think creatively and comprehensively about the social and physical form of the modern urban community and about building a more humane urban and regional civilization.

Mumford was born in New York City, the illegitimate son of a Jewish businessman. Raised in semi-poverty by his mother, Elvina, the daughter of German immigrants, Mumford attended but never graduated from the City College of New York. He believed that his main education came from long solitary walks through the city, during which he carefully observed and studied urban life and architecture. At City College Mumford encountered the works of the Scottish biologist and urban theorist Patrick Geddes and he became a close disciple of

Geddes and his comprehensive, biological view of the city and its region as a living organism.

After World War I Mumford married Sophie Wittenberg (his lifelong companion), moved to Greenwich Village, and worked as a book reviewer for *Dial* magazine. During the 1920s Mumford established himself as one of America's leading intellectuals and social commentators through his books *The Story of Utopias* (1922), *Sticks and Stones* (1924), and *The Golden Day* (1926), and his architectural criticism in the *New Republic*. His communitarianism, a byproduct of his apostleship of Geddes and his conviction that architecture must serve social ends, led him to Charles Whitaker, Clarence Stein, Henry Wright, and Benton MacKaye, with whom he founded the RPAA, an informal body of social

planners influenced by the ideas of Ebenezer Howard, Raymond Unwin, Barry Parker, and the British Garden City Movement. The RPAA sponsored several garden communities including Sunnyside, New York, where Mumford and Sophie lived from 1925 to 1936.

When the Great Depression struck America in the 1930s, Mumford, like many progressive, left-of-center intellectuals, hoped that the crisis of capitalism might shift the nation from a privatistic economy toward a more cooperative one modeled somewhat on the new regionalism espoused by the RPAA. In Mumford's brilliant Depression-era writings *The Brown Decades* (1931), *Technics and Civilization* (1934), and *The Culture of Cities* (1938), he explored the role of the machine (technology) in shaping modern urban civilization. These works revealed Mumford's essential optimism that humankind was capable of shaping truly humane, equitable, and socially efficient living environments that Mumford labeled the new "biotechnic" order. For evidence of this progress he pointed to Europe, in particular Letchworth and Welwyn in England and Romerstadt in Germany, the modern, low-density cooperative housing communities he had visited in 1930 and 1932 when he toured Europe with his then paramour, the houser Catherine Bauer.

This was the "new world" Mumford hoped President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his New Deal would bring to America during the 1930s. When Roosevelt's New Deal housing programs failed to realize this dream, Mumford lashed out at the New Deal in his column in the *New Republic*. He also assailed the rise of fascism in Europe. Mumford branded Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini as "barbarians," and he became a strident voice in favor of American military intervention. After the war Mumford continued his prodigious literary output that included his opus *The City in History* (1961) and numerous books of social and architectural criticism aimed particularly at American housing, highway, and urban renewal policy.

See Also: BAUER, CATHERINE; HOUSING; PLANNING; REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (RPAA).

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JOHN F. BAUMAN

MURPHY, FRANK

Frank Murphy (April 13, 1890–July 19, 1949) held more high public offices than almost any other resident of Michigan in the entire history of the state. He served successively as first assistant U. S. attorney for the Eastern District of Michigan (1919–1922), judge of the Detroit Recorder's Court (1924–1930), mayor of Detroit (1930–1933), last governor-general of the Philippines and first United States high commissioner to the Philippines (1933–1936), governor of Michigan (1937–1938), attorney-general of the United States (1939–1940), and justice of the U. S. Supreme Court (1940–1949).

The dominating event of Murphy's Detroit mayoralty was the Great Depression. No mayor in the nation did more to deal with the Depression than Murphy did. Detroit was one of the few cities in the nation at the time that provided public relief, and Murphy extended city aid to the needy to the extent that funds permitted, the Welfare Department at one point assisting 229,000 persons. The department's efforts were supplemented by the Murphy-created Mayor's Unemployment Committee, which registered the unemployed, maintained a free employment bureau, distributed clothing and emergency relief to those in need, maintained emergency lodges for homeless men, initiated a school lunch program for indigent children, provided legal aid for the poor, and sponsored a successful thrift garden program. As Detroit neared bankruptcy—the city defaulted on its bonds in 1933—Murphy convened a conference of U.S. mayors in

an effort to secure federal aid. This action led to the establishment of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, with Murphy as its first president.

Murphy helped to restore faith in Detroit's government at a time when civic morale was at a low ebb. He provided Detroit with honest, economical, and efficient government; made excellent appointments that accorded recognition to the city's blacks, Jews, and white ethnic minorities; extended the city's merit pay system; improved the city's police force; ousted the last remaining competitor of the city-owned transportation system; initiated a process leading to lower utility rates; and protected the rights of free speech and freedom of assembly in a time of trouble.

When Murphy became Michigan's governor in January 1937, the critical General Motors sit-down strike was already underway, and Murphy played the crucial mediatory role in bringing the strike to an end on February 11 on terms that amounted to a victory for the United Automobile Workers. As governor, Murphy sought to bring the New Deal to Michigan. Long a proponent of social security, he provided the impetus for the enactment by a lame-duck legislature in December 1936 of a liberal state unemployment compensation system, and the next year the legislature liberalized the state's old-age assistance law. The massive impact on Michigan of the recession of 1937 and 1938 led Murphy to call for increased aid from the Works Progress Administration, and the federal government responded to his importunities. Murphy's Michigan New Deal also included a substantial hospital building program, the expansion of public health services, an occupational disease law, rural electrification, liberalized housing legislation, the establishment of a Consumers Bureau, and a consumer-minded Public Utilities Commission.

Murphy raised the tone of state government while he was governor. He was responsible for the enactment and effective implementation of a model state civil service system, the most significant structural reform of his governorship. His administration also provided the state with its first effective budget system, an efficient and nonpolitical purchasing system, an excellent corrections system, an efficiently operated Liquor Control Commission, and

a well-managed Corporation and Securities Commission.

Despite his achievements as governor, Murphy, a Democrat, was defeated for reelection in Republican Michigan in 1938. The next year, Roosevelt appointed Murphy to be the nation's attorney general, and he served a notable year in that capacity. He created what became the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, and he successfully crusaded against crime and corruption, prosecuting such notable figures as Kansas City's Democratic boss Tom Pendergast and newspaper publisher Moses Annenberg.

When Supreme Court Justice Pierce Butler died in 1939, Roosevelt appointed Murphy to replace Butler. The appointment, to be sure, perfectly fit the prescription for a successor to Butler, a Catholic from the Midwest, just as it met Roosevelt's general criteria for selecting Supreme Court justices: loyalty to the New Deal, "a libertarian and egalitarian philosophy of government under law," and, with war looming, support for the president's "war aims." It may be, however, that Roosevelt wished to rid himself of an attorney general whose successful prosecution of city bosses and threatened prosecution of others posed a threat to the president's third-term ambitions. Murphy was unanimously confirmed by the Senate on January 16, 1940, and took his judicial oath on February 5. Murphy remained on the Court until his death in 1949.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; SUPREME COURT; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

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SIDNEY FINE

MURRAY, PHILIP

Philip Murray (May 25, 1886–November 9, 1952) was the founding president of the United Steelworkers of America (USA) and president of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) from 1940 to 1952.

Murray was born in Scotland, where he began mining coal at age ten. In 1902, he immigrated with his family to western Pennsylvania, where he followed in his father's footsteps to become a union activist. Murray was elected president of a United Mine Workers (UMW) local in 1904 and began a quick rise through the ranks to a district presidency in 1916, and to the vice presidency in 1920.

Over the ensuing two decades Murray worked closely with UMW president John L. Lewis. He became an effective adjunct to Lewis's flamboyant leadership by mastering the technical details of the coal industry, union organization, and government policy. Although a staunch fighter for union members' interests, as a devout Catholic, Murray rejected radical solutions to industrial conflict for the papal vision of cooperation between labor and management. His belief in the sanctity of contracts and his abilities as a conciliator earned the respect of employers while his honesty and tough negotiation skills secured his popularity among union members.

Murray believed that a strong union and government intervention in the coal market would be mutually beneficial to workers and mine owners. When the Great Depression hit he became an early advocate of national legislation to regulate the industry. His efforts bore fruit with the early New Deal when the UMW used section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act to regain its membership and Murray took a leading role in writing the coal code under the National Recovery Administration.

Murray was a key player in the creation and success of the CIO. His experience and close relationship with Lewis placed him at the head of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC), one of the CIO's major initiatives. By early 1937 the SWOC negotiated an agreement with industry

giant U. S. Steel, but failed to do so in the rest of the industry. Murray's skilled leadership of SWOC and ability to work with the government finally organized these "little steel" companies in 1941. The next year he founded the USA with himself as president. Unlike many other CIO unions that were born of rank-and-file action, the USA was a more hierarchical and bureaucratic entity from the start. To a great degree this suited Murray's vision for a labor movement that had to survive in conflict with similarly organized large corporations.

Murray took the reigns of the CIO in 1940, after Lewis followed through on a promise to resign the CIO presidency if Franklin Roosevelt won a third term. In this position he maintained his ties to the administration and succeeded in stabilizing the organization and seeing to its growth during the war years and successful institutionalization thereafter. Worried that early Cold War-era attacks on the CIO's left-led unions would compromise the organization, Murray expelled eleven tainted organizations in 1949. He remained in charge of the CIO until his death in 1952.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA); STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC); UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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ANDREW A. WORKMAN

MUSEUMS, ART

Daniel Catton Rich, director of the Art Institute of Chicago, declared at the 1955 American Federation of Arts convention that American art museums

were in an “age of innocence” until after 1925. Rich was referring to the lack of professionalism and concrete philosophies in the country’s art museums, which had tended simply to follow European models. The American Federation of Arts, founded in 1909 by Elihu Root, had dedicated itself to developing American art, but the European nature of American art collections was reinforced when tariff laws eliminated duties on art entering the country, thus stimulating the growth of public and private collections that contributed to museum collections. During this time, American art museums purchased most of their acquisitions using tax deductible donations.

In 1920, the United States had only a few art museums that were comparable to Europe’s best. The directors were generally retired artists, professors, or museum corporate officers who operated on the basis of personal dynamism or the whims of benefactors, and applied little scholarship to their work. At the time, the American arts establishment of dealers, collectors, and museums considered impressionist artists skeptically, post-impressionists out of the question, and American works second-rate. Old concepts of the fine arts and the “casual age” of museum keeping began to end when Paul J. Sachs of Harvard’s Fogg Museum developed a course in museum management that he taught from 1916 to 1955, thereby creating professional museology and a new generation of strong American directors and curators intent on renovating art institutions and collections.

The photographer Alfred Stieglitz helped gain acceptance for modern art and photography through his New York galleries from 1908 to 1946. The famous 1913 Armory Show in New York, Boston, and Chicago, recognized over three hundred artists, most of them American and many whom the art establishment had rejected. About this time, the Art Institute of Chicago began to expand its holdings with works by European modernists and previously neglected American artists. A. E. “Chick” Austin curated the first group show of surrealist art in the United States at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1932.

Sachs worked with Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Lizzie P. Bliss, and Mrs. Cornelius J. Sullivan to

charter the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York in 1929. MoMA’s President A. Conger Goodyear and Director Alfred H. Barr recruited members from other cities to foster interest in contemporary visual and industrial arts with traveling exhibitions beginning in 1932. Other independent arts organizations evolved, including the Boston Museum of Modern Art (now called the Institute of Contemporary Art) in 1936, the Museum of Modern Art Gallery of Washington in 1937, and the Modern Art Society in Cincinnati (later called the Contemporary Art Center) in 1939. At first, most of these were modeled on the Kunsthalle, mounting temporary exhibitions, rather than building permanent collections.

New York City’s Whitney Museum of American Art opened in 1930 with Juliana Force as director of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney’s collection of approximately six hundred works. The Whitney Museum’s mission was “gaining for the art of this country the prestige which heretofore the public has devoted too exclusively to the art of foreign countries and of the past.” The Whitney began an annual show of contemporary art in 1932. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation Museum of Non-Objective Painting opened in New York in 1939, followed in 1942 by Peggy Guggenheim’s Art of This Century Gallery, which featured modern art rescued from Europe on the eve of World War II.

Roosevelt created the Public Works of Art Project in 1933 to pay weekly wages to more than four thousand artists, who produced some fifteen thousand works that same year. The Treasury Department’s Section of Painting and Sculpture, established in 1934, took over public projects; it was renamed the Section of Fine Arts in 1938 and the Public Buildings Administration in 1939. Harry Hopkins’s Works Progress Administration (WPA) organized the Federal Art Project, headed by Holger Cahill, which commissioned artists to bring art out of the museum by creating murals, reliefs, and other works in railway terminals, airports, post offices, and schools. The Federal Art Project’s goals included educating art students, expanding programs beyond cities, and researching America’s cultural heritage. The WPA also helped expand and maintain museums around the country.

During the 1930s, efforts in the development of art museums were led by philanthropists, professional museologists, and the federal government; these projects paralleled the preservation of old historic houses and public places for living history museums. Americans discovered and learned to value their country's culture and history as never before during the Depression.

See Also: ART; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP); HISTORY, INTERPRETATION, AND MEMORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS, HISTORIC; PHOTOGRAPHY; POST OFFICE MURALS.

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BLANCHE M. G. LINDEN

MUSEUMS AND MONUMENTS, HISTORIC

Preservation of historic sites with a patriotic focus was in its infancy in the 1920s, although many states had historic house museums run by antiquarians. Preservation efforts reached a fever pitch during the years of the Great Depression, however. The Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (SPNEA), founded in 1910 and headed by William Sumner Appleton, was devoted to preserving the region's architectural heritage. Although many projects were stalled during the early years of the Depression, Appleton's work served as a catalyst for other such efforts around the country. SPNEA's *Old-Time New England*, the nation's first preservation magazine, also appeared in 1910 and was highly influential. Largely financed by philanthropists, preservation efforts aimed to create "a usable past" in an era of rampant change as old buildings fell into decay or were threatened with demolition.

Henry Ford sponsored a number of major restoration projects, beginning with Sudbury's Way-

side Inn in Massachusetts in the early 1920s, his Michigan boyhood home in 1923, and the Botsford Tavern near Detroit in 1924. Ford also designed the Greenfield Village and Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, which opened in 1933 as a work in progress. By the time he died in 1947, Ford had invested millions in moving historic buildings and duplicating others. Ford aimed to create an "animated textbook," where actors or "interpreters" playing "living history" roles would inspire America's young people.

Similar outdoor museums followed, with or without site-specific buildings. Sewing machine magnate Stephen C. Clark determined to make Cooperstown, New York, a cultural "shrine," and persuaded the State Historical Association to move there in 1938. Clark also supported the National Baseball Hall of Fame and the Cooperstown Farmer's Museum, which showcased early nineteenth-century rural life.

The founding of *Antiques* magazine in 1922 and the opening of the American decorative arts wing at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1924 signaled a growing interest in the country's historic material culture. Henry Francis du Pont pledged his fortune in 1928 to construct the Winterthur Museum on his Delaware country estate, which opened in 1951 as a nonprofit educational institution.

William A. R. Goodwin introduced John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to Virginia's old capital of Williamsburg in 1926 and persuaded him to underwrite a restoration project run by professionals using state-of-the-art preservation methods. Colonial revival architects collaborated with museologists, archaeologists, and historians, who aimed for authenticity in restoring Williamsburg's governor's palace, capitol, and houses and gardens to reflect "the spirit of the past." Williamsburg became a laboratory in restoration techniques and the research of colonial life, although some details of the site were later proved to be historically inaccurate.

Albert Wells of Southbridge, Massachusetts, an avid collector of historic machinery and other "old and odd things" made his home the Wells Historical Museum in 1935. In 1938 Wells incorporated Old Sturbridge Village to celebrate the "arts and industry of early rural New England." Advised by

Goodwin and Kenneth Chorley, he hired Perry, Shaw, & Hepburn as well as Arthur Shurcliff to create a historical village from the early 1800s by moving vernacular buildings from neighboring states and constructing others copied from regional models. The village opened in 1946, complete with craftspeople and actors in an educational outdoor museum.

The restoration staff of Colonial Williamsburg consulted around the country on the restoration of old taverns, mills, and plantations, including a more accurate restoration of George Washington's home for the Mount Vernon Ladies' Association from 1931 to 1938 after Hoover signed a bill making it a national monument in 1930. Kenneth Chorley, who served as president of Colonial Williamsburg from 1935 through the 1940s, became adviser and mentor for similar restoration projects around the country, including Deerfield, Massachusetts, where piecemeal restoration work began in 1930, and Saint Augustine, Florida. Fiske Kimball, director of the Pennsylvania Museum of Art, became a pioneering professional by first restoring old Philadelphia houses and then advising the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation, which bought Monticello in 1923.

Kimball helped the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America refurbish Dumbarton Oaks, their Washington, D.C., headquarters in 1928. The Dames and the Daughters of the American Revolution supported state and local preservation efforts, as did some state federation of women's clubs. The United Daughters of the Confederacy formed the Robert E. Lee Memorial Foundation in 1929 with private donations and funds from Virginia and Tennessee for the restoration of the general's birthplace, Stratford Hall on the Potomac.

Laurence Vail Coleman of the American Association of Museums traveled widely, studying and encouraging the establishment of historic house museums, despite difficulties raising money to buy, restore, and maintain endangered properties. In 1934, the Old Fort Niagara Association in Youngstown, New York, renovated a colonial fort on Lake Ontario. A coalition of SPNEA, the Trustees of Public Reservations, Colonial Dames, and the Mas-

sachusetts Society of Architects mustered funds in 1935 to create the Gore Place Society, saving a great Federal estate near Boston from developers. Trustees of Public Reservations' Laurence B. Fletcher saved the Old Manse in Concord, Massachusetts, appealing to school children to fund purchase in 1939. Horace M. Albright became director of the National Park Service (NPS) in 1929 and widened its focus to include historic sites and buildings. The NPS hired Verne E. Chatelain in 1931 as the first historian in its Education and Research Branch, which later included archaeologists, architects, and landscape architects. In 1930, Herbert Hoover authorized the establishment and restoration of the Colonial National Monument, which includes Jamestown, Williamsburg, and Yorktown.

After Roosevelt's 1933 inauguration, NPS director Arno B. Cammerer received expanded authority over national military parks, battlefields, and cemeteries, sites that had previously been administered by the War and Agriculture departments. The first new military park was the Morristown National Historical Park in New Jersey, where Washington's Continental Army wintered in 1779. The NPS hired more historians, used Civilian Works Administration funds to start the Historic American Buildings Survey under Thomas C. Vint, and put eight hundred Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) laborers to work on historic sites. The Historic Sites, Buildings, and Antiquities Act of 1935 extended NPS authority over far-flung projects, including aid to the city of Charleston, South Carolina, which had passed a landmark historic district zoning ordinance in 1931. The NPS also designated the Salem, Massachusetts, waterfront as the first National Historic Site in 1937.

Urged on by Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes, acquisitions of historic sites were funded through both private donations and congressional appropriations. NPS staff helped state efforts as CCC units began working in more and more national and state parks. The WPA began an Illinois Museum Extension Project to reconstruct the Cahokia Courthouse with help from the state architect's office. In addition, Ickes created the Appomattox Court House National Historic Monument in 1940, but the war halted its restoration for a time.

State and local efforts also gained momentum. In 1929 Illinois bought one of Abraham Lincoln's log cabins, restoring it to its 1840s appearance. The state also began reconstructing New Salem village, where Lincoln lived in the 1830s. Pennsylvania acquired Pennsbury Manor, the forty-acre home of William Penn, its first governor, and colonial revival architect Brognard Okie restored it. In 1931, Tombstone, Arizona, began raising funds to recreate the history of the Old West. The San Antonio Conservation Society used municipal funds to open the Spanish Governor's Palace in 1929 and worked on the San Jose Mission from 1933 to 1935 under the Public Works Administration. A 1933 county public works project in Syracuse rebuilt the Jesuit mission to the Iroquois, Sainte Marie de Gannentaha's fort and crafts shops. The Museum of the City of New York, which was established in 1923, helped charter the Historic Landmark Society in 1935, opening the Old Merchant's House museum in 1936. Louisiana amended its constitution in 1936 to permit the Vieux Carré Commission to preserve New Orleans's French Quarter. The state of California purchased the Monterey Custom House in 1937 as part of a master plan for historic preservation.

With 1928 congressional legislation, the nation's capital underwent renovations under the Commission of Fine Arts. Plans for a Thomas Jefferson Memorial gained momentum after the 1926 centennial of Jefferson's death; the National Capital Park and Planning Commission chose a Tidal Basin site in 1935, and John Russell Pope's design, inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, was selected for the monument. Although criticized as "empty classicism," Pope's design won congressional approval in 1938. Dedication of a sarcophagus at Arlington National Cemetery's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier took place in 1931. The War Department transferred Bedloe's Island, the site of the Statue of Liberty, to the NPS in 1937.

Renovation of historic houses and preservation of historic sites, as well as the construction of living history museums, created jobs during the Depression, and such efforts had wide popular appeal. The American Guide series, a state-by-state series of guidebooks prepared by the WPA's Federal Writers' Project, published its first volume in 1937. The

series cultivated popular interest in historic places. Americans auto-toured in search of nature and nostalgia, antidotes for the problems of the present.

See Also: AMERICAN GUIDE SERIES; LEISURE.

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BLANCHE M. G. LINDEN

MUSIC

The year 1929 began with a sense of optimism that was reflected in the popular song "Happy Days Are Here Again" by Milton Ager and Jack Yellen. Soon, however, other songs reflected a grim reality. In 1931 Jay Gorney and E. Y. "Yip" Harburg wrote a song called "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?," which came to symbolize the hopelessness and indignity many Americans felt in the face of unemployment and severe economic hardship. After President Franklin Roosevelt's morale boosting pronouncement, "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," the song "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" became popular. This was ironic inasmuch as the song was from the cartoon *The Three Little Pigs* (1933), produced by the arch conservative Walt Disney. Not long thereafter, prohibition was repealed, giving rise to a culture of bars and cocktail lounges, which was reflected in such songs as "Soft Lights and Sweet Music," "Night and Day," and "Deep Purple."

Ultimately, the Depression proved to be an era rich in musical composition, innovation, and vari-



Popular Depression-era film and stage composer Richard Rodgers (seated at piano) with lyricist Lorenz Hart in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

ety. In particular, numerous music publishers who were clustered in New York City's Tin Pan Alley were dependent on the sale of sheet music, since recordings were rare. In order to produce a hit song, a composer had to write a good song, sell it to a popular singer, and hope for financial success. Successful Depression-era Tin Pan Alley songs included George Gershwin's "I Got Rhythm" (1930) and "Embraceable You" (1930); Jerome Kern's "All the Things You Are" (1939), "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes" (1933), and "I Won't Dance" (1934); Irving Berlin's "God Bless America" (1938); and Richard Rodgers's "Falling in Love with Love" (1938) and "This Can't Be Love" (1938).

During the same years, many of these composers also wrote Broadway musicals that featured songs of lasting popularity. These include Jerome Kern's *Roberta* (1933, "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes"), George Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (1935, "Summertime"), Richard Rodgers and Lorenz Hart's *Babes in Arms* (1937, "My Funny Valentine"), and Cole Porter's *Red, Hot and Blue!* (1936, "It's De-Lovely"). Another composer of note, Kurt Weill, a refugee from Adolf Hitler's Germany, composed *Knickerbocker Holiday* with Maxwell Anderson and gave the world the memorable "September Song" in 1938.

Many singers became successful radio performers during the Depression years, introducing popu-



A jazz orchestra performs at the Savoy Ballroom in Chicago in 1941. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

lar songs that became identified with them. Kate Smith, for example, was associated with the songs “When the Moon Comes over the Mountain” and “God Bless America.” Bing Crosby became linked with “When the Blue of the Night Meets the Gold of the Day.” Other popular Depression-era singers include Rudy Vallee, Vaughan McRae, and Frank Sinatra. Sinatra was the first singer to use a microphone to startling advantage; earlier singers tended to belt out songs in the style of Al Jolson, but the microphone made subtlety possible, and Sinatra began a new trend in vocal style. Sinatra and other singers generally got their start by singing with big bands, including those led by Harry James, Tommy Dorsey, Guy Lombardo, and Paul Whiteman.

BLUES AND JAZZ

Blues music arose from people who had known hard times, exploitation, and violence long before the Depression. Blues songs were considered crude by many listeners in the first part of the twentieth century when they were first heard in such cities as New Orleans, Saint Louis, and Mobile, Alabama. But many Depression-era listeners responded to blues music because it was about life and release from troubles. The rhythms are danceable, requiring only a guitar and some type of percussion. Among the most important blues musicians in terms of his legacy for later American music, including rock and roll, was legendary Mississippian Robert Johnson. Such Johnson songs as “Me and



A homesteader teaches a Work Projects Administration music class to local children in Pie Town, New Mexico, in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the Devil Blues" (1937) inspired countless later musicians.

Both ragtime, a rhythmic piano-based music, and jazz, a multi-faceted musical form, derived from blues, and both exhibit the energy and rhythm of African music—handclapping, dancing, singing, and improvisation. Jazz surpassed blues in popularity during the 1930s, and many jazz musicians became well known and greatly in demand. In 1915, jazz was generally considered a form of folk music played primarily in the Deep South. Before long, however, such early jazz musicians as Jelly Roll Morton, Sidney Bechet, and King Oliver became national stars. They could play, and they could im-

provise; improvisation is the very heart of jazz, making it spontaneous and dramatic.

Louis Armstrong mastered the improvisatory style on trumpet, sang as well as he played, and is credited with inventing scat singing. Armstrong came to prominence in the 1920s and 1930s, and he remained creative and popular until his death in 1971. One of Armstrong's contemporaries, Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington, became an established entertainer, composer, and band leader by 1930. Gathering the best musicians he could find, Ellington led a band for fifty years and paid its members well so that he could hear his compositions as soon as he wrote them. Many of Ellington's compositions have become standards, including "Mood In-

digio," "Satin Doll," "Black and Tan Fantasy," and "Sophisticated Lady."

Jazz bands evolved into big bands during the swing era, which began in the 1920s and lasted until after World War II. Popular big bands included Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, the Wolverines, and the Chicago Rhythm Kings. Swing music, which combined basic New Orleans jazz with the smoother Chicago style, employed a fast tempo, making the music appealing to dancers. Important swing bands included those led by Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Duke Ellington, Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, and Benny Goodman, who became known as the King of Swing.

Boogie-woogie, a fast-paced blues-influenced piano style with a steady, driving left-hand rhythm, was introduced in the mid-1930s. Originating in Chicago and Kansas City, boogie-woogie is a style for both listening and for frenzied dancing.

FOLK MUSIC AND THE WPA

During the 1930s, the Federal Music Project of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) kept musicians employed by paying them to give concerts and music lessons, to compose original works, and to talk to the public about music. The Federal Music Project collaborated with the WPA Federal Writers' Project to collect, catalogue, and research the nation's folk materials. As part of these efforts, the WPA authorized its employees to collect American folk songs, both old songs and new ones arising from the trying experiences of the 1930s. This project, particularly the contributions of Alan Lomax, resulted in a wealth of folk songs, many of which are available in state archives and the Library of Congress. The most comprehensive of these compilations of Depression-era songs is *Hard Hitting Songs for Hard-Hit People*, compiled by Lomax and edited by Pete Seeger, with commentary by Woody Guthrie. Folksongs are often born of hardship and poverty, and the songs in this collection are no exception. Most of them have a strong blues component, as indicated by many of the titles, including "I Aint Got No Home in This World Anymore," "Depression Blues," "Hard Times in the Mill," and "Wanderin'."

Folksinger and songwriter Woody Guthrie traveled around the United States during the De-

pression, forming his musical ideas in hobo camps, where he listened to drifters and the dispossessed, learning songs passed down through many generations and giving a voice to the downtrodden, the poverty-stricken, and the hopeless. He wrote and sang about what he saw and experienced, with many songs expressing social commentary and love for America, including the familiar "God Blessed America," commonly known as "This Land Is Your Land."

Another major influence in folk music during the Depression years was Huddie Ledbetter, better known as Leadbelly. Leadbelly was discovered by folklorists John and Alan Lomax while he was serving a prison sentence in the Louisiana State Penitentiary in 1933. The Lomaxes recorded hundreds of his songs, which eventually would include "Where Did You Sleep Last Night" and "Goodnight Irene," and brought him and his music to the attention of a worldwide audience by the second half of the 1930s.

COUNTRY MUSIC

Singing comes easily to country people—songs that tell stories, songs that have been handed down through oral tradition, songs that break the monotony of farm life. Country music developed in the rural South and in America's isolated mountain regions, often remaining unchanged for generations, until improved methods of communication were introduced. The term *hillbilly music* became popular in the early 1900s and referred to a type of music that was sincere, if raw, and that spoke of God, home, unrequited love, and real life occurrences.

Jimmie Rodgers is known as the Father of Country Music. A country boy from Mississippi, his entire life was disjointed, unsettled, and frequently sad. However, he combined all these experiences with humor, a simple and straightforward singing style, and his own signature "blue yodel," a cross between a Swiss Alpine yodel and a blues moan. Rodgers's songs were a mixture of random tunes, blues, and jazz, a legacy of inimitable modern country music. Even though poverty was rampant in the South, it is said that during the Depression the standard order in general stores was "a sack of flour, a slab of bacon, and the latest Jimmie Rodgers record."

CLASSICAL MUSIC

By 1929, composers in the United States were seeking to produce original American music that reflected American culture and did not simply imitate European styles. Some composers looked for inspiration in Anglo-American folk music; others looked to African-American spirituals, blues, and jazz, all of which were now well established in American culture.

Aaron Copland set about to develop a musical style with a distinctly American sound. In the 1920s, his compositions incorporated influences from jazz and blues. During the Depression years, Copland adopted a leftist, populist outlook that was evident in such works as the ballet *Billy the Kid* (1938). His best-known composition, *Appalachian Spring* (1943–1944), continued in the same folk-inspired tradition.

William Grant Still studied composition at Oberlin College in Ohio and in New York with Edgard Varese. William Still played in theater and nightclub orchestras, an experience he combined with his formal training in composition to produce his symphonic works, which included *Africa* (1930), *Afro-American Symphony* (1931), the opera *Blue Steel* (1933), and *Lenox Avenue* (1937). All these works reflected Still's African-American culture and traditions.

Other important composers of the period include Howard Hanson, longtime director of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, who composed several symphonies, two of which premiered in the 1930s, forming milestones for the post-Romantic movement. Randall Thompson is recognized for choral and symphonic works. He composed his *Second Symphony* in 1931 and the *Peaceable Kingdom*, an a cappella piece for mixed voices, in 1936. In 1940 Thompson composed *Alleluia*, a choral number that became well established in the repertoire of American choirs. Roy Harris, who was classically trained in harmony and orchestration, heard his *First Symphony* performed in Boston in 1934 under the baton of Serge Koussevitsky. His *Second Symphony* was performed in 1936, and his *Third Symphony* in 1939. Harris wrote the overture "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" in 1934 to "express . . . emotions particularly American and in an American manner."

Virgil Thomson studied music at Harvard University and composition with Nadia Boulanger in Paris. Thomson later formed a friendship with the author Gertrude Stein in Paris, and the two collaborated in writing the opera *Four Saints in Three Acts*, which made Thomson famous. This opera premiered in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1934, and transferred to Broadway twelve days later, where it was an immediate success. Thomson's other compositions include music for theater, film, and ballet, as well as religious choral music.

See Also: ANDERSON, MARIAN; ARMSTRONG, LOUIS; BIG BAND MUSIC; "BROTHER CAN YOU SPARE A DIME?"; ELLINGTON, DUKE; FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT (FMP); GERSHWIN, GEORGE AND IRA; GOODMAN, BENNY; GUTHRIE, WOODY; HOLIDAY, BILLIE; JAZZ; LOMAX, ALAN; RADIO.

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NATOMA N. NOBLE

MUSSOLINI, BENITO

Benito Mussolini (July 29, 1883–April 28, 1945) was founder and leader of the *Fasci di Combattimento*, the Italian fascist movement. A successful journalist and former socialist, he became Italian prime minister on October 29, 1922. He remained in power



Benito Mussolini (left) with Adolf Hitler in Munich, Germany, in 1940. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

until July 24, 1943. Although the Nazis attempted to rescue him, Mussolini was executed by Italian partisans on April 28, 1945.

MUSSOLINI'S RISE TO POWER

The impact of World War II accelerated the decomposition of liberal, middle-class politics in Italy. The country was suffering as early as 1917 when it was gripped by widespread industrial strikes over rising prices and food shortages, fear of a communist revolution thanks to events in Russia, and a crushing military defeat for the Italian forces at Caporetto in October. Victory in World War I also left most Italians bitter because the Allies subsequently refused to grant Italy territories promised to it to bring the nation into the war. After 1918 the country was overwhelmed by a host of social and eco-

nomical problems: urban unemployment, high rents for tenant farmers in the north, land-hunger among peasant farmers in the south, spiraling inflation, and increased violence. Neither Italy's established liberal parties nor the structure of constitution could cope with the crisis. Mussolini successfully exploited the sharp divisions that emerged, presenting his party as a force for peace by breaking strikes and "disciplining" labor, and himself as a new kind of strong and efficient national leader. (His claim to act as a peacemaker was disingenuous given the role played by his armed gangs in the rising tide of violence.) Although Mussolini came to power more than ten years before Hitler, their rise shared common features: an ability to exploit deep-seated political divisions, economic upheaval, and the acquiescence, if not support, of powerful elite groups, such as industrialists, who feared commu-

nism and were desperate to escape the prolonged crisis.

ITALY'S RESPONSE TO THE GREAT DEPRESSION

Despite his grand claims to a revolutionary vision that had, in Mussolini's words, "the sanctity of heroism" at its heart, Italian fascism was largely tied to the existing capitalist economic and social order. While Mussolini clamped down hard on his left-wing opponents, his fascist economics offered little that was new. The regime did institute a new set of institutional arrangements intended to integrate capital and labor in hierarchical units, called "corporatism," linked to the Ministry of Corporations, but the system only enhanced the power of big business. Mussolini's rhetoric proclaiming innovation proved hollow, too, when Italy joined the gold standard in 1927, a step which prompted greater fascist intervention in the economy as the regime acted to push down food prices and force workers to accept wage cuts of up to 20 percent.

Nor was Mussolini able to shelter Italy from the effects of the collapse in world trade and pressures that mounted on the gold standard after 1929. By the summer of 1931 Italy had experienced a serious crisis in its commercial banking sector, although, in sharp contrast to events in central Europe, Mussolini was able to conceal the development from the Italian people. The state loaned the banks one million lira and established an Istituto Mobiliare Italiano to support the banks and an Istituto per la Ricostruzione Industriale to strengthen the ties between government and industry.

But the Depression continued to bite. By 1934 more than 15 percent of Italian workers found themselves out of work, with unemployment rising to almost 18 percent in the northeast and central regions of the country. The regime's efforts to help Italian farmers also failed. Mussolini's regime resorted to a system of exchange controls, quotas, and clearing agreements that took on a renewed importance once Italy invaded Abyssinia in 1935 and intervened in the Spanish Civil War in 1936. This ambitious foreign policy soaked up surplus Italian labor and gave the economy an important boost, but at a price. Italy was forced officially to abandon

the gold standard in October 1936 (a painful blow to Mussolini's ego), and by 1937 inflation was dramatically on the rise.

Intervention in the Spanish Civil War brought Mussolini closer to Hitler. The struggle in Spain emphasized the ideological common ground between the two leaders, notably their deeply felt hostility towards communism. A highly choreographed visit to Berlin in September 1937 further impressed Mussolini to the ambition and the military power underpinning the German regime, and the two countries signed a military alliance, the Pact of Steel, in May 1939. Despite the fact that the Pact committed Italy to come to the immediate support of its ally "with all its military forces on land, sea and in the air," Mussolini always claimed he had agreed to the alliance only on the understanding that there would be no major war until 1942. Italy's foreign adventures in the 1930s had sapped its strength and remained neutral in World War II until June 1940 when, after the fall of France, a German victory appeared assured. Italy's subsequent intervention in the war in Greece and in North Africa proved disastrous—Hitler had to send German troops to prevent an Italian collapse—and on July 25, 1943, after a string of military defeats, Mussolini was dismissed as Italy's leader by King Victor Emmanuel.

See Also: DICTATORSHIP; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; FASCISM; SPANISH CIVIL WAR; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

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PATRICIA CLAVIN

MUSTE, A. J.

Labor and peace activist Abraham Johannes Muste (January 8, 1885–February 11, 1967) was born in the Netherlands. His father, a coachman, moved the family to the Dutch community at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in 1891. The boy trained to be a Dutch Reformed minister and was ordained in 1909. The rest of his life was the story of a steady movement leftward, in both theology and politics. By the time of World War I, Muste had become a Quaker and an unyielding pacifist.

During the next twenty years, Muste devoted himself principally to the American labor movement. Starting as an observer of the Lawrence textile strike (1919), he became the leader of the Brookwood Labor College of Katonah, New York (1921), and, now a full-fledged Trotskyite, a thorn in the side of the much more conservative American Federation of Labor. Muste left Brookwood in 1933 for two other radical organizations that he had helped found: the Conference for Progressive Labor Action (established in 1929), whose members became known as “Musteites,” and the American Workers Party (founded in 1933), which merged with the Trotskyites, who then ousted Muste from leadership.

While traveling in Europe in 1936 Muste experienced a kind of religious revelation that directed him away from Marxist class conflict and labor agi-

tation and back to nonviolent, Christian pacifism. He worked with the Fellowship of Reconciliation, opposed World War II, and urged draft resistance. After the war he increased, rather than reduced his activism. He opposed Senator Joseph McCarthy’s investigations into Communist influence in the United States, organized for the civil rights movement, and was the titular and symbolic father of the effort to limit nuclear weapons and end nuclear testing. Not surprisingly, he was one of the first opponents of the United States’s war in Vietnam.

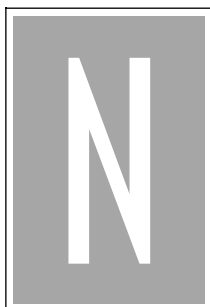
Lean, energetic, and deadly serious, Muste, “the American Gandhi,” won the respect and admiration of thousands of devoted followers. Even those who detested his work acknowledged the purity of his motives and the tirelessness of his efforts. He died in New York City while trying to organize a massive demonstration against the Vietnam war.

See Also: PEACE MOVEMENT.

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DAVID W. LEVY



NAM. See NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP)

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded on February 12, 1909, on the fringes of the progressive movement at Charity Organization Hall in New York City. The organization evolved with the changing social milieu as it struggled to implement its egalitarian philosophy with programs designed to obtain basic citizenship rights for African Americans. The programs developed along two distinct paths: (1) agitation and education, which would become the organization's well-defined political course, and (2) legal, which would define its constitutional foundation. As the NAACP stated in its tenth annual report, its goal was "to reach the conscience of America" in seeking racial equality. Until June 26, 1934, when he resigned from the organization, W. E. B. Du Bois led the NAACP in developing its agitation and education program. Du Bois accomplished his mission through the organization's official magazine, *The Crisis*, which he edited;

through his prolific writings and speeches; and through his founding of Pan Africanism.

By 1930, despite the financial ravages of the Great Depression, the NAACP was a major force in the burgeoning liberal phalanx that included the expanding organized Congress-labor movement and the socialist forces that would create the New Deal. Walter Francis White, who succeeded James Weldon Johnson that year as executive secretary, demonstrated the NAACP's growing political strength by launching the struggle that defeated President Herbert Hoover's nomination of Judge John J. Parker of North Carolina to the U.S. Supreme Court by a thirty-nine to forty-one vote in the Senate. Challenging Hoover's "lily-white policies" and his indifference to the black electorate, the NAACP opposed the nomination because of a speech Parker had given ten years earlier endorsing black disenfranchisement.

The Parker fight marked the coming to political maturity of African Americans who previously were ignored. *The Washington Post* published a lengthy feature on May 18, 1930, noting the development. *The Crisis* targeted several senators who had supported Parker's nomination and were running for reelection in 1930, 1932, and 1934. Eleven were defeated, but as *The Crisis* noted in its December 1934 issue, three "escaped" by winning reelection. White observed in his 1948 autobiography, *A Man Called*

White, "Out of these effective hard-hitting and uncompromising campaigns two changed political attitudes came." White politicians "were forced to recognize that the Negro voter no longer was gullible, purchasable, or complacent as before and would have to be recognized as an increasingly potent force in the American political scene." Furthermore, African Americans "found new hope and dignity" when "hitherto their efforts had been crowned at best with purely 'moral' victories." In "the Parker fight victory had been achieved and a philosophy and aura of success had replaced the purely protest values of preceding battles." Editorials in the black press confirmed the transformation. William Hastie, a member of the NAACP national board, concluded that victory strengthened the NAACP's belief that the ballot was "the most important phase of the Negro's effort to improve his status in America."

Economic inequality, though, remained a burning issue. Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidential victory in 1932 further confirmed that concern; it also marked the beginning of the seismic shift of African Americans away from the Republican to the Democratic Party, a shift that became dramatic in Roosevelt's 1936 reelection. The Great Depression and the New Deal confirmed the maturity of the NAACP as a civil rights organization, a national bureaucratic machine with branches in every state. The deterioration of the economic position of African Americans, however, forced the NAACP to begin reexamining its strategy and emphasizing the economic needs of the masses. "We are becoming concerned," an NAACP statement declared, "that we are able to accomplish so little. . . . We are going to continue to agitate. . . . But we believe what the Negro needs primarily is a definite economic program."

The endemic discrimination of the New Deal's alphabet soup of programs opened the NAACP to intense criticisms from young radical black intellectuals, including John P. Davis, head of the Joint Committee on National Recovery, who pushed the association to further shift its focus to economic issues. The most prominent of these radicals, who were centered at Howard University in Washington, D.C., were economist Abraham L. Harris, soci-

ologist E. Franklin Frazier, and political scientist Ralph J. Bunche. As Bunche noted, "the New Deal for the first time gave broad recognition to the existence of the African American as a national problem and undertook to give special consideration to this fact in many ways, though the basic evils remained untouched." Another prominent critic was Charles Hamilton Houston, associate dean of Howard University Law School, who also pressed the NAACP to shift its focus from anti-lynching to economic issues.

In 1933, the NAACP held a second Amenia Conference at the Troutbeck estate of Joel E. Spingarn, its president, in upstate New York, to develop a broader civil rights program and strategy. Unlike the first Amenia Conference held in 1916, which was integrated, the second was all-black. The conference concluded that a union of black and white workers was needed in the labor movement to direct America's economic and political life. The following year, the NAACP began implementing this program by appointing a Committee on Future Plan and Program of the NAACP, headed by Harris. The organization's economic program included the launching in 1936 of a sustained legal battle in Baltimore, Maryland, against unequal salaries for African-American teachers.

At the same time, under Houston's direction, the NAACP launched its legal campaign against educational inequalities. In 1935, Houston and his protégé Thurgood Marshall (later to become the first black justice on the U.S. Supreme Court) won in the Baltimore City Court the NAACP's trailblazing legal challenge to segregation at the University of Maryland Law School. Their success helped set the stage for subsequent NAACP's court challenges that led to the landmark victory in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the "separate but equal" doctrine, established in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case, was unconstitutional. To accomplish that goal, Houston recommended to the NAACP that it attack the unequal funding of schools in the South in order to make maintaining segregation within the context of "separate but equal" so expensive that the region would be forced to abandon its Jim Crow education system. His recommendation, more lim-

ited and direct, varied from that of Nathan Margold of Harvard University, a white expert in constitutional law, who had earlier urged the NAACP to abandon its case-by-case attack on discrimination by directly challenging the constitutional validity of the "separate but equal" doctrine.

Part of the reason the NAACP reacted slowly during the Depression to increasing demands from blacks for assistance was that its leaders feared infiltration by Communists, and the NAACP was anxious to avoid fly-by-night projects. White, furthermore, had strong reservations about embracing a more "mass-oriented" program. Nevertheless, the NAACP could not disregard the obvious inequalities in the implementation of New Deal programs, including wage differentials sanctioned by the National Recovery Administration; the exclusion of black sharecroppers from the benefits of the Agricultural Adjustment Act; and the exclusion of black-dominated occupations, such as agricultural and domestic work, from Social Security coverage. The programs of other New Deal agencies, such as the Works Progress Administration, the National Youth Administration, and the United States Housing Authority, helped attract blacks to the Democratic Party, but the party itself, especially its southern wing, remained discriminatory. Most of the NAACP's effort to end discrimination in New Deal agencies was waged through the Joint Committee on National Recovery, which was composed of twenty-two national racial and interracial organizations.

White, furthermore, established a solid and warm working alliance with First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, enabling the NAACP to garner added respect and ready access to the White House. This access was essential because, as White explained, "the President was frankly unwilling to challenge the Southern leaders of his party."

As a member of the NAACP national board of directors, Eleanor Roosevelt remained fully attuned to the thinking of blacks with the help of her friend, Mary McLeod Bethune, spiritual leader of the New Deal's Black Cabinet. Mrs. Roosevelt worked tirelessly to influence the course of government for the benefit of the NAACP and African Americans. A noteworthy challenge for her was the refusal in

1939 by the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to permit the African-American contralto Marian Anderson to sing in Constitution Hall. Roosevelt protested the decision by resigning from the DAR. With the president's blessing (and at Eleanor's nudging), the Department of the Interior approved the use of the Lincoln Memorial for the concert, which was held under the auspices of the NAACP. Characteristically, White relished another victory over bigotry. Nothing made him happier, however, than Anderson's exquisitely beautiful performance, which brought tears of joy streaming down the face of one young girl who said, "If Marian Anderson could do it . . . then I can, too."

The NAACP's activities during the Great Depression considerably strengthened its political and legal programs, enabling it in the 1940s to become an early leader in the modern civil rights movement. Its Depression-era programs contributed to the reaffirmation by the federal courts of the principle of equality under the Fourteenth Amendment, and to the subsequent adoption by the federal government of civil rights policies, and the enactment of a comprehensive package of new laws to protect those rights.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1936; MISSOURI EX REL. GAINES V. CANADA; ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR; WHITE, WALTER.

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DENTON L. WATSON

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MANUFACTURERS (NAM)

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) was founded in 1895 as a collection of small- and medium-sized firms with common interests in two areas of public policy: achieving protectionist trade measures and strengthening the power of management vis-à-vis organized labor. After World War I and during the 1920s, the NAM conducted a high-profile campaign in favor of the open shop, striking back at organized labor's efforts to increase union membership. Hit hard by the Great Depression, member firms resigned from the NAM at a high rate; by 1933 membership had declined to fewer than 1,500 firms, down from five thousand in 1920.

During the Great Depression, the NAM was led by Robert Lund, president of Lambert Pharmaceutical. Due to the decline in its traditional membership base of smaller firms in textiles, shipbuilding, and the metal trades, the NAM increasingly fell under the influence of larger firms from the tobacco, automobile, steel, chemical, and food processing industries. By 1936, these latter firms provided about 40 percent of the NAM's annual revenues, which grew by 1937 to \$1.5 million a year, up from \$250,000 in 1933. Lund, who assumed leadership of the NAM in 1931, mobilized it against the New Deal. The NAM opposed Franklin D. Roosevelt every time he ran for president, and objected to aspects of major New Deal policies, including the Na-

tional Industrial Recovery Act (1933), National Labor Relations Act (1935), and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938). By 1937, 55 percent of the NAM's budget went to spending on public relations, carrying the NAM's vision of business-government relations to the broader public. The NAM also focused its energies on lobbying the government, attempting to directly influence events on Capitol Hill. Unlike such business figures as Edward Filene and Gerard Swope, the NAM entertained little sympathy for the rights of organized labor. The NAM portrayed government as parasitic and organized labor as proponents of social agitation and disorder, contrasting them with an image of business leaders as paragons of expertise, social harmony, and reasoned decision making. Although the NAM made little headway against the New Deal, its organizing efforts, publicity campaigns, and improved financial health placed it in a position to advance its goals during and after World War II.

See Also: BUSINESSMEN; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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JASON SCOTT SMITH

NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO ABOLISH THE POLL TAX

Founded in 1941, the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax was a coalition of labor, liberal, and civil rights organizations dedicated to expanding federal protection of voting rights in the South. The poll tax was one of a variety of methods adopted by southern states at the turn of the century to restrict voter participation. The cost of the poll tax varied from state to state, and became increasingly restrictive during the Depression. Since there were other



A Depression-era billboard in Dubuque, Iowa, promotes the National Association of Manufacturers. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

laws and customs specifically designed to bar blacks from voting, such as the white primary, the poll tax was especially effective in disfranchising poor and working-class whites. In 1939, the *Louisville Courier Journal* estimated that as many as 64 percent of the white adult voters had been disfranchised in poll tax states.

When it was founded in 1938, the Southern Conference for Human Welfare made abolition of the poll tax its top priority. The Conference established a Committee on Civil Rights, headed by Joseph Gelders and Virginia Durr, to oversee this effort. Gelders and Durr, both natives of Alabama, concentrated their efforts on getting a bill introduced in Congress that would ban the poll tax in federal elections. With the support of California Congressman Lee Geyers, Durr and Gelders built a broad base of support among major labor, liberal, and civil rights organizations for anti-poll tax legislation.

In 1941, Durr and Gelders incorporated their coalition into the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax. Gelders soon enlisted in the army. As vice chairman of the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax, Durr led in orchestrating a major lobbying and educational effort. The Committee's supporting organizations included the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Negro Congress, the American Federation of Labor, and the League of Women Voters. Eleanor Roosevelt was among the prominent figures who lent her active support to the effort. The National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax published a newsletter, *The Poll Tax Repealer*, and recruited a staff of volunteers, including a number of college students.

The struggle around the poll tax reflected the divide between the New Deal coalition within the Democratic Party and conservative southern Democrats. From 1941 to 1948, the Committee suc-

ceeded in getting three major bills introduced in Congress. The first bill, sponsored by Lee Geyers and Senator Claude Pepper of Florida, initiated the first full-scale congressional debate on federal protection of voting rights since the defeat of the Lodge election bill in 1890. Southern conservatives mounted a vigorous opposition, arguing that the bill was unconstitutional, and warning that any federal tampering with voting restrictions would ultimately compromise the South's ability to restrict black voter participation. Anti-poll tax legislation passed the House by increasingly wide margins, only to be tabled in the Senate by southern-led filibusters.

By the time it disbanded in 1948, the National Committee to Abolish the Poll Tax had succeeded in forging a broad liberal-labor coalition that would play an increasingly important role in securing national support for the federal protection of civil rights and voting rights in the South.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW).

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PATRICIA SULLIVAN

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION (NFU)

The National Farmers Union (NFU), founded in Texas in 1902, was one of the three most important farmers' organizations in the United States during the 1930s. The NFU's base of support could be found among various small producers, including small family farmers, tenant farmers, and sharecroppers, as well as undercapitalized wheat growers in the Midwest. In 1930, John Simpson of Oklahoma was voted in as president of the NFU. In this position, he worked hard to convince Washington to provide credit relief to farmers and to stop the farm foreclosures that were forcing small producers

off the land. Simpson also insisted that the long-term problems of farmers could only be solved with legislation that would directly raise farm prices. To that end, he proposed that Congress pass a cost-of-production plan to provide minimum prices for farmers. According to this plan, each farmer would be allocated a certain production quota, with surpluses sold overseas in the open market.

Simpson's cost-of-production plan placed him at odds with other factions within the NFU, most importantly those who advocated the strengthening of large marketing cooperatives and those who were hostile to state intervention. Simpson was also at odds with the Roosevelt administration. Simpson's premature death in 1934 catapulted E. H. Everson of South Dakota to the presidency of the NFU. Everson mostly continued Simpson's anti-New Deal policies by supporting William Lemke for president in 1936. (Lemke was running as the official candidate of the Union Party, created by Father Charles E. Coughlin.) Everson's own tenure in office proved short, and he was succeeded by John Vesecky of Kansas in 1937. Vesecky's rise to power marked a turning point for the NFU and its relationship to Roosevelt and organized labor. Beginning in 1937, the NFU abandoned its calls for currency inflation and cost-of-production measures, and the union began to support Roosevelt's agricultural policies. This allowed the NFU to forge a closer relationship with the Roosevelt administration and marked a transition in NFU ideology from one of agricultural fundamentalism (the idea that production and farmers formed the base of society) to one of agricultural liberalism (the idea that consumption, full employment, and state-directed fiscal policies determined the well-being of society).

See Also: AGRICULTURE; FARM POLICY; UNION PARTY.

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KATHY MAPES

NATIONAL HOUSING ACT OF 1934

The enactment of the National Housing Act on June 27, 1934, began the modern involvement of the federal government in the American housing market. It represented the early New Deal’s most important attempt at short-term pump priming of the economy, but it also had long-term significance as a shaping influence on the development of urban America.

The main rationale for the legislation was to revive the ailing construction industry, which accounted for about a third of the total unemployed, and whose recovery would have important consequences for supply industries like wood, cement, and electrical appliances. New housing starts, which averaged 900,000 a year in the 1920s, had plummeted as a result of the Great Depression to 90,000 in 1933. Testifying in support of the legislation before the House Banking and Currency Committee, Federal Emergency Relief administrator Harry Hopkins confirmed that “a fundamental purpose of this bill is an effort to get people back to work.”

The legislation was devised by a task force headed by Utah banker Marriner Eccles, a special assistant to Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau on credit and monetary matters. From the framers’ perspective, the best way to revive construction was not through a mass program of public housing but through the use of federal insurance programs to encourage private ventures. This was also the solution preferred by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The National Housing Act created two important federal housing agencies. The Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation spent \$275 million to insure the mortgages that federally chartered savings and loan associations made. Under the law’s provisions these associations were

mandated to institute an important reform of housing finance by inaugurating the long-term amortized loan, which eliminated the daunting balloon payment that was hitherto due at the end of the loan period. The other agency created by the legislation, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), was the New Deal’s most direct intervention in the housing market. It aimed to encourage mortgage lending by banks and other bodies through extending low-premium federal insurance against default by borrowers.

The steady growth of annual housing starts to 800,000 by 1940 indicated that the National Housing Act had helped substantially in reviving the construction industry. Nevertheless, the problematic consequences of its long-term effects were also becoming evident by then. While never intended as a social reform to improve the quality of low-income inner-city housing, the legislation arguably made things worse for slum dwellers by hastening suburban development and white flight from the cities. Under conservative leadership drawn from the business and banking industries, the FHA discriminated against inner-city districts, especially those settled by African Americans, through the institution of a red-lining regime that prohibited insurance on housing in neighborhoods that lacked social and economic stability. It was the white suburbs that benefited primarily from the \$119 billion in mortgage insurance that the FHA issued in the first four decades of its existence. The consequences of the New Deal’s neglect of the inner cities would become evident in the 1960s.

See Also: CITIES AND SUBURBS; ECCLES, MARRINER; FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION (FHA); HOUSING.

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IWAN MORGAN

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA)

In early 1933 the United States was mired in the Depression. One-fourth of the nation's workers were unemployed, and industry was operating at only a fraction of its capacity. Yet during the month following his inauguration on March 4, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave little attention to a program for industry in his efforts to stimulate recovery. His advisors had yet to coalesce around one or even two plans that would enable him to choose a course of action, and Roosevelt hoped the banking, relief, agricultural, and monetary policies he was developing might be sufficient to get the economy back on track. To his thinking, an industrial policy, while desirable, was not necessary to spur general recovery, and he did not want to be rushed into a program in the face of the often conflicting ideas for industrial recovery that were being presented.

Trust-busting progressives, such as Professor Felix Frankfurter of the Harvard Law School, believed that monopolistic rigidity in the economy had brought on the Depression through excessive profits, over saving, and reduced consumer spending. In their view an emphasis upon the restoration of competition with vigorous enforcement of the antitrust laws, limits on the size of businesses, progressive taxation, and controls over financial and business practices would achieve recovery by unleashing free markets. Senators Robert Wagner of New York and Robert LaFollette Jr. of Wisconsin and Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins favored large-scale public works spending to pump purchasing power into the economy and put men back to work. Spokesmen for organized labor called for legislation limiting working hours and prescribing minimum wages in the belief it would spread jobs, stabilize labor standards, and give workers more money to spend. Others advocated plans to "restart industry," either by means of government loans to businesses for reemployment purposes or government guarantees against losses for firms increasing their work forces. Still others, most notably Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Rexford Tugwell, had talked about industrial planning by which a nation-

al industrial council made up of government officials or organized non-business groups would exhort business to more responsible behavior. Finally, business elements proposed industrial self-government based on trade association control of markets. Persuaded that overproduction and destructive competition had brought on the Depression, they argued that businessmen, coordinated and assisted by the federal government, could stabilize the price system and spur recovery through agreements limiting competition and raising labor standards.

Industrial self-government had first been utilized on a large scale during World War I by the War Industries Board (WIB) to mobilize industry for war. In the 1920s businessmen had used voluntary agreements, or codes, of fair practices in an attempt to minimize cutthroat competition in some industries. But in the absence of any legal sanctions these agreements often collapsed. With the Depression, businessmen from the cotton textile, petroleum, and other industries that faced chaotic conditions from excessive production called for the suspension of the antitrust laws to permit trade associations to draft effective agreements on production, pricing, and marketing. They were supported by labor leaders in "sick" industries, such as bituminous coal and the needle trades, who believed that if operators could fix minimum prices and set production quotas they could afford to pay higher wages.

Roosevelt was finally stirred to action on industrial recovery in April 1933. Economic indices were slipping, and Congress was ready to move on industrial recovery despite the lack of a presidential initiative. In the Congress, debate focused on a bill introduced by Senator Hugo Black of Alabama that would mandate a maximum thirty-hour-work week. Based on the notion that available work should be shared and that a shorter workweek would create a labor shortage and push up wages, the Black bill had strong support among the Democratic Party majorities in both houses of Congress. It was approved by the Senate on March 30 and seemed likely to be approved by the House of Representatives. However, Roosevelt was skeptical about the Black bill. In his view, it was probably unconstitutional and overly rigid and would not nec-

essarily lead to wage increases. But he was reluctant to embarrass his Democratic supporters in the Congress by opposing it. As a result, he used his political clout to tie up the bill in the House, where it eventually died, and he instructed Assistant Secretary of State Raymond Moley, a principal advisor, to analyze the various proposals for industrial recovery and come up with an alternative to the Black measure.

Moley ultimately concentrated on two plans. One, put together by a group led by Wagner and Assistant Secretary of Commerce John Dickinson and drawing upon ideas from an assortment of business, labor, and government figures, centered on public works spending, government loans to industry, and industrial self-government. It also guaranteed labor's right to collective bargaining. The other plan was largely crafted by Hugh Johnson, a businessman who had represented the army on the WIB, and Donald Richberg, a Chicago lawyer with close ties to the railroad brotherhoods. It likewise called for public works spending and industrial self-government. But in contrast to the Wagner-Dickinson plan, which saw industrial self-government as a partnership between government and business, with business as the senior partner, the Johnson-Richberg plan envisioned a stronger role for government, including presidential authority to license businesses.

At a meeting on May 10, Roosevelt listened to arguments for the two plans from the major drafters and then ordered Johnson, Richberg, Dickinson, Wagner, Perkins, Tugwell, and Budget Director Lewis Douglas "to shut themselves up in a room" and not come out until they had settled on a common plan for industrial recovery. The conferees completed their work on the plan on May 14. The provision for government loans to industry was dropped. Otherwise, it was an amalgamation of the two proposals, with provisions for public works, industrial self-government, and government sanction of unions.

Roosevelt endorsed the plan on May 15 and sent a bill to implement it to Congress on May 17. Strongly supported by business and labor groups, the bill was approved by the House on May 26 by a vote of 325 to 76. In the Senate rural progressives

and antitrusters led by Senator William E. Borah of Idaho mounted a fierce attack against the bill, arguing it would create a giant system of cartels that would stifle any competition and ignore the interests of labor and consumers. Roosevelt, however, had enough votes in the Senate to approve the bill, and on June 13 the Senate passed the measure by a vote of 46 to 37. Three days later Roosevelt signed it into law.

Officially known as the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), the law contained three titles. Title II authorized a \$3.3 billion public works program, and Title III provided for a new system of capital stock and excess profits taxes to finance it. Title I, the most publicized feature of NIRA, implemented the program of industrial self-government. Limited to two years, it permitted industries to draft agreements, or codes, governing business and labor practices that were exempt from the antitrust laws and had the force of law once they received the president's signature. Although not stated explicitly, trade associations were anticipated to have the major role in drafting and administering the codes. Little was said about the specific provisions in codes except for Section 7, which stated that codes were to include provisions for maximum hours, minimum wages, and the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. Section 4 gave the president the power to license industries for a period of one year, and Section 9 gave him the power to remake any code when he thought it was necessary or to impose one on an industry.

In signing NIRA, Roosevelt pronounced it the "most important and far-reaching legislation ever enacted by the American Congress." Brought about by the blight of the Depression, it marked a major step away from the competition of free enterprise capitalism and offered a vision of economic cooperation and social harmony. Business looked forward to the use of price and production controls to restore profits, and workers saw the prospect of higher wages, shorter workdays, full employment, and the growth of unions. Though it was promising, NIRA failed to meet the hopes of its supporters. The public works program, implemented by the Public Works Administration, was run by Administrator Harold Ickes in a tight-fisted fashion that

dribbled money into the economy and did not significantly jump start reemployment. Title I, little more than an enabling measure, was too vague to be a coherent guide to meet the disparate goals of business, labor, and consumers. As implemented by the National Recovery Administration under the leadership of Hugh Johnson, industrial self-government was generally dominated by larger firms, which put in place practices that often hindered recovery and thwarted the aspirations of labor. By the fall of 1933 industrial self-government was enmeshed in controversy that did not end until May 1935 when the U.S. Supreme Court, in the case of *Schechter Poultry Corporation v. United States*, declared Title I unconstitutional on the grounds that it was an invalid delegation of legislative power to the president and exceeded the authority of the federal government to regulate intrastate commerce.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; ECONOMY, AMERICAN; INDUSTRY, EFFECTS ON THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; JOHNSON, HUGH; MOLEY, RAYMOND.

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JOHN KENNEDY OHL

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT)

Franklin Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) into law on July 5, 1935. Also known as the Wagner Act after its chief sponsor, Senator Robert F. Wagner, a New York Democrat, the law marked a major milestone in the history of the American trade union movement. The NLRA went beyond earlier legislative declarations in the Railway Labor and Norris-LaGuardia acts to demonstrate that U.S. public policy favored workers joining unions and engaging in collective bargaining by providing government protection of the right to organize. Although many historians credit the NLRA with contributing significantly to the quadrupling in union membership that occurred in the twenty years following the law's adoption, some critics see the labor law regime established by the NLRA as ultimately constricting the development of the labor movement and creating the context for the steady decline of trade unions that occurred after the mid-1950s.

Wagner first introduced a Labor Disputes bill in the Senate in March 1934. His proposal was in reaction to the labor turmoil that had followed in the wake of the adoption of section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act. Section 7(a) asserted the right of employees "to organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing." The precise meaning of that right, however, soon became a matter of controversy and led to President Roosevelt's appointment of a National Labor Board, headed by Wagner, to interpret the law and mediate disputes. The National Labor Board's lack of clear authority and frequent disagreements with the leadership of the National Recovery Administration led Wagner to propose a separate bill to establish a more effective labor board and to clarify the protections to be provided to workers attempting to organize. Rather than supporting Wagner's proposed legislation, Roosevelt in 1934 favored the adoption of a stopgap measure, Public Resolution No. 44, that allowed him to create a revamped labor tribunal, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), but which continued to lack effective enforcement powers.

Continuing frustration with the implementation of section 7(a) led Wagner to introduce a revised version of his Labor Disputes bill in the Senate in February 1935. Wagner drafted the new NLRA with the assistance of his legislative aide, Leon Keyserling, American Federation of Labor counsel Charlton Ogburn, and NLRB lawyers Calvert Magruder, Philip Levy, and P.G. Phillips. Representative William P. Connery, Jr., sponsored the bill in the House. In spite of strong support for the bill in both houses of Congress and from the leadership of organized labor, Roosevelt remained unenthusiastic about the legislation until the Supreme Court ruled the entire National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional in May 1935, thus creating a void in New Deal labor policy.

The NLRA as finally passed established an independent three-person National Labor Relations Board that, in contrast to its predecessors, could go directly to the courts to enforce its orders. The law banned certain specified "unfair labor practices" by employers that might interfere with or obstruct employees' "right to self-organization." Such unfair practices included employer-dominated or financed company unions. The NLRB was given authority to determine the appropriate bargaining unit and to conduct secret ballot elections to determine who, if anyone, the majority of workers in the unit wanted as exclusive bargaining agents. The specific language relating to the determination of bargaining units made possible the growth of industrial unions, but ruled out the development of industry-wide collective bargaining.

Most employers strongly opposed the NLRA and then actively resisted the law through legal suits challenging the law's constitutionality. The law thus did not become fully effective until the Supreme Court in 1937 upheld its constitutionality in *National Labor Relations Board v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corp.*

Some critics of the NLRA see the law as part of a corporate liberal strategy to defuse the radical potential of what had become a militant labor movement by channeling that movement into a narrowly constricted form of collective bargaining. Although organized labor strongly supported passage of the NLRA, several labor leaders in 1935 expressed con-

cern about the long-term consequences of relying on the state to define and protect labor's rights. The passage in 1947 of the Taft-Hartley amendments to the NLRA demonstrated the dangers of making unions subject to government regulation. Wagner, however, saw the law not as a means of controlling labor, but rather as a matter of justice, and he supported it because he believed strong unions would boost wages and thereby contribute to the growth of purchasing power needed for a healthy economy. Without the NLRA, it is hard to imagine either unions or workers making the gains they did after the law's passage.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT; NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB); NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT; WAGNER, ROBERT F.

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LARRY G. GERBER

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB)

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is a governmental agency that was founded in July 1935



Government and labor officials oversee the NLRB election for union representation at the River Rouge Ford plant in Dearborn, Michigan, in 1941. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

for the purpose of enforcing the National Labor Relations Act, also called the Wagner Act after its main architect, Senator Robert F. Wagner, a progressive Democrat from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's home state of New York. The National Labor Relations Act was supposed to give teeth to workers' collective bargaining rights, and during the "Second" New Deal the NLRB was successful in safeguarding workers' rights to select their bargaining representatives and in ensuring the compliance of management with the law. The NLRB also facilitated the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which could compete with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) for the votes of minorities, many of whom had been used by management in mass production

industries—such as steel, automobiles, mining, and rubber—as strikebreakers.

The economic hardship and suffering that characterized the Great Depression had impelled workers during the "First" New Deal to unionize and to oppose the labor practices that management had utilized for decades—practices that included court injunctions, "yellow dog" contracts, blacklists, strikebreakers, company unions, and other coercive measures to limit the bargaining effectiveness of unions. Thus, the Roosevelt administration adopted pro-union policies through one of its key agencies, the National Recovery Administration (NRA). During the NRA's two years of existence, it engendered the unionization of labor, and numerous, sometimes violent, strikes took place in the country from

1933 to 1935 as a consequence. In response, Roosevelt created the National Labor Board, headed by Senator Wagner. Although the Board enjoyed some initial success, it eventually collapsed because of the stubborn resistance of business leaders to independent unions.

Although business was able to receive insulation from antitrust laws, section 7(a) of the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act, which had created the NRA, affirmed the right of unions to “organize and bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing.” The NRA’s minimum wages and maximum hours codes, however, were jettisoned by the Supreme Court in the 1935 *Schechter* case, which found the National Industrial Recovery Act unconstitutional, primarily because it attempted to regulate interstate commerce and because of its broad delegation of legislative power. In 1937 a divided Supreme Court, in a broad interpretation of interstate commerce, upheld the constitutionality of the National Labor Relations Act by a five to four margin in *NLRB v. Jones and Laughlin Steel*.

Despite the NLRB’s successful role in promulgating pro-union policies during the late 1930s, its policies created a conservative backlash against labor after 1945. Following a major victory in 1946, Republicans passed the Taft-Hartley Act over President Harry Truman’s veto. The Taft-Hartley Act effectively compromised the union movement. Furthermore, by 1986 the NLRB was dominated by President Ronald Reagan’s pro-management appointees, with the net effect of eviscerating federal support for the collective bargaining power of unions.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT; NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); NEW DEAL, SECOND.

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VERNON J. WILLIAMS, JR.

NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD

During the Depression years there were approximately 140,000 lawyers in the United States, almost half of whom had incomes below the poverty line. Four out of five were not members of the American Bar Association, the national conservative association that at the time admitted few women and no African Americans.

In 1936 about 1,200 lawyers met in New York City in support of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s “court-packing plan,” which aimed to add new members to the Supreme Court who would no longer rule that New Deal legislation was unconstitutional. The group that met in New York included unemployed lawyers in the Lawyers Security League, which was pressing for Works Progress Administration positions and unemployment compensation; lawyers representing new labor unions affiliated with the CIO; law professors who taught and advocated legal realism; various New Deal lawyers and elected officials; members of the Communist Party Lawyers Club, who were committed to Marxism and to developing new tactics to win difficult political cases; African-American members of the National Bar Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People who were excluded from renting downtown office space in some cities and from using libraries in the South; many Jewish members of the International Juridical Association, which included women; and some Socialist lawyers.

This meeting led to founding the National Lawyers Guild in Washington, D.C., in 1937. The Guild’s goals included “to aid in making the United States and state constitutions . . . the law,” and all government and judicial agencies “responsive to the will of the American people.” The Guild also hoped “to protect and foster our democratic institutions and civil rights and liberties of all the people; to aid in the establishment of governmental . . .

agencies to supply adequate legal service to all . . . ; to advance the economic well-being of the members of the legal profession, and to improve the relations between the legal profession and the community at large; to encourage, in the study of the law, a consideration of the social and economic aspects of the law; [and] to improve the ethical standards which must guide the lawyer." Finally, the National Lawyers Guild was formed to promote the ideal that "human rights shall be more sacred than property rights." The organization elected Wisconsin Governor Philip F. La Follette and Washington Senator Homer T. Bone to its temporary executive committee. It then elected Minnesota Supreme Court justice John P. Devaney as its first president.

Guild members in private practice fought political deportations and anti-strike injunctions (risking disbarment in Ohio), while government lawyers in the National Labor Relations Board faced open defiance in the South. A few Guild members also fought in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during the Spanish Civil War. In 1939 Morris Ernst, a leader of the America Civil Liberties Union (and a friend of FBI director J. Edgar Hoover), demanded a resolution from the Guild expressing opposition to "Communism, Fascism, and Nazism," a proposal that the executive board rejected unanimously as divisive. Amid innumerable subpoenas to appear before the new Dies Un-American Activities Committee in the U.S. Congress and similar state committees, most government lawyers resigned from the Guild. Robert Kenny, who later became California attorney general, then became Guild president.

During World War II, Guild members worked for the War Labor Board, joined the military services and demanded an end to racial segregation, represented unions struggling against race and sex discrimination, and called for an excess profits tax on war industries. The Guild strongly supported Roosevelt's "four freedoms" and worked for a full employment law, Social Security coverage for lawyers and other self-employed workers, a fair employment practices commission, anti-lynching legislation, a constitutional amendment to outlaw southern poll taxes, a public defender system for indigent criminal defendants, and low-cost neighborhood law offices. The Guild strongly supported

Roosevelt's proposal, with Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin, for a United Nations organization to work against all future wars.

Immediately after World War II, Attorney General Herbert Brownell sought to put the National Lawyers Guild on a list of "subversive" organizations. The Guild defeated this effort, but by 1956 had declined to only about five hundred members nationally. The National Lawyers Guild is one of the very few New Deal-era organizations that survived into the twenty-first century. In 2003, the Guild had some seven thousand members and chapters in every state. Among its members were lawyers, law professors, law students and legal workers.

See Also: LEGAL PROFESSION; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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ANN FAGAN GINGER

NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

The idea of a representative assembly for all of black America began with John P. Davis, a militant civil rights activist of the 1920s and 1930s. At a Howard University conference in Washington, D.C., in 1935, Davis, Ralph Bunche, and other prominent African Americans decided to push ahead. A year later the first National Negro Congress met in Chicago and included some 817 delegates representing 585 religious, labor, civic, and fraternal groups.

They intended to pursue racial justice at home and abroad by securing “the right of the Negro people to be free from Jim Crowism. . . and mob violence” and otherwise promoting “the spirit of unity and cooperation between Negro and white people.” Prominent members included not only Bunche and Davis, who served as executive secretary, but A. Philip Randolph of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. Randolph was elected president.

If this ambitious coalition held great promise given the particular problems black Americans faced during the Great Depression years, its scope also made it vulnerable to factionalism. Predictably, the nation’s most prominent civil rights group, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), saw the National Negro Congress as a rival and kept its distance. Roy Wilkins, nonetheless, attended the Chicago convention as an observer and several local NAACP activists were more directly involved. Davis had more success courting the National Urban League and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), focusing on a working-class constituency that the NAACP largely ignored even during the Depression’s depths. That focus, however, led to an increasing Communist Party presence.

The National Negro Congress’s accomplishments were substantial given the constraints of the times. On the grassroots level, the Congress helped organize boycotts, rent strikes, and other direct-action protests against racial discrimination. Meanwhile, Davis convinced the CIO to recruit black members and the WPA Federal Writers Project to guarantee positions for black writers. Whether organizing voting drives in New York or condemning imperialism in Africa and fascism in Germany, the National Negro Congress was very active through the late 1930s, emerging as a force that could not be ignored. With President Franklin D. Roosevelt sending greetings to its annual meetings, even the NAACP’s Walter White felt compelled to participate.

Yet, the National Negro Congress fell apart as quickly as it had come together. The Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939 led to a raucous debate culminating in Randolph’s decision to leave the organization and begin work on an all-black March on Washington

movement. When other prominent members left and general membership plummeted, what was left of the National Negro Congress remained largely in Communist hands. In 1946, the Congress joined two other organizations, the International Labor Defense and the National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, to form the Civil Rights Congress. Under pressure from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the Subversive Activities Control Board, and the Internal Revenue Service, the Civil Rights Congress closed its doors for good in 1956, citing declining membership and the legal costs of defending itself against the Cold War’s investigatory apparatus.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BUNCHE, RALPH; RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP.

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KENNETH O’REILLY

NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA)

On June 16, 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), an ambitious effort to hasten recovery from the Depression and cure economic ills through public works spending and industrial self-government. The program for industrial self-government, which harked back to World War I when business and government had cooperated through the War Industries Board to mobilize American industry for war, was based on the assumption that businessmen, coordinated and assisted by the federal government, could bring about



A restaurant worker posts an NRA blue eagle sign in a window in 1934 to show the establishment's support for the government program. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

industrial recovery and social progress. Under industrial self-government, representatives of business, labor, and government would draft agreements, or codes, of "fair" business and labor practices for each of the nation's major industries. Among other things, the codes could include provisions for controls on prices, production, and marketing and were required to include provisions for minimum wages, maximum hours, and the right of workers to organize and bargain collectively. Through the codes, it was hoped, cutthroat competition, overproduction, labor conflict, and deflationary prices would be checked, leading the nation into a new era of prosperity and industrial harmony.

Roosevelt entrusted responsibility for implementing industrial self-government to the newly formed National Recovery Administration (NRA). Headed by Hugh S. Johnson, a former army officer and businessman, it had to chart a path through a bewildering maze of conflicting business and labor pressures. Less prosperous industries, such as cotton textiles and petroleum, generally favored codification in the hope that it would restore profitability. More prosperous industries, for example steel and automobiles, were less interested in codification than in putting brakes on it to forestall unwanted government interference. There were inter-industry conflicts between new and declining industries and intra-industry conflicts between large

and small firms, regions or sections, and manufacturers and distributors. Moreover, labor expected to benefit greatly from the NIRA, while many businessmen were determined to minimize the influence of unions.

Johnson was in a difficult position for dealing with the conflicting pressures. The NIRA included coercive measures such as federal licensing and presidential authority to impose or modify codes to keep business, which under the ideology of industrial self-government would have the dominant voice, from turning code making into an orgy of profit taking at the expense of workers and consumers. But concerned about the constitutionality of NRA, Johnson was reluctant to use the coercive features out of fear they could lead the U.S. Supreme Court to rule against the NRA. In addition, he believed businessmen had to have the prospect of reasonable profits if they were to afford the higher labor costs inherent in NRA. Thus Johnson decided to depend upon the voluntary cooperation of business in codification and hope it would not lose sight of the public interest in its desire to restore profitability.

The NRA initially concentrated on those industries that were either strong supporters of industrial self-government or sufficiently organized through trade associations to permit speedy codification. The code for the cotton textile industry was the first to be completed. Approved by Roosevelt in July 1933, it provided for collective bargaining, reduced working days, and minimum wages. It also abolished child labor, achieving something that neither law nor constitutional amendment had been able to do in forty years. Despite these gains for labor, the Cotton Textile Institute, the industry trade association, dominated the drafting process and fashioned a code to its liking with the strong backing of Johnson, who wanted to get the industry codified quickly and use this bell-weather industry to let business know it had nothing to fear from the NRA. As a result, the industry got nearly everything it wanted, including strong production controls and industry dominance of the code enforcement agency.

During the summer and fall of 1933 codes for the nation's other largest industries as well as hundreds of smaller industries were drafted. With some

exceptions, they followed the general pattern of the cotton textile code. Businessmen possessed a monopoly of information about their own industries, and when combined with "a lack of state capacity" and the weakness of labor, they held sway in the code-making process. Labor received some benefits in the form of maximum hours, minimum wages, and the right to have unions, although in many cases the wages were at very low levels, and unions were circumscribed by crippling qualifications or the steadfast determination of business to resist unionization on anything but its own terms. In return for these small concessions to workers, business got all manner of price, production, and marketing restrictions and was largely invested with the enforcement of the codes. The code for the burlesque industry even went so far as to restrict the number of times a stripper could remove her clothes each day. For the most part, representatives of organized labor and spokesmen for consumers were largely ignored in the drafting process and had little standing with the code authorities, the bodies that were charged with enforcement of the codes and were dominated by trade association members. In effect, when the nation was mired in the Depression and in need of immediate expansion of production, jobs, and income, the NRA permitted business to put in place restrictive policies that would actually hinder recovery.

As industries were drafting specific codes, they were asked by the NRA to adhere to a voluntary blanket code (the President's Reemployment Agreement) that Johnson introduced for all industries in July 1933. Providing for minimum wages and maximum hours, it was designed to speed codification, which was lagging in many industries, and inject some badly needed confidence into the economy. The code was to be in effect from August 1 to December 31, 1933, or until the employer's specific industry was codified. Businessmen who agreed to abide by the blanket code were to display the symbol of the NRA, a Blue Eagle accompanied by the words "We Do Our Part," on a placard in their window or on their products. Consumers were to give their business only to those firms that adhered to the code.

Johnson mobilized the nation behind the Blue Eagle with a war mobilization psychology reminis-

cent of the liberty bond drives of 1917 and 1918. The NRA orchestrated a great outpouring of ballyhoo and patriotic appeal replete with radio speakers, motorcades, torchlight processions, mass rallies, parades, and a nationwide speaking tour by Johnson. Businessmen and the public quickly enlisted in the NRA's army of Depression fighters. The Blue Eagle appeared on posters, billboards, flags, movie screens, magazines, newspapers, and numerous products. Beauty contestants had the Blue Eagle stamped on their thighs, and in Philadelphia fans cheered a new professional football team dubbed the Eagles after the NRA's icon. The Blue Eagle campaign was a success. The national surge around it helped quicken the pace of code drafting, and, according to NRA data, payrolls grew. The boomlet, however, did not last. Neither government nor private spending injected enough purchasing power into the economy to sustain it, and before long many of those who had been recently hired were again unemployed.

By the fall of 1933, the NRA was mired in controversy. Johnson, a highly emotional individual and prone to erratic behavior, drank too much, appeared to have an improper relationship with his secretary, and feuded with other government officials, businessmen such as Henry Ford who refused to cooperate with the NRA, and members of the press. Economists and consumer representatives claimed that businessmen were raising prices faster than wages. Labor leaders charged that businessmen were perverting workers' right to form unions by herding them into company unions. Problems with code compliance were widespread, and when the NRA did respond it seemed to crack down on the "little guy" and permit larger firms to violate the codes at will. In the cotton textile industry, for example, mill owners fired employees and rehired them as "apprentices," who could be paid less than the minimum wage. Former President Herbert Hoover and Senator Huey P. Long of Louisiana compared the NRA to fascism, an absurd charge but one many took seriously. Even many of the business supporters of industrial self-government began to lose confidence in the NRA as the agency's labor and consumer advisory boards started to raise disturbing questions about code provisions and call for greater participation by labor and con-

sumer groups in the code authorities. If business could not run industrial self-government as it saw fit, many businessmen preferred to see the NRA scrapped. Reflecting the growing disenchantment with the NRA, many said the initials NRA had come to mean "No Recovery Allowed"; to others, they stood for "National Run Around."

The controversy engulfing NRA came to center on the price problem and labor policy. The NRA offered business the prospect of higher profits through price increases, and Johnson believed price increases were necessary if business was to afford the higher wages workers had been promised. Consequently, he consented to numerous price protection provisions in codes, including price controls through prohibition of sales below costs and, in a few industries, direct price-fixing. Taking advantage of these provisions, business began to raise prices substantially.

Opposition to the price-control measures developed quickly. Within the NRA the Consumers' Advisory Board and the Research and Planning Division criticized the price concessions made to business and called for Johnson to protect the interests of consumers. On Capitol Hill, Senators William Borah of Idaho and Gerald Nye of North Dakota charged that NRA's price policies were undercutting small businesses by eliminating the lower prices they often used to compete with larger firms. The National Industrial Recovery Board, a special board set up in early 1934 to look into the price issue, also lashed out at the NRA for hurting small businesses. Unable to quiet the growing clamor over prices, Johnson issued Office Memorandum 228 on June 7, 1934. It prohibited price-fixing arrangements in future codes, but because more than 90 percent of NRA-subject industries had already been codified, the memorandum had little practical effect. Nevertheless, it indicated that future NRA price policy would no longer be directed at large-scale price regulation.

In the matter of labor policy, the NRA followed a pro-management approach. Labor read Section 7a of the NIRA, which gave workers the right to have unions led by representatives of their own choosing, to mean workers could form their own independent unions and that if a union successfully

organized a majority of workers in a company it could speak for all the workers. Johnson, meanwhile, said that workers were free to have a union, whether it be an independent or a company union, or not have a union, that employers were not under any obligation to reach an agreement with a union, and that individuals or minorities were free to do their own bargaining and make agreements separate from the union. Encouraged by Johnson's interpretation of Section 7a, business used company unions, multiple representation (more than one union representing workers in a company), the open or nonunion shop, and intimidation of workers to resist the organizing drives of those favoring independent unions. Except for limited gains in the coal, automobile, and steel industries, most organizing drives were unsuccessful.

To adjudicate disputes arising out of Section 7a, Roosevelt in August 1933 established the National Labor Board (NLB). Before long, however, Johnson and the NLB were at odds, for the NLB refused to support his position on multiple representation and was less tolerant of company unions. Frustrated by the intransigence of business and the failure to gain the full support of NRA, labor increasingly looked to strikes rather than the NRA to advance its interests. As strikes spread, Johnson rushed into disputes in the automobile, coal, textile, and steel industries, helping to arrange settlements that generally left labor disappointed and convinced that the NRA was a tool of management. In response to labor's criticism of NRA's policies, Roosevelt in June 1934 replaced the NLB with the National Labor Relations Board. Separate from NRA, it was to investigate and mediate labor disputes and hold elections for workers to decide what representation they desired, relegating the NRA to a secondary position in labor policy.

By the summer of 1934 it was obvious that Johnson, now on the verge of physical and mental collapse, had outlasted his usefulness. Officials inside and outside of the NRA said they could no longer work with Johnson, and heeding their warnings that he was dragging down NRA, Roosevelt removed him from the NRA in September. Johnson's removal eliminated a major sore spot for the NRA, but the more fundamental problems regarding policy remained.

Some believed the program of industrial self-government was so bankrupt it should be allowed to expire in June 1935 when the NRA's two-year charter was scheduled for renewal. Others concluded that Roosevelt should let the NRA die and preserve its best features through separate enactments. Roosevelt decided in February 1935 to ask Congress to renew the NRA on a more progressive basis than the original version, with specific requests for retaining Section 7a, restriction of price and production controls, and the application of the antitrust laws against monopolies. By this time Congress was cooling toward the NRA. Six weeks of hearings in the spring of 1935 by the Senate Finance Committee, which was stacked with opponents of the agency, provided critics with a field day to attack NRA. The hearings were accompanied by the release of a damaging report from the Brookings Institution. While granting that the NRA might have instilled some optimism into the economy in the summer of 1933, it castigated the program for retarding recovery, hurting wage earners, and reducing the volume of production. The combination of the Finance Committee's hearings and the Brookings report shattered what was left of the NRA's support on Capitol Hill.

Before Congress could act on Roosevelt's request, the Supreme Court brought an abrupt end to the NRA. Johnson had avoided testing the constitutionality of the NRA out of fear the court would rule against the agency. Roosevelt, however, believed the NRA's constitutionality must be confirmed if the codes were to be enforced. He chose a case involving the Schechter brothers of Brooklyn, New York, who had violated the live poultry code by ignoring wage and hour regulations, filing false sales and price reports, and selling diseased chickens. For the latter reason it came to be known as the "sick chicken" case. Johnson's original concern proved correct. On May 27, 1935, in a nine to nothing decision, the justices found that Title I of NIRA, the enabling measure for NRA, was an invalid delegation of legislative power to the president and an unconstitutional regulation of intrastate commerce. The ideal of industrial self-government did not die completely with the NRA, though. During the next two years Congress passed legislation continuing NRA-type price-and-production controls for the coal, pe-

troleum, and retail trades industries. But beyond these industries, there was little support for industrial self-government as a means for overall economic recovery or social progress.

In its early months the NRA helped check the deflationary spiral and provided a temporary psychological boost to the economy and the nation's spirit. It also consolidated social innovations like the abolition of child labor, the right of workers to have unions, and the elimination of unfair trade practices. But ultimately the NRA failed. Its failure can be explained in part by Johnson's leadership. In the final analysis, however, the NRA failed because of its underlying premise. Industrial self-government was grounded in the belief that the various segments of the economy could look beyond their own interests and work together for the national welfare. This belief was naïve in the case of organized business. Starved for profits and often unwilling to accept labor as even a junior partner, it pursued its own interests and used the NRA to restrict production, raise prices, and thwart labor's aspirations. If the NRA had endured, the likely result, in the words of Ellis Hawley, "would have been economic stagnation, permanent unemployment, and the perpetuation of a depression standard of living, at least for the majority of the people."

See Also: BUSINESSMEN; COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONSUMERISM; JOHNSON, HUGH; NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB); SUPREME COURT.

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JOHN KENNEDY OHL

NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD (NRPB)

Between 1933 and 1943, the National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) served as the only national planning agency in U.S. history. Created in July 1933, the NRPB had consistent leadership from planner Frederic A. Delano, political scientist Charles E. Merriam, and economist Wesley Clair Mitchell. In 1936, business leaders Henry S. Dennison and Beardsley Ruml replaced Mitchell. The board evolved from public works planning to broader social and economic planning.

NRPB advisory national planning became a policy process bringing together social scientists,

executive and legislative branches, and private and public institutions. A small staff of experts, temporary consultants, and field branches conducted studies of land use, multi-use water planning, natural resources, population, industrial structure, transportation, science, and technology that provided the first national inventories of significant American resources. Regional planning groups were created in New England and the Pacific Northwest. Most states established planning agencies, while planning boards emerged in many cities.

The NRPB responded to key national needs: new policy in reaction to the recession of 1937 to 1938, reorganization of the executive branch (the Reorganization Act of 1939), industrial site location studies in wartime, and postwar planning. Funded with emergency monies until 1939, the NRPB worked under the direction of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Rising tensions between Congress and the president led to controversy over wartime and postwar planning that culminated in a 1943 abolition of the board.

Drawing on a social science research network built in the 1900 to 1933 period, the NRPB's planning vision reflected the evolution of a new political economy centered on interest-group competition, cooperation, and conflict. NRPB legacies included compensatory spending policy, executive reorganization, wartime and postwar planning, an early version of the G.I. Bill of Rights, the Second (Economic) Bill of Rights (a manifesto for postwar liberalism), and an institutionalized policy planning process via the Council of Economic Advisers and the annual federal budget process established by the Employment Act of 1946.

See Also: PLANNING; RECESSION OF 1937; REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1939.

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PATRICK D. REAGAN

NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE

The National Urban League was established in 1911 through the merger of three related organizations: the Committee on Urban Conditions among Negroes in New York, the National League for the Protection of Colored Women, and the Committee for Improving Industrial Conditions among Negroes. Between the time of its founding and the Great Depression, the National Urban League focused on a range of goals, which included: changing the interracial status quo by encouraging whites "to work with African Americans for their mutual advantage and advancement," establishing a social work program at Fisk University to train African-American social workers, securing financial support for local Urban League branches from local community chests such as the United Way, and the establishment of *Opportunity* magazine in 1925 as a publicity vehicle for presenting "factual data on African-American life to businessmen, government officials, labor leaders, and organized and unorganized white workers."

The Depression and the New Deal had an enormous impact on the National Urban League's activities, policies, and programs. By the time of the stock market crash of 1929, close to 300,000 black industrial workers were unemployed. Less than a third of these would find work through employment offices. The majority of the jobs that the National Urban League was able to secure were for African-American women in domestic work. The Depression years pushed the League to the brink of bankruptcy. That it survived was due in large part to the heroic efforts of its executive board and a few staunch contributors. The crisis prevented the National Urban League from cutting back on activities so the staff had to return a portion of their salaries. With so many white people out of work, employers could hardly be expected to listen to appeals from the Urban League. The League was forced to

change its strategy from industrial relations to protecting African-American jobs from the invasion of white workers.

African Americans benefited from the New Deal, but not without a struggle in which the Urban League played a major role by assuring that African Americans received equal treatment for programs responsible for economic relief. From the beginning, the National Urban League criticized New Deal programs for neglecting to curtail widespread discrimination against African Americans.

The Depression and New Deal legislation, along with the groundswell of African-American frustration, forced the National Urban League to break with its tradition of polite interpersonal diplomacy in the worlds of business and labor. It shifted to protest and embraced the strategy and tactics of mass letter-writing campaigns, petitions, and the lobbying of members of Congress for the benefit of African Americans. As a result, the Urban League was able to maintain influence among African Americans suffering from the effects of the Depression and the racial exclusion of New Deal programs.

Part of the Urban League's new strategy was the establishment of emergency advisory councils and workers councils in key urban centers throughout the country and the building of alliances between African Americans and organized labor. In 1933 the League joined other interracial and African-American organizations to form the Joint Committee on National Recovery. Limited by lack of funds and staff, the Committee nonetheless managed to lobby in Washington, D.C., on behalf of African Americans and expose the public to the failure of New Deal programs to address the needs of African Americans.

The National Urban League contributed its share to the recovery efforts by providing crucial studies and African-American specialists to advise the Roosevelt administration. The organization believed that New Dealers needed accurate information about racial problems before they could provide solutions. This data was also used by the Urban League to buttress its case for administrative and legislative reforms.

Throughout most of the Depression the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and the Friedsam foundations funded more than half of the National Urban League's annual budget. African-American organizations did their share as well, on both local and national levels. The Delta Sigma Theta sorority worked with and financially supported the League. Robert S. Abbott, editor of the *Chicago Defender*, and A. Phillip Randolph, head of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, worked with the National Urban League to protect the rights of black workers in New Deal programs. Locally, the Michigan People's Finance Corporation in Detroit provided the Detroit Urban League with free rent throughout the Depression.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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RICHARD W. THOMAS

NATIONAL WOMEN'S PARTY

After the Nineteenth Amendment provided for woman's suffrage in 1920, most activists reorganized as the League of Women Voters. A few militant activists, however, wanted more for women than suffrage, and they pursued that goal through the National Women's Party, which was formed in 1916 by Alice Stokes Paul and others. Although

membership never topped fifty thousand, the National Women's Party was active and vocal, promising to support female political candidates but never putting up its own.

In 1921, the National Women's Party declared its primary objective to be the passage of a national equal rights amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution. Paul drafted an amendment in 1923 to eliminate gender discrimination in federal, state, and local laws: "Men and women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." Although a few congressmen sponsored the bill, by 1938 it had only been reported to the House Judiciary Committee three times.

During the 1920s, the National Women's Party tried to enlist the League of Women Voters and other women's groups to lobby through the Women's Joint Congressional Committee for the passage of the ERA and other legislation of interest to women, including child labor laws, nondiscriminatory civil service classifications, the formation of a federal bureau of education, and the establishment of uniform marriage and divorce laws. Members of the Women's Joint Congressional Committee, however, adamantly opposed the ERA. Many women's groups, including the League of Women Voters, the National Women's Trade Union League, the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the American Association of University Women, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and the National Council of Jewish Women opposed the ERA on the basis that it would be detrimental to existing legislation that protected women. The National Women's Party, on the other hand, considered such protective laws, such as those limiting women's working hours, as discriminatory and advocated "not removal of protection, but removal of the sex basis in protective laws." Opponents to the ERA also claimed the amendment would allow women to be drafted into the army, would endanger child custody, and would force women to pay alimony.

The National Women's Party lost ground during the Depression as many businesses ruled against the employment of married women, who were accused of taking jobs from men, the "bread-

winners." The 1932 Economy Act, which allowed the firing of married women whose husbands were employed by the government, was not repealed until 1937. In addition, half of the states prohibited married women from working and three-fourths of states banned married women from being hired as teachers. National Women's Party member Alma Lutz charged that the enemies of married women workers were not men but single women "obsessed with the idea that their salvation depends upon barring married women from paid labor."

The National Women's Party also tried to fight discrimination against women in New Deal programs. The National Recovery Administration's (NRA) Labor Advisory Board codes, for example, allowed lower wages for women doing the same work as men, while section 213 of the National Industrial Recovery Act forced two-thirds of women civil service workers to resign. The Civilian Conservation Corps was open only to men, and did not hire any of America's four million unemployed women. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins and Eleanor Roosevelt's network of women also held firm against the National Women's Party and its goals. Only the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs broke ranks, finding that protective laws hindered business and professional women as the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act gave minimum wage and maximum hours protection to both sexes.

Frustrated with the party's lack of success in the United States, Paul expanded activism internationally as chair of the Nationality Committee of the Inter-American Commission on Women, on the executive committee of Equal Rights International in Geneva, and on the Committee on Nationality of the League of Nations. Perkins, however, squelched National Women's Party efforts to put the ERA before the 1936 Buenos Aires Inter-American Peace Conference. There were steps forward, however, when the Democratic Party endorsed the ERA in 1944, and Eleanor Roosevelt withdrew her opposition to the amendment. Although the 1945 United Nations Charter had an equal rights for women resolution, the ERA was not approved by the U.S. Congress until 1972. Thereafter, the amendment was sent to the states for ratification, but was not approved.

See Also: GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA)

When in May 1934 Eleanor Roosevelt admitted her fear that the United States was in danger of losing a whole generation of young people, there was good reason for her anxiety. Available statistics indicated that as many as 50 percent of Americans between sixteen and twenty-four years old who were in the labor market were unemployed. Unskilled and untrained, they were seemingly incapable of becoming productive adults. Though the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration had moved swiftly to deal with the worst aspects of the problem, most notably with the creation in 1933 of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), these first measures were little more than stopgaps, catering to the most desperate cases only. The National Youth Administration (NYA) was the New Deal's attempt to combat the problem of youth unemployment on a more long-term basis.

Created by executive order on June 26, 1935, as part of the new Works Progress Administration (WPA), the NYA had twin functions from the start.

One goal was to help needy young people stay in school or in college, enabling them both to develop their skills and talents and to keep out of the hopelessly swollen labor market. The second, more difficult function was to provide assistance to young people no longer in school, but out of work. Such youths needed both immediate relief and job training that would be useful once recovery came. To head the new agency, Roosevelt selected the outspoken Southern liberal Aubrey Willis Williams. Already the WPA's deputy-director, Williams remained the NYA's head throughout its existence. Clearly identified with the New Deal's left wing, Williams was determined to use the new agency to help black youths and white youths equally. Symbolic of this commitment was the early appointment of the distinguished black educator Mary McLeod Bethune to an important position in the agency's administrative structure.

The student work program was relatively easy to organize. It was largely run by the schools and colleges themselves, and by early 1937 more than 400,000 young people were receiving regular stipends in return for performing useful tasks on their various campuses. In all, more than two million young people completed their education while receiving NYA assistance. The program for out-of-school youth was more difficult to manage. The first work projects were often high-labor low-capital-outlay affairs like cleaning up public buildings or developing local parks. Such projects were useful to the communities involved, but failed to impart practical job skills. As soon as possible, therefore, Williams redirected the NYA's emphasis into the acquirement of permanent skills, and, after 1939, even more specifically into training youth for defense industry work. As such, the NYA introduced its enrollees to machines, gave them basic shop training, and then poured them into the nation's rapidly reviving industrial plants. By 1942 the NYA had become a crucial adjunct to the war effort, something thousands of employers all over the country enthusiastically attested to.

Congress abolished the NYA in 1943 over the president's strenuous objections. The program was a victim of the drive to prune federal expenditures to the bone, but its cancellation was also an expres-



Young women take typing lessons sponsored by the National Youth Administration in Illinois in 1937. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

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sion of distaste for Williams as a symbol of extreme New Dealism. The accomplishments of the NYA had been numerous, however, and it remains one of the best examples of what enlightened, committed people can achieve when they have the public behind them, if only for a short time.

See Also: BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WILLIAMS, AUBREY.

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NATIVE AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

Before the Great Depression and the Indian New Deal, ethnocidal policies devastated Native-American individuals and nations. Between 1887 and 1933, over half of the tribal land base was lost to land thieves, tax sales, and governmental sales of “surplus lands.” These policies launched a cycle of poverty that continues at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Thus, lack of education and ill health became hallmarks of tribal societies in the United States. But these racist missionary and civilizing policies did not bring the benefits of American civilization to Native-American people. Instead, many native peoples strengthened their resolve to nurture and cleave to their old traditional ways.

This period of ethnocide or “forced assimilation” was the worst period of Native-American civil rights. In spite of constitutional affirmations, Native-American property rights, free speech, and free exercise of religion were denied. On a more fundamental level, the right of Native-American tribes to continue their distinct tribal status was violated systematically. To this day, the damage to native individuals and communities and the economic rights of Native Americans has not been mended.

INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT

After World War I, some enlightened Native Americans and white individuals decided to reform these oppressive “assimilation” policies with new legislation. Although many Native Americans had become U. S. citizens through “competency commissions” and treaties, Congress unilaterally granted citizenship to all Native Americans in 1924. However, many natives were wary of being declared citizens through “competency” since it often meant that their federal land allotments and treaty rights were no longer protected and thus subject to

confiscation or sale. A significant amount of the tribal estate was taken from Native Americans through fraud and state tax sales. In fact, thousands of newly created Native-American citizens saw their lands removed from federal protection and sold out from under them during the 1920 and 1930s.

Many Native-American leaders asserted that the American Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 was a mischief-maker in Native-American policy. They did not like the way it was imposed without consultation and consent from native communities. The Tuscarora chief, Clinton Rickard, summarized the views of many Native Americans by stating:

The Citizenship Act did pass in 1924 despite our strong opposition. By its provisions all Indians were automatically made United States citizens whether they wanted to do so or not. This was a violation of our sovereignty. Our citizenship was in our own nations. We had a great attachment to our style of government. We wished to remain treaty Indians and reserve our ancient rights. There was no great rush among my people to go out and vote in the white man’s elections. Anyone who did so was denied the privilege of becoming a chief or clan mother in our nations.

Although the 1924 American Indian Citizenship Act granted citizenship unilaterally, it did not end federal protection of native lands and governmental entities. Hence, Native Americans acquired a new status as American citizens while maintaining their privileges and rights as members of distinct Native-American political units. However, native policymakers in 1924 assumed that tribal governments would wither away when Native Americans became U. S. citizens. But most tribal governments did not disappear as anticipated and native peoples continue to enjoy a special dual citizenship.

Poverty, poor education, and ill health characterized the existence of most Native Americans in the 1920s. When native lands were allotted, the federal government assured communities that they would be supported during the transition from communal ways to the individualistic mores of Euro-American society. But government promises were not kept, and many Native Americans contin-



A Native-American mother and child stand next to their home in 1936 on the Mescalero reservation in New Mexico. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ued to reject American individualism and cling to traditional group-oriented values. In some cases, native communities were devoured by their more greedy and competitive white neighbors. By the end of the 1920s, many reformers and Native-American leaders understood that instilling private property through allotment and Christianity

through missionization had wreaked havoc in Native-American country.

THE MERIAM REPORT

In 1928, the federal government commissioned a study of Native-American policy. The resulting Meriam Report catalogued the woeful conditions of



This Native-American family of migrant farm laborers worked in the blueberry fields near Little Fork, Minnesota, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

native peoples. In health care, Native Americans were found to be without even rudimentary services. Infant mortality rates were twice the national average. Native Americans were also seven times more likely than the general population to die of tuberculosis. Sanitary conditions were bad, and many native peoples were disease-ridden. The Meriam report also criticized Native-American boarding schools as "grossly inadequate." From 1800 to 1926, the Bureau of Indian Affairs separated Native-American children from their parents in a cruel attempt to Christianize and civilize them. The Meriam Report pointed out the harsh discipline heaped on Indian children. Basically, the boarding schools forbade Native-American children to speak their own languages, practice their religions, or wear traditional clothes. Violators of these rules were subject to physical abuse. Male American-Indian survivors of this period, such as Rupert

Costo (Cahuilla), joked that upon arriving at boarding schools a missionary teacher would point to a picture of Jesus Christ with long flowing hair and state that they were to become like this man and then order that the boys' long hair be cut. In addition, most Christian boarding schools ruthlessly exploited Native-American child labor throughout much of the first half of the twentieth century. The Meriam Report characterized boarding schools as overcrowded and staffed with unqualified personnel who provided poor medical care, an unhealthy diet, and substandard education. Under these harsh conditions, Native-American literacy rates remained low. Boarding schools were also a direct attack on native families since they separated Native-American youths as early as the age of five from their families and often forbade children from even visiting their reservations and families during the summer.



A Native-American tenant farm family, photographed in 1939 at their farmhouse in McIntosh county, Oklahoma. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OVI COLLECTION

Furthermore, no economic or legal structure appeared to be in place to protect the rights of Native Americans. The Meriam Report found that only 2 percent of all Native Americans earned in excess of \$500 per year and that 96 percent of all Native Americans made less than \$200 per year. Almost half of all Native Americans had lost their land to unscrupulous people who were manipulating the law to take advantage of allotted Native American lands. Legal authorities were unsure where cases involving natives and non-natives as defendants and plaintiffs should be heard—on reservations or off reservations. Often, when such cases were adjudicated, justice was not the result.

Having diagnosed this staggering array of problems, the Meriam Report recommended an infusion of funds to correct the ills of the system. It called for a new office in the Bureau of Indian Affairs to institute new programs and monitor existing ones. The report also stated that the government and especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs had exhibited an extremely hostile attitude towards native families and native culture. The allotment system, a cornerstone of Native-American policy since 1887, was found to be the major cause of chronic Native-American poverty.

THE INDIAN NEW DEAL

The Meriam Report documented a national scandal, showing that the deplorable conditions on reservations were a byproduct of governmental policies and neglect. Thus, the Meriam Report became a major blueprint for the Indian New Deal. In the 1930s, Native-American policy was taken out of the hands of missionaries and transferred to white social scientists. Most Native-American leaders of the time pointed out that Native-American affairs were still not in the hands of native peoples. Native leaders also knew that the persistence of Native-American ways depended on maintaining the land base and traditional tribal identity, and they looked to the Bill of Rights for the legal machinery to facilitate this survival process. The white religious reform community was largely responsible for these excesses since they had backed the discredited allotment policies and the Indian Citizenship Act.

The reforms that emerged in the 1930s were built on the idea that native culture and nations had

a place in twentieth-century America. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's new commissioner of Indian affairs, John Collier, instituted a policy to restore the vitality of Native-American governments through the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) of 1934. The IRA renounced the old allotment policies and encouraged tribes to promulgate their own constitutions. In addition, Native-American governments were recognized as the basic way to foster federal Native-American policies. New Deal reforms also sought to create nondenominational day schools on reservations, rather than continue to fund religious boarding schools that destroyed Native-American traditional family values. In these ways, the right of Native Americans to maintain distinct tribal communities was sustained. The idea that tribes and tribal values would eventually disappear was no longer the underlying assumption behind United States Native-American policy during the 1930s.

Paradoxically, federal officials during the 1930s often pursued goals of Native-American autonomy with an enthusiasm that limited the Native Americans' right of choice. In his zeal for social change, Collier pushed for the adoption of Native-American constitutions that reflected bureaucratic opinions as to how older tribal structures could be converted into contemporary constitutional structures. As a result, IRA constitutions were forced upon many tribes that clearly opposed such measures. During the 1930s, most Native Americans continued to be suspicious of governmental programs to aid them. Many large tribes, such as the Navajos, rejected the Indian New Deal because it did not address the very real economic and resource management issues on large reservations. Unemployment on most Native-American reservations continued to be well over 50 percent throughout the 1930s.

Despite these concerns, the reforms of the 1930s continued. Tribal governments were revitalized and their political authority over reservation life was reinvigorated. Gradually, native peoples started to recover from the devastations of the allotment policy, and health and education programs improved. But these reforms were short-lived.

As the Great Depression ended and World War II began, the United States turned away from

Native-American issues. The budget for the Bureau of Indians Affairs was cut, and conservative politicians attacked Collier's policies of empowering Native-American societies. Racism played an important role in this backlash, as did non-native businessmen who had lost their ability to plunder Native-American resources and lands during the 1930s. The cost of reforming the administration of Indian affairs was also a source of friction. An ideological attack against Native Americans emerged out of the anticommunist hysteria of the day. The attack painted Native-American ways as un-American and communistic. These ideological critiques aided another attack on native societies in the late 1940s and early 1950s, reversing many of the gains secured during the Indian New Deal. These conservative political attacks on native peoples would pave the way for radical civil rights and self-determination movements like the American Indian Movement in the 1960s.

See Also: COLLIER, JOHN; INDIAN NEW DEAL; INDIAN REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1934; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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NAZI-SOVIET PACT

The Nazi-Soviet Pact, signed during early morning hours on August 24, 1939, formed the historical gateway between the Great Depression and World War II. Ostensibly a mere nonaggression treaty between Germany and the USSR, the agreement contained an unpublished protocol that gave independent Poland a death sentence by carving up Eastern Europe. In the United States, the entente placed a permanent cloud over the Communist Party's leadership of the anticapitalist left.

The Pact had roots in appeasement of Nazi Führer Adolf Hitler by European democracies. Germany's annexation of Austria in 1938 went uncontested. Later that year, Great Britain and France ignored Soviet Foreign Commissar Maxim Litvinov's call for collective action to protect Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland, a border region with a sizable German-speaking minority. On September 30, in a conference at Munich, Germany, the two Western powers surrendered the region to Hitler in exchange for a promise to maintain peace. From that point on, he sought to seize Poland, certain that Britain and France would not fight a major war to defend that nation. The Munich Pact caused Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Joseph Stalin to consider a treaty with Germany. For the next year, the British and French made no serious effort toward any accord with Moscow to contain the Nazis, causing Stalin to suspect they wanted Hitler to attack the USSR. Germany's need for raw materials, plus Stalin's anger at the democracies, led to

a Russo-German trade agreement in August 1939. At that point, Soviet Prime Minister Vyacheslav Molotov proposed a nonaggression pact.

The concord was written by four persons: Hitler in Berlin, and his Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, Stalin, and Molotov in Moscow. They drafted the document in haste. Germany was planning an early invasion of Poland, and Stalin gleefully exploited Hitler's impatience to exact territorial concessions. The text, therefore, contained unusually straightforward language. A preamble cited a 1926 neutrality agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union as historical precedent. Seven articles followed. The first article abjured aggression, each nation upon the other, whether severally or jointly with other powers. The second clause provided that if an outsider attacked either, the signatories would not lend support. This gave Hitler *carte blanche* to address "provocations" by Germany's eastern neighbor. The third section promised an open channel of communication between Russia and the Reich. The fourth provided that neither would join any grouping of powers aimed directly or indirectly at the other—blatantly ignoring Germany's Anti-Comintern Pact with Italy and Japan against the USSR. Article five affirmed that disputes would be settled by arbitration commissions. A sixth gave the agreement a ten-year life, with an automatic five-year extension, if neither side objected. The final clause put the Nazi-Soviet Pact in force immediately upon signature by Ribbentrop, Molotov, and Stalin, thereby hastening the attack on Poland.

The secret protocol partitioned Poland, also handing the USSR Belorussian and Ukrainian lands lost in her 1920 war with the Poles. In addition, the unpublished portion ceded to Stalin the Romanian province of Bessarabia, as well as Latvia, Estonia, and Finland. Subsequent negotiations brought Lithuania under Russian rule as well.

One can scarcely overstate the Nazi-Soviet Pact's historical significance. World War II erupted just days after its signing, when Germany invaded Poland and Britain and France declared war on Germany. The conflict killed eighty million people. It destroyed fascist governments in Italy, Germany, and far-off Japan. It left the European continent in

rudder, and fatally undermined European colonialism everywhere. The ultimate victory by the Soviet Union, which was foolishly attacked by Germany—her 669-day ally—on June 22, 1941, marked the rise of a new Russian empire that lasted until 1989.

In the United States, the Nazi-Soviet Pact, and blind support of it by the American Communist Party (CPUSA), ended the Popular Front against fascism. For nearly six years, leftists of various stripes had put aside differences to resist the spread of Hitlerism. The CPUSA had become the largest anticapitalist party, with influence ranging far beyond a membership that never surpassed 100,000. The Pact belied the CPUSA's claim to leadership of democratic, progressive forces. Support for the USSR's treaty with Nazi Germany raised the question of where the party's primary loyalty lay. It put Communists under the same type of expanded federal surveillance that domestic fascist groups faced. It also prompted a miniature red scare and cemented ideological foundations that Senator Joseph McCarthy and other political opportunists built upon a decade later. Paradoxically, the war that devastated so much of the world ended America's Great Depression and brought unprecedented prosperity thereafter.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; HITLER, ADOLF; POPULAR FRONT; STALIN, JOSEPH; WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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The National Youth Administration, an important New Deal agency, was established in 1935 to provide vocational training and employment for young men and women. These men attended an NYA mechanics class in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1936. FRANKLIN

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NEW DEAL

The United States in the 1920s, argued William E. Leuchtenburg, “had almost no institutional structure to which Europeans would accord the term ‘the State.’” As one journalist had observed, “nobody would have thought of calling the sleepy inconsequential Southern town that Washington was in Calvin Coolidge’s day the center of anything very important.” An economist noted that “The only business a citizen had with the government was through the Post Office. No doubt he saw a soldier

or a sailor now and then, but the government had nothing to do with the general public.”

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Franklin D. Roosevelt confronted the worst economic depression in American history with this feeble state apparatus. A generation before, Grover Cleveland had responded to a similar crisis. As in 1933, the president had been faced in 1893 with armies of the unemployed, desperate farmers, and frightened financiers. Cleveland had resolutely



The Civilian Conservation Corps, one of the earliest New Deal programs, was established in 1933 to provide jobs in conservation projects for young men around the country. These CCC members were photographed at California's Rock Creek Camp in June 1933. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

maintained a policy of sound money and strict economy, and he steadfastly resisted demands for government assistance. His courage won Cleveland the praise of conservatives everywhere, but it split his Democratic Party, brought it electoral disaster, and condemned the Democrats to national minority status until the 1930s.

Roosevelt ignored this model. Instead, he drew on the Progressive traditions of the need for government to confront the problems of modern industrial society and to protect the disadvantaged—what Daniel Rodgers has called a “new social poli-

tics.” Roosevelt also drew on the model of what the federal government had done during World War I when it mobilized men and resources to fight a European war. Herbert Hoover had drawn on many of the same traditions and had mobilized government agencies to check the deflationary spiral after 1929, just as he had as secretary of commerce in 1921 to combat recession. But Hoover’s activism was to promote voluntary cooperation. Roosevelt’s was not so constrained: He cheerfully, albeit unsystematically, sought federal government remedies and, if necessary, federal government coercion to tackle the Depression.

As a result, American citizens who had had so little experience with the federal government now saw it deeply interwoven in their daily lives. Between 1933 and 1938 the New Deal that Roosevelt had promised the American people when he accepted the Democratic nomination in 1932 profoundly altered the relationship between individuals and their government and shaped the political economy of the United States for the next fifty years.

American farmers were told what they could and could not plant by federal officials. They received checks for not planting crops, or even for destroying what they had already planted. Many had access to electricity for the first time. Farm owners, like homeowners across the nation, renegotiated their mortgages with federal agencies. Tenants could borrow to buy their own farms. Millions of workers were employed by the government on public works and work relief projects. They voted in federal elections for union representation. Their minimum wage was determined by the government. They were eligible for unemployment compensation and received old-age pensions. Most Americans paid income taxes to the federal government for the first time in the 1930s and 1940s. Businessmen could no longer fight unions with every weapon at their disposal and could no longer simply ignore them. They were told what they had to pay their workers, and, for a short time, how much they could produce. Their banking and securities operations were strictly monitored. At the same time, they had unprecedented access to cheap credit from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) and had their bank deposits underwritten. Virtually every community in the United States bore the physical imprint of the New Deal: a public housing project, a new high school stadium, a new airport, a new road, a new dam.

This transformation of the role of the federal government and the notions of the legitimate function of government was eventually accepted by the federal courts. The exact timing of the “Constitutional Revolution” of the 1930s, and the motivation of the judges who appeared to switch sides, remains open to dispute, but the constitutional consequences were clear. The restrictions on what the

federal government could regulate under the commerce clause were largely removed. In 1942 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that an Ohio chicken farmer growing twenty-three acres of wheat, all of which would be fed to his chickens and consumed in his backyard, so affected interstate commerce that the secretary of agriculture could impose marketing penalties on him. Before 1937 the Court had savaged economic and social legislation, notably the great industrial and farm recovery acts of 1933. Since 1937 it has never overturned legislation involving economic regulation and between 1937 and 1946 it reversed thirty-two of its earlier decisions in the economic and social arena.

The American people made the same decision as the judges. The majority of Americans welcomed this assumption of active responsibility by the federal government for the welfare of ordinary Americans and responded by electing Roosevelt as president four times. American voters made the Democratic Party the national majority party for a generation and supported presidents—Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, and Lyndon Johnson—who campaigned in the shadow of Roosevelt and sought to complete the unfinished business of the New Deal. Until the 1960s most Americans believed that the federal government could be relied on to do the right thing.

HISTORIANS

The first generation of New Deal historians (Tugwell, Freidel, Burns, Schlesinger, Leuchtenburg) largely shared this perspective. They were mainly liberal activists for whom the Depression and World War II were their formative political experiences. Because of Roosevelt’s sense of history and the creation of the presidential library in Hyde Park, New York, historians could accomplish archive-based work on the Roosevelt presidency far more quickly than on any previous president. By 1950, 85 percent of Roosevelt’s papers had been cleared and could be studied—some five years before the Library of Congress was able to release some of its Lincoln papers and seventeen years before serious archival assessments of the Hoover presidency started. It was inevitable that these historians should put Roosevelt at center stage: The

need to establish a coherent narrative of the vast array of legislation and the agencies that proliferated dictated their emphasis on the president and the dynamics of policy formulation. Their tone was largely celebratory. "Something magical," recalled one historian, happened in the 1930s when the federal government came to the rescue of ordinary Americans. They were not uncritical: They regretted the lack of greater planning and coherence in the New Deal, felt that Roosevelt was sometimes too clever by half and sacrificed long-term strategic goals for short-term political gains, and noted that many who needed help most were excluded from the benefits of the New Deal. Nevertheless the overall portrait of Roosevelt and the New Deal was heroic. At a time of unprecedented prosperity after 1945, the New Deal legacy of economic management through fiscal activism seemed successful. At a time when ideology and mass movements—fascism, communism, McCarthyism—seemed so dangerous, these historians could see great value in the apparently pragmatic, non-ideological New Deal that "brokered" the demands of the competing interests groups who mediated between the government and the people.

Radical historians (Zinn, Bernstein, Conkin, Kolko) of the 1960s lamented what the liberals had celebrated. The one-third of a nation that Roosevelt had identified in 1937 as ill-housed, ill-clothed, and ill-fed remained poor. Neither racism nor the power of capitalism had been checked. To these historians the New Deal, like other reform movements in twentieth century, had merely served to sustain the hegemony of corporate capitalism. To the radical historians of the 1960s, the New Deal failure was particularly tragic because, echoing the radicals of the 1930s, they believed that there had never been a better time for a radical overhaul of the American economic and political system. Capitalism had collapsed. American workers and farmers were more disillusioned than ever before or since with traditional business leadership. For once corporate leaders could not solve their problems through overseas economic expansion, since foreign markets had collapsed. They feared that the alternative domestic remedies for depression in a mature economy, therefore, would involve the radical redistribution of wealth and power if America's

persistent overproduction were to be solved. To forestall that radical change, New Left historians argued, corporate leaders were not the targets of New Deal reform; rather they were the driving force behind the New Deal. These corporate leaders sought to patch up, not tear down, the old economic system to ensure that power remained largely in traditional hands. Shrewd business leaders supported industrial stabilization, labor legislation, and social security legislation because they could afford increased labor costs that would drive under their smaller competitors. To defuse the angry discontent of workers, farmers, and the poor, they supported the most minimal welfare measures possible. Limited concessions would avert the threat of disorder and undercut the appeal of radicals. This interpretation continued to resonate in graduate schools in the United States, even though it did not yield a major overview of the New Deal. In the 1990s historians of American business like Colin Gordon resurrected a more sophisticated version of the analysis.

If New Left historians lamented the limited nature of New Deal change and viewed it as a decisive "missed opportunity" for radical change, critics on the right lamented that the New Deal had initiated entirely too much change and that the 1930s had marked the "Big Bang" of the federal government. Critics from Herbert Hoover to economic historians such as Robert Higgs in the 1980s and 1990s argued that Roosevelt artificially created a crisis in 1933, then used the analogy of wartime powers and foisted economic regimentation and government control on the American people. The New Deal was a decisive wrong turn in American history that set the nation firmly on the road to collectivism and the creation of a Leviathan—the modern, insatiable, bureaucratic state. As a result, conservative critics and historians argued, the commitment of both ordinary Americans and their leaders to individualism, free markets, and limited government suffered a blow from which the nation has never recovered.

In fact, few New Deal programs were implemented by an army of federal officials faithfully carrying out orders from Washington. Programs were often administered by state administrators, by local officials more sensitive to local mores than to

Washington diktat, or by people, such as farmers and businessmen themselves, whom the programs were intended to regulate. State and local case studies of the New Deal and particular agencies have shown that change that looked impressive in Washington did not necessarily have the same impact at the local level. Studies that focus on social groups rather than on their leaders and politicians, “the inarticulate many” rather than “the articulate few,” show grassroots radicalism and the agency of ordinary Americans, but they also show the persistence of conservative traditions of deference and individualism amid extraordinary economic distress. Studies that focus on policymaking rarely show the enlightened capitalists as the driving force behind New Deal reforms. Historians who have attempted overviews that take advantage of these studies (McElvaine, Badger, Biles) have tended to emphasize the limitations of the changes wrought by the New Deal. In that sense they resemble the New Left historians. But, unlike those historians, they tend to stress not the conservative intent of policymakers or the malign influence of corporate capitalists, but the external constraints imposed by the political and economic environment: the lack of a sufficient state apparatus, the strong forces of localism, the great difficulty of policymaking in an economic emergency, and entrenched conservative leadership in Congress.

THE EFFORTS AT RECOVERY

What judgments on the New Deal can be made against this background? The overriding imperative in 1933 was to produce economic recovery quickly—to reopen the banks and to check the downward deflationary spiral of wages and prices. The microeconomic intervention in agriculture and industry aimed to restore purchasing power to farmers by controlling production under the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) and to eliminate destructive competition in industry by setting a floor under wages and prices through National Recovery Administration (NRA) codes. Various schemes of “quick fixes” by currency manipulation, to which Roosevelt was always attracted, had little effect. The NRA codes may have checked the deflationary spiral, but they did not generate additional purchasing power that would create extra jobs.

Public works spending by the slow moving Public Works Administration (PWA) did not compensate. Microeconomic policies were largely abandoned after the end of the NRA in 1935. Unemployment figures never fell below 10 percent until well into 1941. It would take the demands of preparedness and the defense industries during the war to generate the purchasing power to create new jobs and full employment.

In agriculture, the mix of credit, production control programs, parity payments, and price support loans under the 1933 and 1938 Farm Acts rescued rural America. Federal assistance enabled farm owners to stay on the land in the 1930s when there were no alternative economic prospects off the land. But those on the land who were always poor—tenants and sharecroppers in the South, migratory farm workers in Florida and California, small farmers in the Appalachians—did not receive proportionate assistance from the AAA or the cash-strapped Resettlement Administration (RA) and its successor, the Farm Security Administration (FSA). Farm programs, which were largely to remain in place for the next fifty years, eliminated much of the risk of unpredictable weather and markets for American farmers but they did not in themselves bring prosperity. It was World War II that solved the farm problem: It produced the urban demand that absorbed surplus farm production and the non-farm jobs that absorbed the surplus rural population.

Nevertheless, there were important New Deal economic legacies. The reforms in banking and securities eliminated most of the excesses that had produced financial instability in the 1920s. The stabilization of the financial system lasted until deregulation in the 1980s. The New Deal was also a “laboratory of economic learning.” Roosevelt did not allow unbalanced budgets before 1937 as a conscious economic policy: They were emergency measures and he hoped to balance the budget in fiscal 1937. The defense buildup and the need to escape the 1937 to 1938 recession once more made deficit spending an imperative. By now a version of Keynesian economics had influential backers in the administration. Previously they had believed that the mature American economy did not have the ca-

capacity to expand dramatically: Unemployment would always be with them. Now they believed that the necessary injection of purchasing power through government spending could create the demand to put all Americans back to work. The war showed that government spending could indeed create full employment. The New Deal left a legacy of macroeconomic tools that would produce nearly full employment until the late 1960s.

THE WELFARE STATE

The mixed record on the economy was not what brought the New Deal overwhelming electoral endorsement. What more than anything bound lower-income voters to the Democratic Party, including for the first time African-American voters in the northern cities, were the welfare programs of the New Deal. Before 1933 the United States was a welfare “outlier” in the Western industrial world: Private charity and county poor-law provision all too often constituted the sum total of assistance to the unemployed. There was no social insurance—no unemployment compensation in operation at the state or federal level, no old-age insurance, no health insurance. Under the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) the federal government made grants, not loans, to the states for relief. The Civil Works Administration (CWA) in 1933 and 1934 and the Works Progress Administration (WPA) after 1935 provided jobs for as many as four million of the unemployed. The Social Security Act of 1935 provided unemployment compensation, old-age insurance, and matching funds for categorical assistance to the needy aged, the blind, and dependent children. The New Deal, as James Patterson concluded, “responded with a level of public aid scarcely imaginable in 1929.”

The welfare state the New Deal launched was, however, in many ways a ramshackle affair. New Dealers disliked welfare and wanted to replace the dole with jobs and social insurance. But work relief programs never provided jobs for more than 40 percent of the unemployed and welfare did not wither away: Indeed, aid to dependent children would in time be unrecognizable as a program that was aimed at the children of worthy widows. Relief programs, whether under federal direction from 1933

to 1935 or under state control thereafter, were always handicapped by occasionally incompetent, sometimes corrupt, often niggardly state and county administrators. Social insurance was funded by the contributions of the workers themselves and not by general tax revenues. The immediate impact of payroll taxes was deflationary and regressive. There were wide variations in state generosity and eligibility requirements, and Social Security failed to cover many of the most needy in the United States—agricultural laborers and domestic servants, who were disproportionately African American. The emerging welfare state offered nothing for health care and very little for low-income housing—staples of the welfare state in western European countries.

WORKERS

The New Deal may not have achieved a dramatic redistribution of wealth, but there was a radical edge and a class base to politics in the 1930s. American workers flocked to unions in the 1930s: Union membership tripled. Even more important, the great majority of unskilled and semiskilled, often immigrant, workers in the mass production, basic manufacturing industries were organized. Before 1933 organized labor had been hemmed into sick industries and into craft unions of skilled workers. By 1940 the great primary industries of autos, steel, rubber, and electrical goods, which were dominated by hostile open shop national corporations, had been organized in industrial unions under the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). These new unions were overtly and aggressively political in contrast to the traditional nonpartisan stance of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). By 1940 labor funds made the largest contribution to the Democratic Party’s campaign chest, union members were a crucial element of a class-based New Deal electoral coalition, and in many northern cities union organizing drives and Democratic election campaigns were virtually interchangeable. Labor leaders could demand representation at the highest levels of government policymaking.

These labor gains owed much to a newfound militancy on the part of American workers, a mili-

tancy that was developed and channeled by union organizers, many of whom were Communists and Socialists. Before 1933 vulnerable immigrant workers, no matter how much they resented their job insecurity or the arbitrary power of foremen on the shop floor, had been no match for the unfettered power of employers determined to smash unions. But the Depression solidified class solidarity and subordinated ethnic divisions. Any loyalty to employers from the benefits of welfare capitalism disappeared when those benefits were eliminated as employers cut costs. Explosions of militancy in 1933 and 1934 were in part stimulated by the rising expectations encouraged by the NRA. But rank-and-file militancy was not enough to secure long-term organization. What workers needed was the protection afforded by the Wagner Act of 1935, which outlawed many of the traditional anti-union practices of the employers, and by the political power exercised by labor within the Democratic Party, which meant sympathetic federal, state, and local governments. Governors and sheriffs no longer inevitably protected strikebreakers or used troops or the courts to defeat labor. The sit-down strikes were allowed to succeed. Even defeats during the 1937 to 1938 recession did not mean the complete destruction of unions, as in the past. Employers bitterly resisted and seldom realistically bargained, even after union recognition. But faced with the determined stance of government and the need to maintain production and profits during the war, they did come to terms with unions. They continued to seek to protect managerial prerogatives after the war, but also came to see benefits in stable and predictable industrial relations with “responsible” unions.

INFRASTRUCTURE

The New Deal also made important investments in the nation’s infrastructure. Public works projects built the roads, government buildings, and airports that revenue-starved localities could not. Long before federal aid to education, New Deal programs built school and university facilities, paid teachers’ salaries and, through the National Youth Administration (NYA), put thousands through school. The New Deal may not have built many units of public housing, but its credit to homeown-

ers not only saved homes for owners who would otherwise have lost them but paved the way for long-term mortgages that revived the private construction industry in the late 1930s and, in due course, gave the United States the highest percentage of home ownership in the world. Multipurpose dams like those in the Tennessee Valley brought water resource development and cheap power that not only transformed agriculture in the West and the South but also stimulated industrialization. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation made credit available to regional entrepreneurs in the Sunbelt who would spearhead economic development in the late 1930s and 1940s.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITATIONS

The New Deal had major achievements: immediate relief for the unemployed, a welfare state, long-term safeguards for commercial farmers, financial stability, the macroeconomic tools for long-term growth, the creation of a countervailing power to business in the form of organized labor, and investment in the infrastructure. But these achievements have to be set against confusions in policy, the restoration of the power of big business in World War II, the failure to tackle rural poverty with as much vigor as farm recovery, the failure to challenge segregation and disfranchisement of African Americans in the South, and the inadequacies of the welfare revolution.

The limitations of the New Deal were perfectly clear to younger New Dealers. Roosevelt inspired a remarkably talented and largely incorruptible cohort of young academics, economists, lawyers, and social workers into government service, including the first generation of influential women at the federal government level. They were self-critical and willing to learn. It was their own investigations that first uncovered the extent of rural relief needs. Critics of the impact of New Deal policy on southern tenancy were brought into the government. Advocates of social security were conscious of taking first steps: They would extend coverage and bring in health insurance later. Rural planners intended to tackle the problem of urban under-consumption and to shift farmers out of high-cost production. Advocates of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)



The Tennessee Valley Authority, a major New Deal agency, was established in 1933 to build dams, provide electricity, and develop the resources of the Tennessee Valley region. Large numbers of unemployed laborers were hired to work on TVA projects, including these men who showed up for work at the Norris Dam site in November 1933. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS

ADMINISTRATION

wanted to see it replicated in all the major river valleys of the country. Radical southerners saw that prosperity in the South needed political and economic democracy in the region, which meant, at the least, the end of black disfranchisement. Their faith in federal solutions made sense, given the narrow-minded, venal, and amateurish politics of so many state governments. But a remarkably lean federal bureaucracy and a recurrent faith in participatory democracy in the form of, for example, farmer committees, crop control elections, National Labor Relations Board elections, and Native-American self-government accompanied their faith in federal solutions.

That the New Dealers failed to overcome the limitations they themselves identified was sometimes the result of missed opportunities, of excessive deference to southern congressional leaders, of a lack of interest in domestic politics during World War II, of too great a willingness to compromise, and of a lack of valor against vested interests like the American Medical Association or white southerners. But the limitations were also the result of the economic emergency of 1933 and the lack of preexisting "state capacity." The need to act quickly meant working with, not against, bankers, businessmen, and farm leaders; it meant cultivating and strengthening southern conservative leaders. The

lack of central government expertise and resources precluded top-down central planning or purely federal solutions.

The political realignment that the New Deal created was inevitably a partial realignment. The Democratic Party might be a class-based party of lower-income voters linked with middle-class consumers behind policies that accepted the necessity of increasing mass purchasing power. But the power of southern county-seat elites and their control of congressional leaders were still intact. Some scholars now argue that a Third New Deal from 1937 onwards attempted to achieve the full-scale political realignment, the strengthening of state capacity and executive power, and the policy prescriptions that would have enabled the New Deal reform aspirations to be more completely met through executive reorganization, the court-packing plan of 1937, and the attempt to purge the Democratic Party of conservatives in the primaries of 1938. The president would have had more control over the executive through the budget bureau, a planning board, and control of the regulatory agencies. A reformed Supreme Court would have ensured that rulemaking authority could be delegated to this new streamlined executive. The purge attempted to nationalize party politics and overcome localism and inertia. In the North, issue-oriented politics espoused by young New Dealers had replaced the patronage-oriented politics of the older generation of Democrats. Roosevelt hoped to facilitate the same change in the politics of the South. The policy complement to this administrative thrust was the National Resource Planning Board's report of 1943, *Security, Work, and Relief*, which called for guaranteed minimums for all American citizens, health care, and low-cost housing. Full employment, the elimination of the weaknesses of Social Security, and a structural assault on rural and urban poverty would ensure that the first steps of the New Deal were not last steps.

THE ANTI-STATIST COALITION

But a full-scale political realignment, the creation of a liberal nation-wide Democratic Party, and the triumph of a social democratic agenda was ultimately checked by a powerful anti-statist coal-

ition that had developed right from the start of the New Deal. Conservative businessmen had backed the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) because of prohibition's unacceptable degree of federal control and interference in individual rights. A billion-dollar industry had been destroyed and assets confiscated without compensation. AAPA Democrats, such as John Raskob and Jouett Shouse, supported Al Smith in his attempt to block Roosevelt's nomination in 1932. They hoped to link up with southern states-rights advocates of rigid governmental economy, such as Harry Byrd of Virginia. They viewed the New Deal's exercise of power in the same light as prohibition—a massive infringement of property rights and freedom of contract. They soon sought like-minded businessmen to join them in the Liberty League in outright rejection of the New Deal.

But, on the whole, businessmen were on the defensive in the 1930s: Those who worked with the New Deal largely did so to try and restrain New Deal reforms. They regrouped in the late 1930s to redress the political balance that had produced the Wagner Act of 1935. They tapped into long-term middle-class hostility to strikes and trade unions and managed to drive a wedge between working-class and middle-class Americans. In the 1930s working-class and middle-class Americans were seen as united consumers and producers, protecting their incomes against privileged corporations. In the 1940s businessmen mounted a carefully orchestrated campaign to link inflation to union demands and the labor/middle-class coalition was never restored, except for a brief period in the mid-1960s.

Republicans could capitalize on these developments. The logic of their defeat in 1932 and 1936 should have been to moderate their conservatism, to move the party to the center to compete with the Democrats. But hard-line conservatives dominated the party machinery and the New Deal's constitutional changes, especially court reform, reawakened old guard Republican concerns in defense of the Constitution and the courts. Rural and small-town conservatives continued to dominate Republican representation in Congress, especially in the House. Western progressive Republicans, who had

deserted Hoover in 1932 and rejoiced in Roosevelt's bold leadership in 1933, were nevertheless opposed to the direction of the non-emergency New Deal. Powerful anti-statist sentiments shaped their hostility to the expansion of federal power in the late 1930s.

Just as businessmen whose financial institutions had been rescued by the government disliked state intervention, so American farmers were capable of significant dissonance between their dependence on government support and their distaste for statism. For example, in the Dakotas not a single person survived the droughts of the 1930s without the government's intervention, and the federal government spent more money per capita there than in all but six other states. But sociologists noted that few Dakotans were prepared to admit that they had received government assistance. This rural celebration of self-help was as powerful in the West as it was among conservative elites in the South. Just as a wedge was driven between workers and middle-class consumers, so a wedge was driven between farmers and labor. The hostility of farmers to statism led them to be a prominent part of the anti-New Deal, anti-labor coalition.

The power of that anti-statist coalition was cemented by the presence of the southern Democrats. Some, notably Harry Byrd, Carter Glass, and Josiah Bailey had opposed the New Deal as unconstitutional from the start of the first "Hundred Days" of the Roosevelt administration. Most southern congressmen, especially committee chairmen, had welcomed New Deal measures in the economic emergency. But they cooled over the non-emergency direction of the New Deal that seemed to benefit northern cities and labor at their expense, and to threaten traditional patterns of dependency and control in the South. But the original conservatives, Glass and Bailey, saw an even greater danger of federal intrusion in Roosevelt's plans to reform the Supreme Court. They predicted that not merely would newly appointed judges expand the federal power to intervene in interstate commerce but that they would also interfere in the South's traditional pattern of race relations. This fear seemed far-fetched in 1937, given the New Deal's caution on racial issues, yet Roosevelt's appointees on the Court proved those fears prescient in the long run

This anti-statist coalition represented in Congress by Republicans and southern Democrats would for a quarter of a century check any significant expansion of the New Deal. It ensured that New Deal first steps would generally be last steps. But it also shaped the liberal legacy of the New Deal. Faced with these challenges and the success of government policy in creating seventeen million new jobs in World War II, New Dealers increasingly came to champion "commercial" rather than "social" Keynesianism. They felt that they had the fiscal tools to create continued economic growth which in itself would solve many of the social, including racial, ills of America. There was no need in this formulation of Keynesianism to redistribute income or reshape capitalist institutions. Unlike ambitious New Deal goals of planning encapsulated in the National Resource Planning Board's 1943 report, liberal post-1945 policy did not require constant involvement in the affairs of public institutions or the drastic expansion of federal regulations. They acquiesced in a limited statist vision.

The New Deal was a dramatic response to economic crisis, the most dramatic democratic response in the industrialized world in the 1930s. Its recovery and relief programs may have been flawed, but they enabled millions of Americans to survive the Depression. The response of Franklin Roosevelt and his government and the radical, participatory nature of politics in the 1930s checked temporarily what was the steady erosion of popular participation and faith in politics throughout the twentieth century. The New Deal revolutionized the agenda of American politics. There were permanent new roles for the federal government. Social Security through contributory taxes by the workers themselves would prove impossible, just as Roosevelt intended, for future congresses to cut. Farm programs would prove almost as difficult to dislodge, given the strategic position in both the legislature and the executive that organized farmers occupied. Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, up for reelection every two years, soon learned that the provision of government services and infrastructure projects to their constituents would bring even more political rewards for incumbents than the patronage politics of the pre-New Deal period, which involved the appointment of

postmasters and the delivery of civil war pensions. But a powerful anti-statist coalition checked the more systematic and social democratic expansion of the New Deal envisaged by reformers between 1937 and 1945.

See Also: CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; CONSERVATIVE COALITION; HOUSING; HUNDRED DAYS; NEW DEAL, SECOND; NEW DEAL, THIRD; ORGANIZED LABOR; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; TRANSPORTATION.

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TONY BADGER

NEW DEAL, SECOND

In analyzing the New Deal and its development, historians have often distinguished between a "First New Deal" of 1933 and a "Second New Deal" of 1935. (Subsequently scholars also identified a "Third New Deal" that began in 1937.) In the First and Second New Deal model, the First New Deal, enacted during the first "Hundred Days" of the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the spring of 1933, especially involved efforts to achieve economic recovery by means of national planning and controls and to provide "relief" assistance to the unemployed and impoverished. The key programs of the First New Deal were the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), designed to bring balanced recovery in the industrial and agricultural sectors, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), to provide assistance to the needy. Other important First New Deal programs were the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the Glass-Steagall Banking Act of 1933, and the Securities Act of 1933.

A second major burst of New Deal legislation, concerned especially with social reform, came in 1935. The defining programs of this Second New Deal began with the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of April 1935, which produced the Works Progress Administration (WPA), followed in the spring and summer by a number of programs enacted in the "Second Hundred Days." These included the Social Security Act, the National Labor Relations Act (or Wagner Act), the Revenue Act (or "Wealth Tax") of 1935, the Banking Act of 1935, and the Public Utilities Holding Company Act.

But while scholars have generally agreed that the two major periods of New Deal reform came in 1933 and 1935, they have disagreed about other aspects of the First and Second New Deals. One view maintains that the New Deal moved in a more radical policy direction in 1935, with its emphasis on social-democratic programs to provide economic security, to support organized labor, and to implement more progressive taxation. Another version holds that while the New Deal became politically

more radical in 1935, with anti-business rhetoric and appeals to the working class, it actually became more conservative ideologically and programmatically by moving away from federal planning and controls and towards regulatory efforts to ensure a more competitive market economy.

The disagreement about just what the First New Deal and the Second New Deal entailed helps explain why New Deal scholars have typically concluded that matters were more complicated than a simple First and Second New Deal dichotomy would suggest. Neither the 1933 nor the 1935 legislation was so coherent as the model suggests, and important continuities can be found between the two periods. Though a few New Dealers had envisioned thoroughgoing federal economic planning and controls, most had not, and the NRA and AAA in practice had cooperated with big business and farmers and often acted upon their preferences. Significant elements of the First New Deal (relief, agricultural policy, some planning, regulation of banking and securities, for example) continued into the Second, while much of the Second New Deal (including work relief, social security, progressive taxation) had been in the planning stages almost from the beginning. Moreover, Roosevelt had been an advocate of public utilities regulation since he was governor of New York, and New York Senator Robert F. Wagner had provided powerful impetus for more far-reaching New Deal labor policy beginning in 1933.

The First and Second New Deal framework thus seems to oversimplify and therefore to distort the nature and development of the New Deal. Policymaking was more complicated and had more continuity than the model suggests, and changing circumstances rather than ideological change largely accounted for the differences between the First and the Second New Deals. Yet the framework nonetheless remains a useful one that identifies the two principal, and different, periods of New Deal policymaking. The Second New Deal had a greater social-democratic character, with programs that aimed especially at economic security and at the working classes. In addition to the Wagner Act that enabled the growth in size and power of organized labor, the Social Security Act, with its old-age in-

surance, unemployment compensation, and public assistance provisions, constituted a major change laying essential foundations of the modern regulatory-welfare state.

To be sure, the programs of the Second New Deal did not do all that many claimed that they did or desired that they do. The Social Security Act, for example, did not cover large groups of people, agricultural and domestic workers most importantly. Surviving spouses initially had no benefits, and African Americans often held jobs not covered by the act. Benefits were relatively small, and the old-age and unemployment insurance were financed largely by regressive payroll taxes. The act did not include health insurance. In the reworking of social reform policy in 1935, “unemployables” (including such groups as children, the elderly, and the blind) fell to state responsibility, though the Social Security Act provided for matching grants for such categories of the needy. Other Second New Deal programs also had important limits. The “Wealth Tax” turned out to be something of a misnomer, for after Congress revised it, the legislation had little redistributionist character and did little to reduce concentrations of corporate wealth and power. The Public Utilities Holding Company Act also underwent significant revision, though ultimately it did help to decentralize the utilities industry and end some of the worst monopolistic practices.

But the programs of the Second New Deal nonetheless had a profound impact. The work relief programs of the WPA gave work and income to millions of people—not only in the varied construction programs of the WPA, but also in its programs for writers, theater workers, musicians, and artists. The WPA also implemented the National Youth Administration, which helped young people gain education and skills, and the Rural Electrification Administration, which ultimately helped to transform the American countryside. The Social Security Act provided the beginnings of an old-age insurance program that, starting with 1939 amendments, would expand in various ways over subsequent decades, and its other provisions had large future implications as well. The Wagner Act, and the National Labor Relations Board it created, played an instrumental role in the growing size and power of

organized labor—both the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the new Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The Banking Act of 1935 substantially increased the power of the Federal Reserve Board over the banking system and thus enhanced its ability to support the economy. The 1935 legislation also contributed to Roosevelt's landslide reelection victory in the election of 1936.

The idea of a Second New Deal thus usefully focuses on the important legislation of 1935 and helps to illuminate what was different and important about it. But the First and Second New Deal concept has another advantage: it provides a chronological framework that enables understanding of the dynamics of New Deal policymaking and the development of the New Deal.

To a significant extent, the programs of the Second New Deal came as a result of policy planning underway for some time. That was certainly the case with the Social Security Act, recommended by the Committee on Economic Security formed in 1934 but with roots going back well before that. In the case of the WPA, the New Deal had begun work-relief programs in 1933, and Roosevelt and Relief Administrator Harry Hopkins preferred work relief over direct relief as a way to safeguard self-respect and build the national infrastructure. Roosevelt had been concerned about progressive taxation and utilities regulation long before 1935, and for some time Senator Robert Wagner had advocated stronger labor policy and a National Labor Relations Board with real authority and power. The Supreme Court's invalidation of the NRA in 1935 (and with it Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act that had provided some protection for organized labor) required policy adjustments and paved the way for the passage of the Wagner Act.

But the Second New Deal was a product of politics as well as of policy planning and adjustment. By 1935 the efforts at national unity of the early New Deal had dissipated. Much of business had soured not only on the NRA but also on Roosevelt and the New Deal, and for his part, Roosevelt was no longer inclined to propitiate business. As anti-New Deal rhetoric escalated among businessmen, so did anti-business rhetoric increase among New Dealers.

While business, the wealthy, and conservatives increasingly criticized Roosevelt and the New Deal for doing too much, leaders on the left, often reflecting discontent among the poor, the working class, and the lower middle-class criticized the New Deal for doing too little. Especially prominent were Louisiana Senator Huey P. Long with his redistributionist "Share Our Wealth" program, California physician Francis Townsend and his plan for generous federal old age pensions, and the Michigan "Radio Priest" Father Charles Coughlin and his populist attacks on the New Deal and calls for monetary reform. These men attracted millions of followers and reflected widespread sentiment that the New Deal should do more to help struggling Americans. Despite economic improvement since 1933, unemployment had only fallen from 25 percent to 20 percent by 1935, and New Deal programs had only begun to provide assistance to the impoverished and unemployed.

To some degree, the Social Security Act, the "Wealth Tax," and other Second New Deal programs can be understood as responses to the criticisms and proposals of Long, Townsend, and Coughlin and as efforts to undercut their apparently growing political appeal. But while Long and the others did help focus attention on such measures and help build momentum for them, planning for Social Security, progressive taxation, and other 1935 legislation did not arise from their agitation. Moreover, policymaking in 1935 was also strongly affected by the outcome of the 1934 elections. Typically parties winning the presidency had lost significant strength in the subsequent off-year congressional elections; in earlier twentieth-century off-year elections, the president's party had lost an average of some three dozen seats in the House and three or four in the Senate. In 1934, however, Democrats gained an additional nine Congressmen and nine Senators (on top of the great increases in 1930 and especially 1932). Those results reflected both a vote of confidence in FDR and a desire for more reform—and produced a Congress that was more Democratic and more liberal than the Congress elected in 1932—and a Congress in which urban liberals in particular had significantly more power. Led by Senator Wagner, urban liberals provided

both leadership and support for the programs of the Second New Deal.

The Second New Deal was thus a product of many forces—longstanding policy planning, the continued ravages of the Great Depression, the inadequacies or termination of some First New Deal programs, growing tension between the Roosevelt administration and business, pressure from such leaders as Long, Townsend, and Coughlin, and the election of 1934. Reflecting such factors, the legislation and programs of 1935 had a different character than those of 1933 and great importance for politics and government thereafter. Whatever its flaws, the First and Second New Deal framework thus does provide a way to understand the nature and importance of the 1935 legislation and the policy and political dynamics that shaped it.

See Also: NEW DEAL; NEW DEAL, THIRD; PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; TAXATION; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JOHN W. JEFFRIES

NEW DEAL, THIRD

Historians have long distinguished between the "First New Deal" of 1933 and the "Second New Deal" of 1935 in tracing the development of the New Deal programs of President Franklin D. Roo-

sevelt. A number of New Deal scholars later identified a "Third New Deal" that began in 1937. As with the First and Second New Deal typology, the idea of a Third New Deal has involved different interpretations and can suggest too great a discontinuity in priorities and programs from previous New Deal policy. But also as with the First and Second New Deal framework, understanding the notion of a Third New Deal helps to understand the dynamics of New Deal policymaking and the nature and legacy of the New Deal. While the First and Second New Deals laid the foundations for the modern regulatory-welfare state, the Third New Deal entailed both a new liberal agenda based on Keynesian fiscal policy and a more conservative political context that would be central to wartime and early postwar American politics.

Historians have identified at least two versions of an "intended" Third New Deal that did not materialize. One involved efforts to enlarge the policy planning and coordinating capacity of the executive branch and thus to implement a more powerful administrative state. Early in 1937, FDR sent Congress two measures towards that end: the Executive Reorganization Bill and the Judiciary Reorganization (or "Court-Packing") Bill. The Court-Packing Bill created a furor, and ultimately Roosevelt got only a shadow of what he had requested (though the bill may have contributed to creation of a more liberal Court in the next few years). In the context of the Court fight and of an emerging conservative coalition in Congress wary about expanding federal and presidential power, the Executive Reorganization Bill also stood little chance. A substantially watered down, though still significant, Executive Reorganization Act was passed in 1939. Some New Dealers also wanted to enhance the anti-monopoly power of the federal government, but little came of the Temporary National Economic Committee established in 1938 and of other anti-trust efforts.

Another version of an intended but essentially unsuccessful expansion of the New Deal, consistent with Roosevelt's second inaugural address in 1937 in which he talked about "one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished," was to enlarge the welfare state. The sharp and shocking recession of

1937 and 1938 reinforced the priority that social reformers gave to expanding social welfare and public assistance programs. But those efforts encountered effective opposition in the late 1930s, and then wartime prosperity seemed to make them unnecessary.

The more powerful administrative state and an expanded social welfare state failed to win approval largely because of the unexpected strength of conservatism in Washington and the nation after the overwhelming landslide victory of Roosevelt and the Democrats in 1936. In Congress, a conservative coalition of Republicans and conservative Democrats, enhanced by GOP gains in the election of 1938, stymied efforts to expand the New Deal. Among the forces creating this increased conservative opposition to liberal reform were the court-packing controversy and the recession of 1937 and 1938, though other events (for example, the sit-down strikes of the Congress of Industrial Organizations and Roosevelt's effort to "purge" conservative Democrats in the 1938 elections) played a role, too.

The recession of 1937 and 1938 was an especially important event in shaping the Third New Deal, for besides strengthening conservatives it also helped change the liberal agenda. Influenced by the British economist John Maynard Keynes, a number of influential New Deal policymakers became persuaded that the recession had occurred because Roosevelt had cut back on spending programs that had unbalanced the budget and contributed to the economic expansion (though far short of full recovery) between 1933 and 1936. In the spring of 1938, they persuaded FDR to return to a spending program, especially to provide relief assistance to the poor and jobless, and the deficits helped to reverse the recession. This sequence of events strengthened the belief that fiscal policy was vital to the performance of the economy. It also convinced many policymakers that compensatory fiscal policy could produce both reform and recovery—that deficit spending on desired social programs might also provide the economic stimulus for economic growth. During World War II, the massive deficits to finance mobilization (which dwarfed the relatively small and mostly unintended deficits of the 1930s) at last ended the Depression, restored pros-

perity, and created a full-production, full-employment economy. Keynesian fiscal policy thus became central to the liberal agenda of the Third New Deal of the late 1930s and beyond.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; NEW DEAL; NEW DEAL, SECOND; RECESSION OF 1937.

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NEW MASSES

New Masses was the predominant intellectual journal of the Left from the mid-1920s to the mid-1940s. *New Masses* played a catalytic role in allowing a range of voices little heard in American "high" culture except in parody into the center of that culture. While this may seem unremarkable today, it was revolutionary then.

New Masses first appeared in late 1926 as a monthly cultural magazine that also featured considerable reportage. As the name suggests, its founders saw it as revival of the radical Greenwich Village bohemia embodied in the journals *The Masses* and *The Liberator*. Like *The Liberator* before it, *New Masses* viewed the Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) as the leading vehicle of social change—a connection that would become increasingly close.

New Masses soon moved toward a more proletarian and less regionally parochial stance, particularly with the ascension of Mike Gold to the position of editor-in-chief in 1928. The most notable aspect of Gold's editorship over the next few years was his invitation to working-class writers (and would-be writers) across the country to tell their stories in their own voices. With the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, *New Masses* powerfully recorded the economic, social, and political crisis in a wide range of American accents.

In 1932, faced with a financial crisis, *New Masses* was transformed into a weekly political journal with a strong cultural interest modeled after *The New Republic*. It was increasingly aimed at white-collar workers. Nonetheless, the editors of *New Masses* retained a considerable attachment to the notion of promoting a working-class literature.

These alterations in format and intended audience lent themselves well to the Popular Front era that emerged in the mid-1930s. The magazine was closely aligned with both the antifascist struggle epitomized by the Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War and the organization of workers in the new industrial labor unions of the Committee for Industrial Organization (later the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO). *New Masses* was able to reach a large segment of the liberal non-Communist intelligentsia not only because of a general antifascist zeitgeist, but also because the period saw the first successful large-scale attempts to organize white-collar workers into such left-influenced unions as the Screenwriters Guild, the Newspaper Guild, the Teachers Union, and the Office and Professional Employees Union.

This Hitler-Stalin pact in 1939 marked the end of the Popular Front era at the magazine in some respects. *New Masses* still strove to reach non-Communist activists in the arts, the labor movement, and the civil rights movement—and to build support for the Soviet Union. However, negative reaction to the pact provided a major boost to an anti-Stalinist Left critique of the CPUSA and *New Masses* within intellectual and artistic circles.

This anti-Stalinism, most prominently displayed in the pages of *The Partisan Review*, painted *New Masses* as a middlebrow tool of Soviet foreign

policy. *New Masses* was able to deflect some of this criticism once the Soviet Union and the United States became allied against the Nazis. However, the journal's core constituency was weakened and increasingly isolated, a weakness that became apparent once World War II ended and the Cold War began in earnest. *New Masses* retrenched to a weekly cultural journal and then merged in 1947 with the leftist cultural journal *Mainstream* to form *Masses and Mainstream*.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; POPULAR FRONT.

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JAMES SMETHURST

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR (1939–1940)

The New York World's Fair of 1939 to 1940 in Flushing Meadow, Queens, celebrated a utopian vision of the "World of Tomorrow" that touted American machine-age industrial prowess. Organized by New York's business elite beginning in 1935, the fair was originally conceived as a celebration of the 150th anniversary of George Washington's inauguration in New York City. The organizers hoped that the fair would boost the local economy and alleviate Depression-era anxieties about the role of industry in American society. The emulation of an idealized past typical of other international expositions gave way, however, to an opti-

mistic vision of the future in which the availability of machine-made consumer goods created conditions for widespread prosperity and democracy. The only remnant of the original theme was a monumental statue of George Washington, depicted as if gazing into the future, that provided a link between 150 years of democratic traditions and modern American prosperity. Overall, the fair's modernist utopian vision predominated, symbolized by the Trylon and Perisphere that became the icons of the exposition.

Fair planners aimed to structure visitors' experience to reinforce the ideology of a machine-age consumer prosperity. Situated at the heart of a series of color-coded zones, the Perisphere housed the exposition's theme center. Here, visitors encountered the "Democracy," a vision of the planned communities of the future in which an efficient highway system linked a commercial urban core to suburbs designed for the modern living of the "average" American family. Industry pavilions underscored the significance of new technologies such as television and FM radio in creating consumer goods that would facilitate a distinctly American "way of life."

The World of Tomorrow was presented as a product of an industry-government coalition. One of the most popular exhibitions was the Futurama at the General Motors pavilion. Created by industrial designer Norman Bel Geddes, Futurama seated visitors in plush armchairs and conveyed them past a 36,000 square foot model of the American landscape as it would look in 1960. The efficient system of highways showed viewers the possibilities that could be realized by the automobile if government funding would create the infrastructure.

The fair touted federal and state accomplishments in its government zone amidst international exhibitions from more than sixty countries. Here, the backdrop of the war in Europe disrupted the fair's vision of a prosperous and peaceful future. Germany was notably absent from the lineup of European exhibitors, and the pavilions of Poland and Czechoslovakia remained open despite the Nazi takeover of those countries.

The streamlined modernism that characterized the fair's architecture and consumer goods was

complemented by art of all styles throughout the fair grounds. Drawing on Works Progress Administration arts projects that stressed the integration of art and everyday life, fair planners made sculpture integral to the design of the fair; murals by Fernand Leger, Willem de Kooning, Stuart Davis, and others decorated the pavilions. With additional exhibitions of contemporary American and old master paintings, the fair became an art event that linked cultural achievement and American industrial innovation.

The amusement zone was a prime attraction and planners stretched unsuccessfully to connect its spectacles to the fair's utopian theme. Billy Rose's Aquacade, for example, was pure spectacle—an aquatic variety show with elaborate synchronized swimming held in a ten-thousand-seat amphitheater. Other displays attracted viewers with risqué offerings, such as Norman Bel Geddes's *Crystal Lassies*, a modern peep show enhanced by an elaborate system of mirrors, and Salvador Dalí's *Dream of Venus*, a nonsensical surrealist "fun house" that featured semi-nude figures.

The World of Tomorrow was a financial disaster. Attendance fell short of expectations and organizers had lost millions of dollars by the time the fair closed on October 27, 1940. Many people, it seemed, found the admission price too high. Those who did come further disappointed organizers by seeking their own experience of the exposition rather than conforming to the planned vision. Nevertheless, the fair's legacy included new technologies and consumer goods that transformed daily life, and widespread acceptance of modernism in the areas of art, architecture and industrial design. The World of Tomorrow also popularized the idea of the "average" American, affecting corporate marketing strategies and Americans' own understanding of themselves.

See Also: SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

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ISADORA ANDERSON HELFGOTT

NFU. See NATIONAL FARMERS UNION.

NIEBUHR, REINHOLD

Karl Paul Reinhold Niebuhr (June 21, 1892–June 1, 1971) was the most significant American-born Protestant theologian of the twentieth century, and during the Depression an important political activist, thinker, and writer. Son of an immigrant minister of the German Evangelical Synod of North America, Niebuhr grew up in Missouri and Illinois and attended the Synod's Eden Seminary (Bachelor of Divinity, 1913) and Yale Divinity School (B.D. 1914, M.A. 1915). His studies confirmed him as a liberal and a modernist in theology—both anti-Calvinist and anti-supernaturalist. During World War I he was an ardent supporter of Woodrow Wilson's liberal internationalism and a militant Americanizer within the German-American community. In the 1920s, while serving as pastor of the middle-class Bethel Evangelical Church in Detroit, he became a leading voice of liberal Protestantism. A determined foe of Henry Ford's labor policies, he preached social justice and racial tolerance from pulpits around the country and in the pages of the national weekly magazine *The Christian Century*.

Even before leaving Detroit in 1928 for a professorship in Christian ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York, Niebuhr had embraced a gradualist socialism. Once in New York he became a main contributor to the socialist weekly *The World Tomorrow*. In 1930 he ran for the state Senate on the Socialist Party ticket, and in 1932 he was a Socialist candidate for Congress (both were "educational" campaigns that garnered few votes). But with the rise of fascism Niebuhr moved toward the New Deal coalition, voting for Roosevelt reluctantly in

1936, and enthusiastically thereafter. During the Depression he wrote his most influential books, while also laboring tirelessly as a political organizer and journalist. *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932), *Beyond Tragedy* (1937), and *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (1941) were pivotal works in the rethinking of American reform politics in relation to Protestant theology. He blended the liberal hope for expanded justice and equality with "the tragic sense of life," a sensibility usually associated with conservatism. Niebuhr effected the same ideological merger in founding the Fellowship of Socialist Christians (1931), the Union for Democratic Action (1941), and *Radical Religion* (1935) and *Christianity and Crisis* (1941) magazines. By the time he appeared on the cover of *Time's* twenty-fifth anniversary issue in 1948, the word *Niebuhrian* had come to mean a persistent commitment to social responsibility in a world of chastened expectations.

See Also: CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; RELIGION; SOCIALIST PARTY.

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RICHARD WIGHTMAN FOX

NIRA. See NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT.

NLRB. See NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD.

NORRIS, GEORGE

The Depression years witnessed the fulfillment of the public career of George William Norris (July 11,

1861–September 2, 1944). Already in his seventies, he played a major role in the enactment of many of his legislative aspirations both in Washington and in Lincoln, Nebraska.

Elected to the House of Representatives in 1902 and to the Senate in 1912, Norris first came to public attention as a member in opposition; he opposed the power of the speaker of the house in 1910 and the nation's entrance into World War I, as well as the peace treaty that followed the war. During the 1920s Norris continued as an opposition leader, fighting against the disposal of government properties, including a dam under construction during World War I at Muscle Shoals, a series of swift rapids in the Tennessee River in northern Alabama. The dam was unfinished when the war ended. Norris also opposed individuals and groups interested in the private development of the dam's hydroelectric potential and what he considered flawed efforts to provide assistance to distressed rural America. However, by the last years of the Hoover administration, as the Great Depression unfolded with progressive Republicans holding the balance of power in the Senate, the Norris-La Guardia Anti-Injunction Act (1932) became law, and a measure championed by Norris for over a decade calling for an amendment abolishing the "lame duck" sessions of Congress was approved and then ratified in 1933 as the twentieth amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

With the election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Norris saw more of his dreams coming true. Most important was the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), which called for multipurpose development of the Tennessee River Valley. In Nebraska, Norris championed the Tri-County Project and other public power projects, creating in effect a miniature TVA that helped make Nebraska, like Tennessee, an all-public-power state. In 1934, Norris stumped the state calling for the creation of a unicameral legislature and was on hand for the convening of its first session in 1936.

An ardent supporter of the New Deal, Norris cosponsored measures calling for the permanent establishment of the Rural Electrification Administration. He also supported a farm forestry law, and endorsed funding for agencies and projects provid-

ing assistance to rural America. Norris supported measures to regulate corporations and to guarantee labor's right to organize, and he also supported the establishment of a system of social security, as well as appropriations providing work for the unemployed. Reluctantly, because he believed that "only God can change the Supreme Court," Norris voted for the president's court-packing scheme to secure justices more sympathetic to the New Deal. In 1936, seeking a fifth term, Norris abandoned his Republican Party affiliation and ran as an independent, becoming the first senator to be elected as an independent. President Roosevelt, campaigning in Omaha, endorsed Norris over his own party's candidate.

Defeated for reelection in 1942, Norris returned to his hometown, McCook, where he prepared his autobiography and maintained until his death an active interest in public affairs and the concerns of rural America.

See Also: NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT; TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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RICHARD LOWITT

NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT

Signed into law by President Herbert Hoover on March 23, 1932, the Norris-La Guardia Act culminated a decades-long struggle by the American labor movement to restrict the use of anti-union injunctions in labor disputes. First introduced in the Senate by George W. Norris in 1928 and later sponsored in the House of Representatives by Fiorello La Guardia, the act presaged the National Labor Relations Act by proclaiming as the public policy of the United States support for the efforts of workers to form their own unions and engage in collective

bargaining. The law severely limited the power of federal judges to issue injunctions in labor disputes and also rendered so-called yellow dog contracts, which made employment contingent upon an employee agreeing not to join a union, unenforceable in the federal courts.

The issuance of injunctions against sympathy strikes, boycotts, and other tactics used by organized labor had become increasingly common after 1880. Over four thousand such injunctions were issued between 1880 and 1930. The elimination of labor injunctions had thus become a top priority for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) after its founding in the 1880s. Leaders of the AFL believed they had accomplished this objective with the 1914 Clayton Act amendments to the Sherman antitrust law. However, subsequent judicial interpretation negated the effectiveness of the Clayton Act, so that almost as many injunctions were issued in the 1920s alone as in the previous four decades combined. Although Norris supported the AFL's basic objectives, he rejected a specific AFL proposal to make unions and labor disputes virtually immune from any form of judicial intervention. Instead, he relied on labor lawyer Donald Richberg, economist Edwin Witte, and law professors Felix Frankfurter, Herman Oliphant, and Francis Sayre to draft a more narrowly framed law that was consistent with the approach to labor law reform soon to be adopted by the New Deal.

In response to the tremendous increase in the use of labor injunctions during the 1920s and the change in political climate resulting from the impact of the Great Depression, both the House and Senate approved the Norris La Guardia Act by overwhelming margins in 1932. Although Hoover had previously opposed the bill, he grudgingly signed it, stating at the time that the courts would ultimately determine the act's constitutionality. The Supreme Court later upheld the law in *Lauf v. E.G. Shiner & Co.* (1938).

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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LARRY G. GERBER

NORTHEAST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE

Given its place at the heart of the American economic system, the Northeast (comprising the states of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey) suffered mightily during the Great Depression. An argument could be made that as a region the Northeast bore the brunt of the economic crisis, particularly because New York City reigned as the capital of global finance. Not only did the American people look to the financiers on Wall Street to bail them out of the crisis, but the entire world hoped that a economic recovery would begin in New York City.

The Great Depression also had a psychological impact on the United States, and news of the economic chaos was spread through newspapers and radio. Since the nation's media spotlight emanated from and shined brightly on New York City, the city's newspapers covered the Great Depression from front row seats that intensified the glare. A reporter for one of New York City's many daily newspapers did not have to travel far to see or feel the devastation—thousands of citizens formed breadlines on a daily basis.

Up and down the Northeast, from the important port cities of Boston and Philadelphia to the financial capital of New York City, the region symbolized the massive human suffering endured during the era. Prior to the stock market crash, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* had trumpeted the success of the market and kept tabs



Unemployment in the major cities of the Northeast forced many people to seek charitable help during the Depression. These men lined up for free food at a New York City mission in 1932. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

on the stock market's movers and shakers. Despite the widespread panic gripping the nation after the collapse, newspapers across the region were filled with reassuring stories about the long-term viability of the market system.

Psychologically, money was at the center of American culture in the 1920s. Brokers and investment bankers were society's new heroes—the kinds of people flocking to the financial centers in the Northeast, particularly New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia. Markets fluctuations, hot stocks, and trading exploits became juicy gossip items in

the era. The growing consumer culture required money. The impulse to live it up necessitated an ever-growing cash flow. Thus, many relied on stocks and a line of credit to finance their new lifestyles. The banking industry, centered in New York City, gained a tremendous amount of power in determining the economic fortunes of the nation. The “get rich quick” mentality lured people into the market. They hoped for the big score that would take them away from everyday toil.

The bond drives that took place during World War I opened the public's eyes to the power of in-

vestment. The large commercial banks were more than willing to facilitate these trades. Win or lose, the big banks and brokerages would receive their cut. In addition, the expanding opportunities to acquire goods on credit familiarized average citizens with the concept of buying stocks on margin.

STOCK MARKET COLLAPSE

Wall Street represented a new religion in the United States. Its priests were the men who ran Wall Street's successful brokerages and investment banks. They formed a sort of exclusive gentleman's club, each belonging to the same clubs, vacationing together, and mainly living on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. The ultimate club was the New York Stock Exchange, with a mere 1,100 seats. The only way in was to purchase an existing seat from one of the members or investment banks that owned the seat. The men who controlled Wall Street had deep ties to the Northeast. Most had attended the private schools and elite colleges dotting the region.

While Wall Street's leaders breezed through an insulated world high above the trading floor, an entirely different kind of trader fueled the stock over-speculation that would lead to the crash. Many traders only cared about stock fluctuation, borrowing enough money to buy and sell, then quickly moving the stock to make money on the difference. Timing, not knowledge, mattered most. By the summer of 1929, stock market value hit \$67 billion, up from \$27 billion two years earlier.

The economic freefall that took place in and after October 1929 decimated the American economy. Within three years, 75 percent of the value of all securities—a whopping \$90 billion—disappeared. The year after the crash, more than twenty-six thousand businesses went bankrupt, surpassed in 1931 by more than twenty-eight thousand failures. In December 1930, the Bank of the United States went bankrupt, wiping out approximately 400,000 depositors.

Early relief efforts advocated by the administration of Herbert Hoover were a mix of public and private cooperation. In November 1930, Philadelphia's most influential citizens formed a committee under the leadership of Horatio Gates Lloyd, a partner in the city's branch of the J. P. Morgan con-

glomerate. The group raised an initial \$4 million, which it doled out to various charitable organizations. Lloyd also participated in a city effort to raise money for the needy. To the dismay of the Hoover administration and the private organizers, such programs did little to stem the disaster. Although the Lloyd committee raised an additional \$7 million to fight Philadelphia's economic woes, the money ran out in a little over a year. And even though it raised another \$10 million and received \$2.5 million more from the state, the committee had disbanded by June 1932. Philadelphia's relief efforts failed, as did the efforts of similar charitable organizations across the region, and with them went the hopes of the Hoover administration for a public-private partnership to end the crisis.

AWASH IN FEAR

As debilitating as the stock market crash was to the nation's economy, the crushing blow came from the way it demoralized the American people. The collapse shocked everyone and shook people's faith in the national economic system. Businessmen and corporations, many headquartered in New York, reacted by making drastic cuts, while anxious consumers virtually stopped spending on anything beyond bare necessities. Millions of workers lost their jobs as businesses desperately cut their operations to the bare essentials. Construction in New York City, for example, came to a near halt as 64 percent of construction workers were laid off soon after the stock market collapsed. Unemployment in 1929 was slightly over 3 percent, but by 1932 the figure had reached 24 percent. Millions more were involuntarily working in part-time positions.

In 1931, nearly 200,000 New Yorkers were evicted from their apartments for failure to pay rent. Many who were not evicted sold off their valuables so they could pay their rent, or they moved from apartment to apartment. If their furniture had been purchased on credit, owners left it behind when they could no longer make payments. Philadelphians experienced 1,300 evictions per month during the year following the crash.

The psychological toll unemployment took on the American people caused high levels of stress and anxiety. While some took to the streets to sell



Unemployed steel workers and their families (photographed in 1938 in Midland, Pennsylvania) were forced to live in tarpaper shacks because of a housing shortage. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

whatever they could gather, others turned to crime in an effort to find food. In Pittsburgh, a man stole a loaf of bread to feed his children, and then later hanged himself in shame. In New York City, hundreds of thousands of unemployed or underemployed workers turned to soup kitchens. By October 1933, New York City counted 1.25 million people on relief. Even more telling is that another one million were eligible for relief, but did not accept it. Six thousand New Yorkers tried to make money selling apples on the streets. But by the end of 1931, most street vendors were gone. Grocery store sales dropped by 50 percent during the Depression. Many urban dwellers scoured garbage cans and dumps looking for food. Studies estimated that 65 percent of the African-American children in

Harlem were plagued by malnutrition during the era.

Tens of thousands of people in New York City were forced to live on the streets or in shantytowns located along the banks of the East River and the Hudson River. These clusters of makeshift abodes were dubbed *Hoovervilles*—a backhanded tribute to the president. The city's largest camp was in Central Park. Ironically, the Central Park shantytown became a tourist attraction and featured daily performances by an unemployed tightrope walker and other out-of-work artists.

Even the rich were not immune to the harsh realities of the Great Depression. From his Manhattan palace, steel king Charles M. Schwab openly

admitted his fear. By the early 1930s, the situation was so glum that it became fashionable among the wealthy to brag about how much they had lost in the crash. Even professions one would think were insulated from economic hardship were affected during the Depression. In Brooklyn, one-third of all doctors were forced out of business.

When people learned of the role business leaders had played in the stock market crash, they quickly changed their formerly favorable opinions to outright scorn. The Wall Street collapse proved that these exalted financial leaders did not know what they were talking about in the years leading up to that fateful October as they continually hyped the market. Remarkably, in the days immediately after the collapse, the nation's business leaders (from Sears, AT&T, and General Motors, among others) issued cheery reports about swelling sales and stability in an attempt to bolster public confidence.

The Depression in the Northeast was not confined to the region's urban centers. Farming—still accounting for one-fourth of the U.S. population—had been depressed for nearly a decade. Farmers suffered as exports, crop prices, and land values all dropped. The Great Depression hit farmers and rural areas in the Midwest and West much harder than the Northeast because those areas depended much more on farming as part of the regional economy. In addition, many of the farmers who left their land during the crisis headed west to find a better life in California's agricultural regions and urban centers.

The bleak economic conditions in the Northeast led to direct confrontation between those who were suffering and various authorities. The Communist and Socialist parties, for instance, agitated unemployed workers to rise up against those controlling the economy. While party bosses, like the Communist leader William Z. Foster, dreamed of the end of the capitalist system, hungry and fearful workers demanded food, jobs, and some form of meaningful relief. In early 1930, Communist activists staged rallies against unemployment that drew protestors in New York, Washington, D.C., Boston, and many other cities. At some sites, demonstrators fought with police, who used force against the agi-

tators, including tear gas in the nation's capital. New York police used nightsticks to break up a crowd of thirty-five thousand who had turned out in Union Square to hear Foster speak.

The administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt was not immune to agitation, even though it fought to alleviate the problems plaguing the economy. In 1933 and 1934, unions organized around the country to fight for better wages, working conditions, and hours. On Labor Day in 1934, more than 300,000 textile workers from New England to the southern states staged a strike that became the most violent strike in American history. In Fall River, Massachusetts, approximately ten thousand protestors surrounded a mill, trapping the strike-breakers inside. Riots broke out across New England, and at many sites corporate guards, special deputies, and the police fought with strikers and their supporters. As the violence increased, the National Guard was mobilized in every New England state except New Hampshire and Vermont. President Roosevelt had to personally intervene to end the confrontation between owners and workers.

THE NEW DEAL

Given the state's place at the heart of the financial and psychological turmoil of the Great Depression, it is ironic that a New Yorker, then Governor Roosevelt, rose to challenge incumbent Herbert Hoover in the 1932 presidential election. The public perception that Hoover did not fully grasp the enormity of the economic crisis led to a landslide victory for Roosevelt, who came from a long line of New York aristocrats.

Roosevelt took office in the midst of a banking crisis, but with a deft touch and a supportive Congress, he got the Emergency Banking Act passed, which allayed depositors' fears and gave banks a shot of confidence. Next, Roosevelt used a series of fireside chats to calm the nation, and he created programs that put people back to work and gave them hope for the future.

The Roosevelt administration heard the pleas of those who wanted to work, but could not find jobs. Roosevelt championed the Civil Works Administration and within two weeks 800,000 people were put to work. Several months later, more than



This federal housing project, photographed in 1942, was built during the Depression for low-income families in New Bedford, Massachusetts. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

four million were working in the program, which focused on construction of roads, bridges, schools, playgrounds, and hospitals. Roosevelt and his aides realized that hunger was not negotiable and putting people to work would relieve some of the doldrums the nation confronted.

In early 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) began operations with an initial enrollment of 250,000 at a cost of \$500 million. The next summer, Roosevelt enlarged the group to 350,000, then to half a million in 1935. CCC "soil soldiers" built roads, installed telephone lines, planted trees, and worked for several federal agencies. In New York and Vermont, they supported the Army Corps of Engineers in building much needed flood control

projects. Although the CCC was a nationwide effort, it helped ease the plight of northeastern urban centers by relocating young unemployed men out of the cities.

The federal government also supported public works efforts by doling out money from the Public Works Administration (PWA), established in 1933. New York City received more PWA money than any other municipality because of Mayor Fiorello La Guardia's close relationship with President Roosevelt. In all, the city was given \$116 million in grants and another \$136 million in loans. The improvement projects ranged from new playgrounds and housing complexes to the \$42 million Triboro

rough Bridge, linking Queens, Manhattan, and the Bronx.

Later, Roosevelt pushed through the Emergency Relief Appropriation of 1935, which enabled him to create the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Although the WPA cost more than making direct payments to the poor, the program helped lift people's spirits, in the Northeast and elsewhere, making them feel worthy of having a job.

See Also: BUSINESSMEN; CITIES AND SUBURBS; COMMUNICATION AND THE PRESS; HOMELESSNESS; HOUSING; MIDWEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929); STRIKES; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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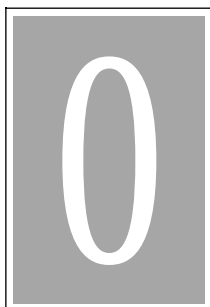
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BOB BATCHELOR

NRA. *See* NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION.

NRPB. *See* NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD.

NYA. *See* NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION.



ODUM, HOWARD

Howard Washington Odum (May 24, 1884–November 8, 1954) was an educator, sociologist, and research director, and the first individual to undertake an organized, social scientific research program of the American South. Born near Mount Pleasant, Georgia, to a family of small fundamentalist farmers, Odum imbibed southern patriotism from his grandfathers, both Civil War veterans. An opportune family move allowed him to attend Emory College, where he received a bachelor's degree in classics. Odum earned a master of arts degree at the University of Mississippi, where a psychologist mentor directed him first to G. Stanley Hall at Clark University and then to Franklin Giddings at Columbia University. Odum's Clark dissertation in psychology in 1909 and his sociology dissertation from Columbia in 1910 were both based on African-American folktales. These writings reflected Odum's interest in African Americans, but he assumed their natural inferiority. Until near the end of his life, Odum, despite his membership in the Commission for Interracial Cooperation, was unable to transcend his prejudices, although he came to view black inferiority as a function of environment rather than genetics.

After short stays at several academic institutions, Odum went in 1920 to the University of

North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he would remain for the rest of his life. Within his first five years at Chapel Hill, Odum founded the department of sociology, the school of public welfare, the *Journal of Social Forces*, and the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences. He excelled at raising money, receiving \$1.25 million from Rockefeller foundations alone.

Odum was popular with foundations because he focused completely on specific social problems. He emphasized "objective measurement," and when he served as an assistant director for the 1929 President's Research Committee on Social Trends, he demanded totally factual contributions in line with Herbert Hoover's demands. Ironically, "impressionistic" analysis was central to Odum's own work.

By the 1930s Odum identified *sectionalism*, a self-enforced isolation that inculcated prejudice and caused people to reject outside help, as the South's greatest problem. He accused the Southern Agrarians of championing exactly such a view, and advocated the concept of regionalism, or the breaking up of the nation's complexity into smaller, cooperating regions. Using research teams to collect data in 648 categories, Odum wrote the influential *Southern Regions* (1936) and *American Regionalism* (1938). Despite Odum's extensive research and problem-solving orientation, he lacked a willing-

ness to take into account political and economic power.

By the 1940s, Odum had returned to work on his initial subject of folkways, and he added the concept of *technicways* to reflect technological society and its culture, which he despised. Odum continued to write until the time of his death.

See Also: EDUCATION; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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MARK C. SMITH

OKIES

Okies is a term applied generally to people from the American Southwest who migrated to the Pacific Coast, particularly to California, during the Great Depression. This pattern became associated with Oklahoma because that state provided a plurality of migrants from 1935 to 1940, the peak of the phenomenon. Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska, Colorado, and the Dakotas all contributed heavily to the numbers trekking west, not only to California, but also to Arizona, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. Though this migration was commonly associated with the Dust Bowl (vividly portrayed in Pare Lorentz's 1936 documentary *The Plow that Broke the Plains*), the impelling forces were complex. Drought conditions on the Plains, starting in the early 1930s and intensifying in mid-decade, were surely a cause for leaving. But a larger number of Oklahoma migrants, for example, came from the more humid, though drought-stricken, southeastern part of the state than from the Dust Bowl region of the northwest and panhandle. Many of the mi-

grants from the Plains and Southwest farmed marginal land. In drought conditions the topsoil blew away and the land became even less likely to support crops. A large number of these farmers were tenants—60 percent of Oklahoma farmers rented their farms—and consequently were less rooted. Mechanization of farming, especially the introduction of tractors, pushed people off the land. Moreover, when the Agricultural Adjustment Administration paid farmers not to grow crops, it was often the tenants who would be left landless. Finally, at least in southeastern Oklahoma, farmers possessed a migratory habit of mind and simply continued their pattern of moving west.

The Okies were drawn to California by a vision of the West as a land of greater opportunity, especially the chance to own a small plot of fertile soil. But there were more substantive draws. Both jobs and relief seemed to be paying more in California, and the migrants' friends and relatives who had moved to the Golden State in large numbers in the 1920s invited them to enjoy a better life.

The migration started in earnest in 1935, peaking in 1937 and 1938. The essential optimism of the people, always hoping for better weather and a better crop next year, probably kept them from moving earlier. But as the weather got worse and their personal economic situations became desperate, the Okies took action. They packed up what belongings they could get into the family truck or car and began the three-day (or more) trip to California along Route 66.

Not all of the migrants were farmers (a Farm Security Administration [FSA] survey indicated that unemployment more than drought caused the migrants to relocate), and a substantial number of the Okies made their way to the cities. Almost 100,000 of the 252,000 migrants to California followed Highway 66 to its western terminus in Los Angeles where they largely blended in and quickly lost any identity as Okies. Angelinos noticed their arrival. In 1936 the Los Angeles Police established a Bum Blockade at all the major entrances to the state. Short-lived and embarrassing to Los Angeles, it nonetheless hinted at the harsher reception for those better-remembered migrants who settled in the San Joaquin Valley.



This Oklahoma family found work in the pea fields near Nipomo, California, in the spring of 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Though some ended up in oil and others in construction, most of the migrants to this fertile central California valley became farm laborers, replacing Mexican and Filipino workers in the orchards and cotton fields. The Okies were welcomed as cheap labor, but despised as residents. The worst off lived along the banks of irrigation ditches in abject squalor. A few found lodging in the sixteen permanent and nine mobile FSA government camps. As time went on the migrants themselves were able to construct modest homes for themselves in Okieville.

The Okies were segregated by class and stereotyped as rigidly as any disdained racial or ethnic group. The California Citizens Association, orga-

nized to stem the influx of migrants, succeeded in upping the relief requirement from one year's residence to three. The Associated Farmers battled against the possibility that the migrants might be organized into a meaningful force by the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America, a Congress of Industrial Organizations union. They criticized (accurately) FSA camps as organizing grounds and fought the several strikes that broke out in the late 1930s. Okies, however, were not much interested in unionization. Though often demoralized, they were still independent enough to reject the blandishments of organizers.

The Okies probably fared best in the area of culture. Novelist John Steinbeck brought the plight

of the migrants with full force to the American public in 1939 with the novel *The Grapes of Wrath*, which described the journey of the Joad family from Oklahoma to California, where they were met with disdain and hostility, except in a government camp. Dramatic photographs of Okies by the FSA's Dorothea Lange and the widely heard folk songs of Oklahoma native Woody Guthrie reinforced Steinbeck's pleas on behalf of the migrants. Director John Ford reworked *The Grapes of Wrath* into a more optimistic and populist presentation in his 1940 film.

As World War II loomed, the Okies began substantially to assimilate. Many entered defense industries in the larger metropolitan areas, but many remained in the San Joaquin Valley scoring some cultural victories. A streak of common-man political conservatism, the emergence and popularization of country music, and the burgeoning of conservative Protestant religious groups mark the impact of the migrants on the society that had despised them.

See Also: DUST BOWL; MIGRATION; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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WILLIAM H. MULLINS

OLD-AGE INSURANCE

On August 14, 1935, Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law the Social Security Act, creating the first federal old-age insurance system in the United States. The Federal Old-Age Benefits program was one of seven new federal entitlement programs created by the Social Security Act, to be administered by a newly created Social Security Board. The old-age benefits were funded initially by a payroll tax of 1 percent levied on both employees and employers, with the first revenues collected in 1937 and the first benefits paid in 1940.

Interest in old-age insurance as a means to alleviate old-age poverty grew in the early twentieth century in response to the increasing number of individuals living into old age and the diminished employment opportunities for older workers. The numbers of Americans over the age of sixty-five increased dramatically, from 1.1 million people in 1870 (3 percent of the population) to 6.7 million (5.4 percent) in 1930. Improvements in public health and medicine increased life spans, but individuals often found it difficult to maintain themselves financially in old age. By law and custom, families became the chief form of assistance to needy older relatives. For those without kin able to support them, the dreaded county poor house remained the means of last resort.

During the Progressive era, Americans looked to the examples of Germany and England, where old-age insurance programs had been established in 1889 and 1908 respectively. Advocates of social insurance argued that certain hazards of life, such as old age, were social problems best addressed by using actuarial principles to distribute the risk and financial burden across society. Early advocates, such as Columbia University professor Henry Rogers Seager, author of *Social Insurance: A Program of Social Reform* (1910), and social theorist Isaac Rubi-now, author of *Social Insurance* (1913), educated a generation of economists, politicians, academics, and social reformers on the benefits of social insurance as a rational approach to addressing social ills. In the 1920s, the American Association for Labor Legislation, which included such prominent labor economists as John R. Commons, John B. Andrews,

and Richard T. Ely, continued to support the concept of old-age insurance, though it focused its efforts on winning the passage of state old-age pension laws funded by general revenues on a pay-as-you-go basis. Old-age insurance advocates found a cool reception among politicians in the 1920s, but Rubinow and Abraham Epstein, former research director of the Pennsylvania Old Age Commission and executive secretary of the American Association for Old Age Insurance (founded in 1927), continued as outspoken and persistent advocates for an American system of old-age insurance.

By 1930, only 33.1 percent of men and 8.1 percent of women over sixty-five participated in the labor force while the majority of old people relied on savings, investment income, or relatives to support them. However, the failure of financial institutions, the bankruptcy of corporate pension plans, and the crash of the stock and real estate markets eliminated the savings and income of many old people, increasing the financial burden placed on family, friends, and public relief. Individual families, poor relief, and private charity strained to aid the swelling ranks of the impoverished aged. Popular organizations, such as the Townsend clubs, led by Dr. Francis E. Townsend, mobilized millions of old people in support of proposals for immediate, generous payments by the federal government to the nation's older citizens.

The federal government responded to the crisis of old-age poverty as part of a broader economic security program. On June 29, 1934, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 6757 creating the Committee on Economic Security to prepare comprehensive legislation addressing the major causes of economic insecurity. To the New Dealers designing the Economic Security Act, social insurance would be the key component of the administration's bill. Assistant Secretary of Labor Arthur Altmeyer and Dr. Edwin Witte, executive director of the Committee on Economic Security, both of whom oversaw the day-to-day development of the Act, were long-time social insurance advocates who had studied under John R. Commons at the University of Wisconsin. Franklin Roosevelt himself spent part of the spring of 1934 reading Rubinow's *Quest for Security* (1934), a work that convinced him of the value of

social insurance. The president instructed Witte, Altmeyer, and Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins that the long-term program to assist senior citizens must be financed through contributions rather than general revenues to enhance its financial stability and ensure its political future by making its benefits appear to be an earned right. After months of research and several attempts to craft a workable bill, the Committee on Economic Security delivered its final report and the text of the Economic Security Act to the president on January 15, 1935. The final version of the bill, modified by both the House and Senate and renamed the Social Security Act, emerged from the House on August 8 and the Senate on August 9, and was signed into law five days later.

The Social Security Act created a dual system of immediate and long-term programs to provide old-age security. The old-age assistance program (Title I) allocated \$49,750,000 in matching grants to states to pay benefits immediately to needy old people. The Old Age Benefits program (Title II) created a contributory old-age insurance system designed to provide payments to current workers when they reached old age. The program was to be entirely self-supporting with payroll taxes that would gradually rise to handle the growing elderly population. Initially, the program provided assistance primarily to white, male industrial employees. By excluding certain occupations from coverage, especially farmer laborers and domestic workers, the old-age insurance program initially excluded 60 percent of all African-American workers and 80 percent of all African-American women workers from coverage. Women, though only 30 percent of the workforce, accounted for 60 percent of those excluded from coverage.

Though initially limited in scope, the Social Security Act marked the culmination of a three-decade long campaign for social insurance in the United States. Building on the 1935 provisions, Congress would amend the old-age insurance program numerous times, gradually liberalizing benefits and broadening coverage to more workers and their dependents. The old-age insurance provisions of the Social Security Act continue to be an effective program for reducing the insecurity and poverty of old age in America.

See Also: ELDERLY, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON THE; ORGANIZED LABOR; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; TOWNSEND PLAN.

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STEVEN B. BURG

OLSON, FLOYD B.

Floyd Bjornstjerne Olson (November 13, 1891–August 22, 1936), governor of Minnesota, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the only child of Paul Olson, a railroad worker, and Ida Marie Nelson. He grew up in a poor area of North Minneapolis, an experience that influenced his later career in politics. After completing high school in Minneapolis, Olson attended the University of Minnesota for one year in 1910, but left for financial reasons and

worked at a series of jobs in Alaska, the Canadian Northwest, and in Seattle. He returned to Minneapolis in 1913 and resumed his legal studies at night at Northwestern Law College. He graduated at the head of his class in 1915 and joined the law firm of Frank Larrabee and Otto Davies. In 1917 he married Ada Krejci, with whom he had one daughter, Patricia.

In May 1919, at the age of twenty-eight, Olson was appointed assistant county attorney for Hennepin County. In 1920 he succeeded William Nash as county attorney, easily winning reelection in 1922 and 1926. As the leading prosecuting attorney for the state's most populous county throughout the 1920s, Olson enjoyed high visibility and steadily increasing stature as an honest, hardworking public official who was not afraid to tackle challenging cases. He led an investigation into the activities of the Ku Klux Klan in 1923 and obtained several indictments against local Klan leaders.

Olson's interest in the welfare of the common person led him to join the fledgling Minnesota Farmer-Labor Association, which gained strength in the years immediately following World War I. Olson's impressive speaking abilities and his hard-earned reputation as someone who would represent common people made him highly attractive to the Farmer-Laborites. In the 1924 gubernatorial election, Olson lost by 40,000 votes to the Republican candidate, Theodore Christianson. Olson remained affiliated with the Farmer-Labor Association, but declined to run in the 1928 election.

With the onset of the Depression in 1929 Olson believed the Farmer-Laborites could win in the 1930 election in Minnesota. He ran a conservative campaign, emphasizing his interest in appointing people to office who would be nonpartisan and committed to the welfare of all Minnesotans. Although he won handily in 1930—and would be re-elected twice more—Olson's party never controlled the Minnesota legislature. Indeed, throughout his three terms as governor, Olson constantly fought the more conservative elements in the Minnesota legislature. In spite of this, he signed a number of bills relating to expanding public works, regulating securities, encouraging cooperative enterprises, and conserving natural resources.

Olson greatly admired the new president, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and during his last two terms as governor he sought to have his state's program mirror that of the New Deal. Toward this end he gained passage of a mortgage moratorium, a state income tax, allocation of fifteen million dollars in direct relief to the destitute, and congressional reapportionment. As his legislative agenda progressed, Olson became more enthusiastic about reform to the point that he declared himself a "radical" in a speech to the 1934 Farmer-Labor state convention. He soon realized that his rhetoric of radical reform was discomfiting to many voters, and he abruptly toned down his speeches and advocated a more moderate approach for reform during his last years in office.

Although often mentioned as a possible third-party nominee for the 1936 presidential election, Olson had no desire to oppose Roosevelt, and instead began his campaign for the 1936 Senate contest. Late in 1935, however, he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and in August 1936 he died at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota.

Standing six-feet-two-inches tall, handsome and blue-eyed with impressive speaking skills, Floyd Olson was a pragmatic politician whose words were often more radical than his deeds. Popular with voters throughout his political career, his reputation for personal generosity and honesty enabled him to work effectively with an often hostile legislature in passing numerous laws that expanded the role of state government in the lives of Minnesotans.

See Also: MINNESOTA FARMER-LABOR PARTY.

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EDWARD A. GOEDEKEN

OLYMPICS, BERLIN (1936)

Shortly after Adolf Hitler took power in Germany in 1933, many Americans questioned the propriety of supporting the Nazi-hosted Olympic Games scheduled for Berlin in 1936. In response to reports of Jewish persecution, the American Jewish Congress, the Jewish Labor Committee, and the non-sectarian Anti-Nazi League held protest rallies that called for an Olympic boycott. By 1934, support for a boycott had spread abroad. It was supported by many newspapers, including *The New York Times*, anti-Nazi groups, and such Catholic lay leaders as Al Smith of New York and Governor James Curley of Massachusetts. The African-American press opposed a boycott, pointing to the hypocrisy of not first addressing discrimination at home. African-American journalists further argued that black athletic success at the Olympics would undermine Nazi racial views and foster a new sense of black pride at home.

Avery Brundage, president of the American Olympic Committee, opposed a boycott, arguing that politics had no place in sports. He blamed the proposed boycott on a Jewish-Communist conspiracy. In 1934 Brundage investigated the German sports program, and after a series of closely controlled interviews, he reported that Jewish athletes were treated fairly and that the games should go on. Judge Jeremiah Mahoney, president of the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU), argued that Germany had broken Olympic rules forbidding discrimination, and he opposed participation as an endorsement of Nazism. The boycott issue came to a head on December 8, 1935, when the AAU voted by a slim margin to not boycott the Olympics. The following summer, Ernest Lee Jahncke, an American member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) who had come out strongly against the Berlin games, became the only person ever expelled from the IOC. He was replaced by Brundage.

The winter games were held in February at Garmisch-Partenkirchen in the Bavarian Alps. The United States fared poorly, winning only one gold medal in two-man bobsledding, and bronze medals in two-man bobsledding, the 500-meter skating race, and hockey.



German spectators salute Adolf Hitler at the opening ceremonies of the Berlin Olympics in August 1936. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

The summer team's voyage to Germany started off badly when Brundage dismissed Eleanor Holm Jarrett from the team for drinking. She was a 1932 Olympic swimming champion, a world record holder, a married woman, and a movie starlet.

There were nearly five thousand athletes from forty-nine countries at the Berlin Games. The 383-member American team was strong in track and field and basketball, but weak in other areas, including boxing, a traditional American strength. Jesse Owens, the star of the games, captured four gold medals. Owens won the 100-meter dash in 10.3 seconds (wind aided), the 200-meter dash in 20.7 seconds, and the broad jump with a jump of 26 feet 5 5/16 inches; Owens also ran on the 4x100-meter relay team. All but the 100-meter dash were world records. The first black champion of the

games was high jumper Cornelius Johnson, who leaped 6 feet 8 inches. Johnson was later snubbed by Hitler, who had previously congratulated every winner. Thereafter Hitler was advised by IOC president Count Baillet-Latour not to recognize any champion. The eighteen African-American athletes in track and field, demeaned by the German press as America's "Black Auxiliary," won thirteen medals. The women's track squad was led by sprinter Helen Stephens, who set a world record in the 100-meter dash and anchored the victorious 400-meter relay. The United States won a total of twenty-four gold, twenty silver, and twelve bronze medals for 124 points, a distant second to Germany's thirty gold medals and 181 points.

The main controversy involving the United States team was the benching of Jewish sprinters



A pedestrian in New York City in November 1935 reads a sign urging Americans to boycott the 1936 Berlin Olympics in protest of Nazi persecution of German Jews. The sign announced a meeting to discuss the issue at New York's Mecca Temple. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION, COURTESY OF UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM PHOTO ARCHIVES

Marty Glickman and Sam Stoller from the 4x100-meter relay the day before the event. They were replaced by Owens and Ralph Metcalfe, the team's two fastest men. Coach Dean Cromwell of the University of Southern California claimed that the Germans were hiding a team of superstars, so the United States needed to use their top men. Glickman, however, believed anti-Semitism was the motivation; he maintained that the coaches wanted to avoid embarrassing Germany by dropping the only Jewish-American track competitors. The other two runners, Frank Wykoff and Foy Draper, were from the University of Southern California, as was Cromwell, so favoritism may have played a factor in Cromwell's choice to keep them in the race. The team easily won the relay in a world record 39.8 seconds.

The Olympics provided a perfect arena for Nazi propaganda. The Games went off flawlessly, full of lavish pageantry and rituals, punctuated with great athletic achievements. German director Leni Riefenstahl's monumental film *Olympia* has preserved the pomp, circumstance, and athleticism of the Berlin Games. The spectacle gave the Nazis, as well as fascist Italy, Hungary, and Japan, a field on which to demonstrate the alleged superiority of their social, economic, and political systems. The Berlin Olympics also made a hero out of Jesse Owens, who defeated the racist Nazis on their home field, and encouraged Americans to respect the accomplishments of African Americans.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; HITLER, ADOLF; LEISURE; OWENS, JESSE; SPORTS.

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STEVEN A. RIESS

ORGANIZED LABOR

The ranks of organized labor expanded enormously over the course of the Great Depression. The number of employees represented by unions grew from 3.6 million to 10.5 million between 1930 and 1941. As a percentage of the non-agricultural labor force, union membership rose from 11.6 percent in 1930 to 27.9 percent in 1941. The labor movement's progress, however, was hardly steady or inexorable. Throughout the 1930s workers alternately encountered success and failure, employer resistance and cooperation, ineffective and responsive labor leadership, and a protective but ultimately constrained federal government.

After a steep decline in the early 1920s, unions had begun to recover by the end of the decade. The American Federation of Labor (AFL), the umbrella association of craft unions that represented the vast majority of organized workers, had worked successfully to develop amicable relations with employers. This was a practical strategy when the economy was healthy but it left the AFL completely unprepared for the economic crisis that accompanied the stock market crash of 1929. Rather than proposing aggressive strategies for tackling unemployment and employers' wage cuts at the onset of the Depression, AFL president William Green pleaded for labor-management cooperation, a thirty-hour workweek, and a public works program; he was late in supporting unemployment insurance and refused to endorse a candidate in the 1932 presidential election. As jobs became scarce and labor leadership failed to respond effectively, union membership steadily dropped to 3.2 million in 1932, its lowest level in over fourteen years. Workers appeared demoralized and withdrawn, displaying none of the radicalism that had characterized their response to the earlier depressions of the 1870s and 1890s. Whereas prior depressions featured prominent national strike waves, fewer than 200,000 workers, a new low, took part in work stoppages in 1930.

Federal legislation and the efforts of a rising cadre of industrial unionists breathed new life into the labor movement. In 1932 Congress passed the Norris-LaGuardia Act, which gave employees the

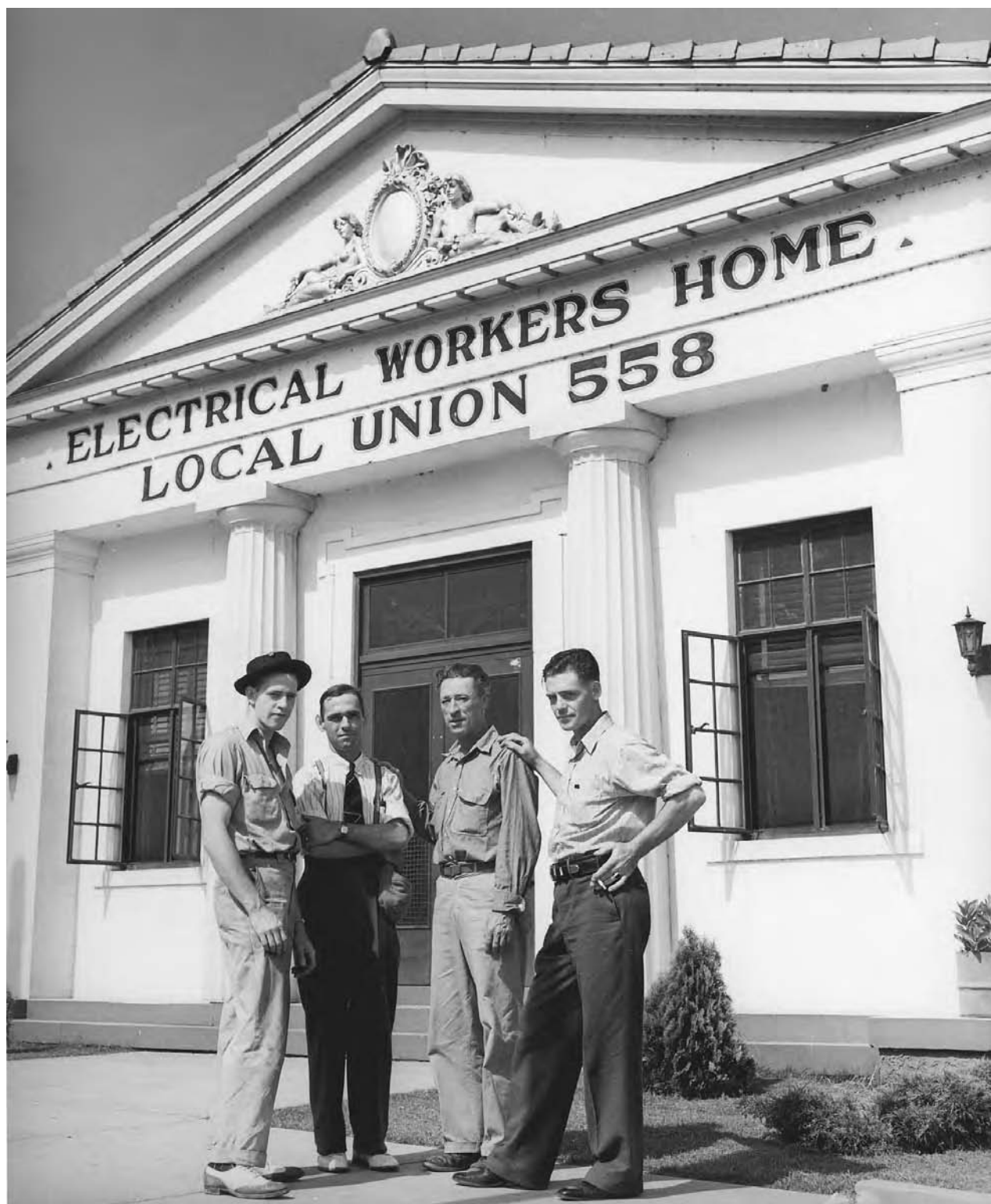


Police battle with striking teamsters in June 1934 in Minneapolis. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

right of association, outlawed “yellow-dog” contracts that stipulated that workers could not join unions, and restricted the use of federal injunctions to stifle pickets or boycotts. Although its effects arguably were less profound, the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 provoked a far greater reaction from unions. Its famed section 7(a) required that the industrial codes drawn up under the law grant employees the right to bargain collectively with employers without coercion or discrimination. Unions felt that the federal government, at last, had become a tool rather than weapon to be used against them. Organizers from the United Mine Workers (UMW), distorted the law’s meaning but demonstrated its rallying potential in recruitment

signs that announced “The President wants you to join a union.”

Well before many codes were drawn up, workers began returning to the labor movement. There were more work stoppages in 1933 than the previous two years combined. By 1934 violent strikes demanding union recognition had broken out in the steel, automobile, textile, lumber, and shipping industries. San Francisco faced a city-wide general strike in which longshoremen, led by Harry Bridges, broke from the AFL, set up the independent International Longshoremen and Warehousemen’s Union, and won a favorable settlement. Rank-and-file unionists (i.e., those who were not leaders or officers) and their insurgent leaders threatened not



These Tennessee Valley Authority employees, photographed in 1942, were members of the Electrical Workers Union in Sheffield, Alabama. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

only employers, who resisted forcefully, but the AFL's authority within the labor movement.

Unable to harness the anger and excitement of ordinary workers, the AFL also suffered from its own tactical errors. The national textile strike of 1934 (the largest in American history at that date) was prematurely called off, sacrificing critical momentum, when President Franklin Roosevelt promised an investigation into working conditions. The AFL's rigid attachment to craft unionism, in which an industry's employees were split off into separate unions on the basis of occupation, cost it the loyalty of workers who had organized and formed relationships across job categories and did not care about the national unions' jurisdictional boundaries. As a result, thousands of workers who had taken part in strikes gradually dropped out of the unions after the immediate conflict was resolved.

John L. Lewis, president of the UMW, argued that the AFL's single-minded focus on craft workers came at the expense of the unskilled and semi-skilled operatives prevalent in the mass-production industries. A more promising approach lay with industrial unionism, which held that a single union should encompass all workers in a given industry. Most importantly, Lewis decried the AFL's disinclination to mount aggressive organizing campaigns until jurisdictional issues were resolved. When the leadership of the AFL irreconcilably fragmented, Lewis and his associates announced on November 9, 1935, the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO), an alliance of some of the AFL's most militant unions, and vigorously began recruiting industrial workers. The split was later completed when the CIO permanently became the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The CIO's efforts were greatly assisted when Congress passed the National Labor Relations Act of 1935, also known as the Wagner Act. The Act reaffirmed the protections of labor that had been implemented in the National Industrial Recovery Act (which the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional that same year), granting labor the right to organize and bargain collectively with employers, but it also extended those protections by creating the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to investigate complaints of unfair labor practices, en-

force the right to form unions, and oversee the election of representatives by employees. Unlike earlier pro-labor legislation that merely removed constraints to labor organization, the National Labor Relations Act committed the federal government to supporting union activity within established limits.

There is considerable debate about the contribution of the National Labor Relations Act to the subsequent escalation of industrial unrest. Some historians believe that the law and the hearings of the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee, which were chaired by Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., of Wisconsin in order to support the National Labor Relations Act by compiling evidence of employer violence and industrial espionage, encouraged ordinary workers to defend their interests. Once the law was upheld on April 27, 1937, by the Supreme Court in *NLRB v. Jones and Laughlin Steel Company*, the NLRB energetically began to enforce the law that employers previously had disobeyed openly. Between 1935 and 1945, the board handled 36,000 cases of unfair labor practices and held 24,000 elections, 83.9 percent of which resulted in the certification of unions.

Others historians attribute the success and abrupt rise of rank-and-file militancy to the CIO's organizing campaigns and the competition for members that finally mobilized the AFL. Certainly, Lewis's efforts in forming Labor's Non-Partisan League in 1936 helped politicize workers and contributed to Roosevelt's landslide re-election. More decisively, the CIO's on-the-ground organizing led to the resurgence of the labor movement. Its innovative approach included promoting interracial solidarity, appealing to ethnic workers by expanding the concept of Americanism, utilizing the radio to spread its message, and cooperating with Communist and Socialist activists who proved to be some of its most effective organizers.

The first test of the nascent alliance came in late 1936 when militant autoworkers at a General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan, staged a nonviolent sit-down strike. Recognizing its broader implications in one of the nation's vital non-unionized industries, Lewis quickly championed the strike, which spread throughout the company. When bloodshed seemed imminent, Lewis interceded, se-

cured the support of Roosevelt and Governor Frank Murphy, and on February 11, 1937, won an agreement whereby for the first time General Motors recognized the United Automobile Workers (UAW) as the bargaining agent for its members. Worried about similar disruptions, U.S. Steel, the target of the CIO's most aggressive organizing campaign, settled an equally historic agreement on March 2, 1937, that recognized a CIO union (one that would become the United Steelworkers of America), raised wages by 10 percent, and introduced a forty-hour workweek. These two victories galvanized workers throughout the country, who struck for union recognition, as well as better wages and improved conditions. Even the AFL got busy organizing mass-production industries, responding to the demands of its own energized membership and the success of the CIO. By the end of 1937, the CIO claimed 3.7 million members and the AFL another 3.4 million, together more than doubling the union membership of 1932.

The momentum of 1936 and 1937 proved difficult to sustain. Although cumulative union membership continued to grow through the end of the Depression, several high-profile organizing failures and the economic downturn of late 1937 and 1938 hurt the labor movement. Collective bargaining reached its limit when employers refused to negotiate with labor representatives in good faith. Layoffs shrank the membership of some industrial unions and forced others to accept wage concessions; the AFL, meanwhile, withstood the recession with fewer setbacks. Roosevelt's waning interest in broad social and economic reform also took a toll. By the late 1930s, Roosevelt shifted his attention to diplomacy, which widened the growing split between the pacifist CIO and the interventionist administration. Tensions mounted until Lewis, who once had been a vocal supporter of the president, declared his endorsement of Republican Wendell Willkie in the 1940 election.

The rank and file took its own path in the election. Working-class voters, even those in Lewis's own UMW, overwhelmingly cast their ballots in support of Roosevelt. Indeed, throughout the decade ordinary workers took matters into their own hands, often without consulting or despite the con-

trary wishes of union leaders. Early in the Depression the paralysis of AFL leadership sometimes was broken by spontaneous strikes touched off by local incidents and popular radicalism. Many of the alliances that workers formed at the local level were improvisational and unconventional. For instance, in 1934 strikers in Toledo, Ohio, secured the support of A. J. Muste's Unemployed League to win union recognition. Later efforts by the CIO proved so successful in part because they merged the resources of national unions with sensitivity to local community autonomy. The CIO not only generated but identified and supported rank-and-file militancy.

While workers displayed more enthusiasm than union officials for direct action, they often were motivated by less radical social values. Whereas union leaders, particularly those in the CIO, sometimes supported a wide range of reforms and political philosophies, workers themselves often cared only about their specific demands. Their activism, therefore, arose out of a defense of the implicit prerogatives they had established with employers in prior decades. Social transformations also indirectly increased participation in union activity. Ethnic divisions that inhibited unionization earlier in the century fell away after immigration was severely curtailed in the early 1920s. The arrival of mass consumption allowed workers to develop a separate working-class culture with ties beyond their neighborhoods.

All workers did not share equally in the advances made by organized labor. Workers in the South and West remained much less organized than those in the Northeast and Midwest. Union organizers targeted several industries, such as textiles and garments, that employed women in great numbers and others, such as automobile, rubber, and metalworking, that employed few, but increasing numbers of, women. Nevertheless, unions remained led by men and oriented toward the interests of male workers. For instance, many unions embraced discriminatory employment policies in which women were laid off first under the assumption that men provided their household's primary income. Long ignored or discriminated against by AFL unions, African Americans and Mexican

Americans were slow in joining the labor movement. The CIO made great efforts to attract them, however, partly because it understood that by using African-American strikebreakers employers had fostered racism to divide workers. The CIO's concern for unskilled and semi-skilled industrial workers also led to its particular interest in African Americans and Mexican Americans, who disproportionately filled those positions. Still, racism was not absent altogether from even the CIO unions. Moreover, the single major union dominated and led by African Americans was part of the AFL. In line with the AFL's craft constituency, A. Philip Randolph's Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters represented relatively prosperous railway workers, though it also would become an institutional channel for the integration of the AFL Executive Committee and was a forerunner of civil rights activism.

Few could have predicted in the early 1930s that by the decade's end more than a quarter of the workforce would be unionized and that collective bargaining would be protected by the federal government. Nevertheless, the Depression years also amply illustrated the limitations of American unions and anticipated future troubles. But before confronting these enduring difficulties the labor movement would enjoy yet another prolonged resurgence during World War II.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS (BSCP); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE; NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); STRIKES.

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EDUARDO F. CANEDO

OUR DAILY BREAD

Our Daily Bread, released in late 1934 through United Artists, was an eighty-minute film produced and directed by the respected 40-year-old King Vidor. His then wife Elizabeth Hill is credited with the screenplay. The film's leading players were Karen Morley, Tom Keene, and Barbara Pepper. Vidor had struggled unsuccessfully to find an interested studio and finally financed production himself. Vidor, determined to make a film that would depict "the struggles of a typical young American couple in this most difficult period," believed that people working together could beat the hard times, and the film is, among other things, a plea for cooperatives. The film was well received critically, won a League of Nations prize, was shown to President Franklin D. Roosevelt at the White House, and turned a small profit.

The storyline is simple and, according to *Variety*, concurred with “the views of various public persons.” City dwellers John and Mary, victims of the hard times, accept an offer from her uncle to farm some undeveloped land he owns. John and Mary struggle to make a go of it. John, realizing how ill-equipped they are for farming, offers a transient dispossessed farmer a place to live and a share of the crop in exchange for his expertise. Soon there are dozens of families on the farm working together, living in hand-built shacks. Sally, a slatternly attractive blonde, turns up in a rainstorm searching for her boyfriend. A compassionate Mary takes her in.

The people on the farm overcome various crises, but despair sets in because an unrelenting drought threatens to annihilate the crop. John falls into self-doubt, is seduced by Sally, and with her leaves the farm. En route together he discovers a stream some miles away and, returning to the farm, convinces the people that working together they can divert the stream, irrigate the land, and save the crop. In an exciting and superbly directed and edited ten-minute sequence, representing some days of around-the-clock effort, water is brought to the parched crop. The depiction of this massive effort draws heavily on contemporary Soviet film technique and the ideology underlying it. The farm is saved. So too is the marriage of John and Mary, but it faces a more rosy future than the cooperative which, like American society at the time, still has many problems to overcome.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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DANIEL J. LEAB

OWENS, JESSE

In an era of rigid racial segregation of all the major team sports in the United States, track star and

Olympic champion James Cleveland “Jesse” Owens (September 12, 1913–March 31, 1980), along with heavyweight boxing champion Joe Louis, was the most prominent African-American athlete of the 1930s. Owens, the youngest of ten children born to Henry and Emma Owens in Oakville, Alabama, moved with the family in the early 1920s to Cleveland, Ohio, where he received the nickname of “Jesse” from an elementary school teacher who misunderstood his drawled pronunciation of J. C. In junior high school an energetic physical education teacher, Charles Riley, taught Owens the mechanics of athleticism, as well as proper manners and good citizenship.

A spectacular high school career in track propelled Owens to Ohio State University, where he enrolled in 1933 on a work-study arrangement. As a sophomore (his first year of varsity eligibility), he broke three world records and tied another in the Big Ten finals at Ann Arbor, Michigan. Just over a year later, Owens dominated the Berlin Olympics, winning four gold medals with new world records in the 100-meter and 200-meter dashes, the broad jump, and the 400-meter relay.

These successes were all the sweeter because they occurred under the nose of Nazi leader Adolf Hitler. Owens disproved Hitler’s theory of Aryan supremacy, and Hitler was reported to have snubbed Owens by refusing to shake his hand. In truth, American sportswriters concocted the snub story for patriotic readers, thus creating one of the most enduring of all American legends. While hotels refused admission to Jesse Owens’s parents who had come to New York City to welcome their son home from Berlin, the Hitler snub story allowed racist Americans to focus on bigotry abroad.

After rousing receptions in New York City, Columbus, and Cleveland, the youthful Owens faced the ominous task of finding a job. By now his amateur athletic career was officially finished because the Amateur Athletic Union banned him for refusing to participate in a post-Olympics fund-raising tour of European cities. Instead, Owens rushed home to capitalize on various stage and screen offers. All those proposals turned out to be insubstantial, but Republican presidential candidate Alf Landon paid Owens handsomely to rally black voters in the election of 1936.

That failed effort appropriately represented Owens's unsatisfactory experience from 1937 to the outbreak of World War II. He barnstormed with several athletic and musical groups, supervised a public recreational program in Cleveland, and ran exhibition races at professional baseball games. Often his athletic efforts were clownishly framed on the order of an infamous race against a horse in Havana, Cuba, on the day after Christmas in 1936, and two years later a farcical loss to Joe Louis in a sprint in Chicago between games of a Negro League doubleheader. Owens established a dry-cleaning business in Cleveland, but saw it go bankrupt in 1939; he re-enrolled at Ohio State, but within a week of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Owens gave up his dream of earning a baccalaureate degree.

Had the Cold War and the civil rights movement not cast Owens's Depression-era feats in a

new light, he might well have been forgotten. As American-Soviet rivalries turned the Olympic Games into a symbolic war, Owens became a premier showpiece of American success. His modest, conservative style made him an effective antidote to radical blacks, especially after the black-power salutes of two American sprinters at the Mexico City Olympics of 1968. Owens's mature years saw him comfortably active as a public speaker and as a spokesperson for a dozen or so major corporations.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LOUIS, JOE; OLYMPICS, BERLIN (1936); SPORTS.

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WILLIAM J. BAKER



PATMAN, WRIGHT

John William Wright Patman (1893–1976) served in Congress for forty-seven years from 1929 until 1976, advocating on behalf of small business owners on the economic periphery. In the 1920s he served briefly in the Texas legislature and as a district attorney. After his 1928 election to Congress, Patman refused to work with the seniority system, and instead he carved out a leadership position for himself. Patman's career was shaped by the Depression-era economics of scarcity. His legislative agenda included immediate payment of the World War I soldiers' bonus, the impeachment of Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon, the elimination of chain stores, and government ownership of the Federal Reserve System. Permeating each of these concerns was a commitment to the Democratic Party and liberal economic populism.

Patman believed that World War I veterans had not received just compensation. He argued that immediate payment of the soldiers' bonus, passed in 1924 as an insurance policy due in 1945, could also be used to expand the currency, thus remedying the nation's economic woes. Patman was tenacious in his advocacy and came into conflict with Mellon, who attacked the measure as financially unsound. Patman therefore pushed unsuccessfully for Mellon's impeachment, but created enough of a con-

troversy to cause Mellon to resign from his appointment as ambassador to Great Britain. Patman's bonus advocacy generated other political problems: He encouraged the June 1932 Bonus March to Washington, D.C. that resulted in a military attack on the World War I veterans and proved to be a fiasco for Hoover's 1932 re-election bid. After Franklin D. Roosevelt's election, Patman continued to push for the measure despite presidential opposition. In 1936, Congress enacted the bonus, without the inflationary provisions, over Roosevelt's veto.

During the 1930s Patman turned his attention to the problems of economic concentration within the private and public sectors. He became a leader in the antimonopoly movement, and conducted three legislative campaigns—one successful and two not: the first to amend the Clayton Antitrust Act of 1914; the second to implement a progressive tax on the earnings of chain stores; and the third to require government ownership of the Federal Reserve. The Robinson-Patman Act, passed in 1936, sought to eliminate discriminatory wholesale pricing whereby large retailers received discounts unavailable to smaller merchants. The measures dealing with chain stores and the Federal Reserve failed. Patman fought for reform of the Federal Reserve System, though, until his death, fearing that private bankers exerted too much influence over the nation's monetary supply.

See Also: BONUS ARMY/BONUS MARCH; FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.

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NANCY BECK YOUNG

PEACE MOVEMENT

Because the Treaty of Versailles fell short of the Wilsonian liberal internationalist vision, Americans were receptive to proposals to avoid future wars. In the 1920s, the organized peace movement campaigned for a reduction in military appropriations, for disarmament, and for outlawing war. Peace activists supported the signing of the Kellogg-Briand Pact in 1928, under which the United States, France, and eventually more than sixty other countries committed to seeking peaceful solutions to international differences. Women's peace groups conducted large-scale petition campaigns for disarmament in 1931 and 1932. Aggressive acts by Japan, Italy, and Germany in the 1930s, however, led to fears that the United States would be drawn into war, but also concern that the world was becoming more unjust, unstable, and dangerous.

Dorothy Detzer, the executive secretary of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, persuaded Senator Gerald Nye to launch his influential 1934 investigation focusing on the role of the munitions industry in the United States' entry into World War I. In April 1935, fifty thousand veterans marched in Washington for peace and 175,000 students conducted a student strike for peace. Students also campaigned against military training and took the Oxford Oath to refuse to support any war the government might conduct. The Communist-initiated American League against

War and Fascism organized a peace demonstration in August 1935 that brought together fifty thousand activists from labor, women's, and religious groups. Students strikes grew even larger in the next three years and involved a majority of college students. Pacifists and liberal internationalists joined in the Emergency Peace Campaign in 1937 and allied with isolationist members of Congress in an unsuccessful effort to get the Ludlow Amendment reported out of the House of Representatives. Defeated by the narrow margin of 209 to 188 in the House, the amendment would have required a national referendum prior to war except when the United States was attacked. In 1938 Socialists joined with isolationists in a campaign to "Keep America Out of War" but found their effort eclipsed by the conservative isolationist America First Committee.

Other groups campaigning for peace included religious-based pacifist groups, such as the Fellowship of Reconciliation, and secular pacifist groups, such as the Women's Peace Union and the War Resisters League. Moderate, nonpacifist peace groups included the League of Nations Association and the Carnegie Endowment for Peace. The National Council for the Prevention of War, led by pacifist Frederick Libby, had numerous affiliated organizations and a significant Washington presence. Carrie Chapman Catt initiated the National Committee on the Cause and Cure of War, which included women's organizations with a total of five million members.

Peace groups divided over the issues of strict versus flexible neutrality, whether to embrace collective security against fascist aggression, particularly in the case of Spain, and how to respond to Nazi anti-Semitism and events such as the Nazi-Soviet Pact and the fall of France. As the United States moved toward war, the broad peace coalitions disintegrated and membership in all but the absolute pacifist peace groups declined significantly. The latter groups played important roles in assisting conscientious objectors during the war, while other peace groups increased their activity only after the war.

See Also: MUSTE, A. J.

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MARTIN HALPERN

PECE. See PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT.

PECORA, FERDINAND

From 1932 to 1934, Ferdinand Pecora (January 6, 1882–December 7, 1971) led an exhaustive investigation that exposed corrupt practices in U.S. financial services, garnered national press coverage, and contributed significantly to New Deal legislation that regulated and reformed the banks and stock exchanges.

A Sicilian immigrant, Pecora grew up in New York City, where he studied to become an Episcopalian priest before turning to the law. Active in Theodore Roosevelt's Progressive Party in 1912, he later joined the Democrats and served as an assistant district attorney for New York County.

Following the stock market crash of 1929, President Herbert Hoover urged congressional Republicans to investigate rumors that Democratic "bear raiders" had profited by driving down the markets. The Senate Banking Committee launched an investigation, but it quickly foundered, unable to substantiate the charges. After dismal performances by its first two counsels, the committee hired Pecora in January 1933 to prepare a final report. Convinced that much more remained to be investigated, Pecora won a brief extension. He assembled several tal-

ented lawyers and dispatched them to the National City Bank in New York, where they combed through the bank's records before Pecora called its president, Charles Mitchell, to testify in Washington. Under tough questioning, Mitchell admitted that the bank's security house had unloaded poor stocks onto unsuspecting investors, conceded his own income tax evasion, and resigned as bank president.

Headlines from the Mitchell hearings convinced the incoming Democratic majority on the Banking Committee to let Pecora continue the investigation. The counsel called a long list of prominent financiers to inquire into their questionable banking and brokerage practices. When a circus promoter slipped a midget into the lap of banker J. P. Morgan, Jr., during a brief recess of the committee, widely printed news photographs symbolized the congressional humbling of the mightiest bankers. Pecora's probe put human faces on the economic catastrophe of the Depression and spurred public demands for reform. The hearings' well-documented findings had a direct impact on passage of the Glass-Steagall Banking Act (1933), the Securities Act (1933), the Securities and Exchange Act (1934), and the Public Utilities Holding Company Act (1935).

President Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed Pecora to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) in 1934, but the former investigator was dismayed when a notorious stock trader, Joseph P. Kennedy, became its chairman. Voting mostly in the minority on the SEC, Pecora resigned after six months to accept a seat on the New York Supreme Court. In 1950 he ran unsuccessfully as the Democratic candidate for mayor of New York.

See Also: GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933; PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT; SECURITIES REGULATION.

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DONALD A. RITCHIE

PENDERGAST, TOM

Thomas Joseph Pendergast (1872–1945) was the powerful and notorious political boss of Kansas City, Missouri, which, with a population of 400,000, was the largest city in the United States west of the Mississippi River during the Depression. “Tom’s Town,” as the media dubbed Kansas City, was wide-open and utterly corrupt: In 1939, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover called the situation in Kansas City more dangerous to American institutions than world communism.

In 1911, after a long apprenticeship, Pendergast assumed control of a local political faction, the Goat Democrats, which had been started in the 1880s by his brother, James Pendergast. By 1926, he had combined several Democratic factions in Kansas City into the all-powerful Pendergast machine. (To be on the safe side, he also held sway over the small local Republican Party.) The Pendergast machine had block captains—political workers who handled relations between neighborhood residents and city hall—on every block in Kansas City. Under its rule, there were no free elections in Kansas City. As many as 60,000 illegal ghost voters helped keep the invisible machine in control. Enforcers stifled dissent—during the 1934 city election they killed four people at the polls.

Pendergast, a short and brutish former saloon bouncer, lived lavishly in a large mansion with his wife and three children and ran Kansas City as if it were his own personal business. He dominated the construction and wholesale liquor businesses and had a forced presence on the boards of numerous corporations. The local underworld, which had considerable influence in the police department, was allied with Pendergast’s machine, and Pendergast claimed to have 20,000 informants. He required all legal and illegal businesses in Kansas City to pay a percentage of their annual gross to machine collectors; he received over \$30 million a year in tainted money from gambling, prostitution, and narcotics. Pendergast never held public office after leaving the city council in 1915, but he was a major force in the Missouri and national Democratic Party and started Harry S. Truman, a member of his machine, on the road to the presidency. Inside Mis-

souri, he had so much power at the state level that he controlled almost all the New Deal relief jobs in the state.

Pendergast experienced serious health problems in 1936, from which he never entirely recovered. In 1937 and 1938, the federal government moved against the Pendergast machine, convicting 259 campaign aides of voter fraud. Pendergast, addicted to gambling and purportedly the biggest better on racehorses in the country, became reckless in his need for ready cash. In 1939, he pled guilty to income tax evasion and served a year in the federal penal system. His machine collapsed at the municipal level and he died in disgrace of heart trouble on February 25, 1945.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

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LAWRENCE H. LARSEN

PEPPER, CLAUDE

Claude Denson Pepper (September 8, 1900–May 30, 1989) was a loyal and outspoken supporter of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s Depression-era program of reform and relief. Raised in rural Alabama in near poverty, Pepper matured in a legacy of populism that became for him a lifetime political commitment to that strain of liberalism that was the underpinning of New Deal political philosophy.

After graduating from the University of Alabama, Pepper went to Harvard Law School with the help of government aid he was awarded as a result of an army training accident. Following a short period teaching law, Pepper entered law practice in rural north Florida and was elected to the state leg-

islature in 1928. Defeated after one term, he nevertheless established himself as a Democratic Party stalwart. He moved to Tallahassee, Florida, and developed a statewide network of professional and political relationships. In 1934 he ran for the U.S. Senate, losing an exceptionally close race. In the process, he established himself as a rising star in the state's Democratic Party structure. Two years later, both of Florida's U.S. senators died within a month of each other, and Pepper was nominated without opposition in the Democratic primary for one of the vacated seats, a feat tantamount to election in the South's one-party system of the period.

The new Florida senator was quickly confronted with Roosevelt's "court packing" plan to enlarge the Supreme Court in order to obtain favorable judicial review of New Deal legislation. After some hesitation over the radical proposal, Pepper strongly supported the plan. This gained presidential favor and established him as a New Dealer. Thereafter, he never wavered in his support of administration measures. In the face of widespread southern opposition in 1938, Pepper made his support of the Fair Labor Standards Act, a controversial New Deal labor proposal, a principal issue in his reelection campaign. His overwhelming primary victory re-ignited congressional support for the nearly lost measure, further strengthening his position as an administration insider.

In the face of rising isolationism in 1939, Pepper advocated intervention in the early stages of World War II on the side of Britain and France against Germany, a politically courageous course of action that aided Roosevelt's efforts to prepare the nation for war. In 1950, at the height of the Cold War, Pepper was defeated for reelection largely because of his earlier conciliatory posture toward the Soviet Union. In 1963, he was elected from a Miami district to the U.S. House of Representatives and served continuously until his death in 1989. Pepper rose to be chairman of the House Select Committee on Aging, and was later chairman of the powerful House Rules Committee. As a self-styled "last of the New Dealers," he made himself the political guardian of the nation's social security program, which is today the principal legacy of the New Deal.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1938.



Frances Perkins (right) in New York City in 1931 with Eleanor Roosevelt and Mrs. Percy Pennypacker. FRANKLIN

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TRACY E. DANESE

PERKINS, FRANCES

Frances Perkins (April 10, 1880–May 14, 1965), Franklin D. Roosevelt's secretary of labor from 1933 to 1945 and the country's first female cabinet mem-

ber, molded New Deal welfare and labor legislation. Daughter of Susan Bean and Fredrick W. Perkins, a businessman, Fannie Perkins (she later changed her name to Frances) was born in Boston, raised in Worcester, and attended Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts from 1898 to 1902. In 1910, Perkins received a master's degree in economics and sociology from Columbia University in New York, and became executive secretary of the New York City Consumers League, where she lobbied for maximum work hours, workplace safety, and other labor laws. Outraged by the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire, Perkins and others demanded that the state legislature act, leading to creation of the Factory Investigation Commission, co-chaired by state senator Robert F. Wagner and assembly leader Alfred E. Smith. Perkins testified before the commission as an expert witness, became its chief investigator, and arranged surprise factory visits for lawmakers. Based on the commission's findings, New York enacted more than thirty laws protecting industrial workers.

When Smith became governor of New York in 1919, he appointed Perkins to the state Industrial Commission and heeded her advice on labor and welfare policies. In 1929, Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt elevated Perkins to the post of industrial commissioner of New York. Once the Depression hit, Commissioner Perkins became a leading advocate for unemployment insurance and direct federal aid to the jobless.

As President Roosevelt's secretary of labor, Perkins helped establish the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Public Works Administration, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. She insisted that the National Recovery Administration (NRA) codes include wage and hour standards and that they prohibit child labor. After the Supreme Court declared the NRA unconstitutional, Perkins backed the Wagner Act, guaranteeing labor's right to collective bargaining. She also had Labor Department lawyers draft a minimum wage, maximum hour, child labor-banning bill. A modified and weakened version of the bill passed Congress in 1938 as the Fair Labor Standards Act.

In June 1934, President Roosevelt created the Committee on Economic Security, with Perkins as

its chairperson, to formulate a social security program. Working with scores of experts and state and federal officials, often with conflicting views and interests, Perkins delivered to the President recommendations that became the basis for the 1935 Social Security Act. Disappointed by the law's exclusion of farm, domestic, and some other workers, she fought for the rest of her life to extend social security to everyone.

Rising labor militancy and the split between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations complicated Perkins's job. Though she was neutral and urged reconciliation between the AFL and CIO, each accused her of favoring the other. On her advice, Roosevelt refused to use force in the 1934 San Francisco Longshoremen's and general strike and in the wave of sit-down strikes. This angered management and conservatives, as did Perkins's refusal summarily to deport Harry Bridges, the radical leader of the San Francisco strike. In 1938, the House Committee on Un-American Activities demanded her impeachment, but dropped the matter after a few hearings.

Perkins's and the Labor Department's role diminished during World War II as Roosevelt created independent wartime agencies to mobilize industry and labor and to curtail strikes. President Harry S. Truman accepted Perkins's resignation as secretary of labor in July 1945, subsequently appointing her to the Civil Service Commission, where she stayed until 1953. Perkins remained active, writing, lecturing, and teaching at Cornell University, until two weeks before her death. In 1965, Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz summarized her importance: "Every man and woman in America who works at a living wage, under safe conditions, for reasonable hours, or who is protected by unemployment insurance or social security, is her debtor."

See Also: ORGANIZED LABOR; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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BARBARA BLUMBERG

PHILANTHROPY

In 1934, millions of ordinary Americans gathered eagerly around a radio set to listen to Louisiana politician Huey Long rail against the rich. The idea that the wealth of families like the Rockefellers only had to be shared to end the Depression was economic nonsense, but it was highly appealing. Most people would have been enormously surprised had they known the truth: In 1929, the net worth of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., principal heir to the Standard Oil fortune, was almost \$1 billion. By 1934, that figure had been cut in half.

Bankruptcy never loomed as a possibility for the Rockefellers, nor for most of the country's richest families. However, many wealthy Americans sought to economize in the wake of their declining net worth. The most important characteristic of philanthropy during the 1930s was its relative diminution. Nonetheless, while the Depression overwhelmed many charitable ventures, New Deal tax policy spurred the creation of new nonprofit foundations. And during years when other institutions were starved for cash, a few philanthropies promoted agendas with important consequences for generations to come.

Throughout American history, only a minority of those with money gave any substantial amount of it away. Nonetheless, wealthy American families such as the Rockefellers, Dukes, Milbanks, Carnegies, Sages, Harknesses, and Kelloggs had been far more generous with their assets before 1929 than had most of their contemporaries, and they continued to give, sometimes at reduced rates, as the nation's surplus wealth shrank. However, the network of private charitable organizations that they and thousands of other donors supported reeled under the combination of increased need and de-

clining contributions. Orphanages, for instance, historically had helped significant numbers of poor families cope with a crisis by keeping young children for a limited period of time, usually less than six months. "Orphans" rarely lacked living parents. After 1932, however, once a child gained a much sought-after place in an orphanage, he or she remained, on average, seven years. The harried superintendent of one of the few private orphanages left open in Kentucky during the 1930s reported that lucky children slept two to a bed, and the rest in his hugely overcrowded institution slept on the floor. During the Depression, pleas for clothing, food, or emergency housing deluged hundreds of municipally based charity organizations, which, like orphanages, did not have sufficient resources to meet need. To complicate matters, corporate "welfare work" collapsed. During the early twentieth century, progressive businesses had pioneered systems of fringe benefits for employees, including free health care, profit-sharing, or educational scholarships for workers' children. Few businesses were able to maintain such benefits after 1931.

Private philanthropy's inability alone to respond to the crisis spurred an accelerated development of an American "welfare" state, which, in turn, reshaped philanthropic giving during the Depression. In 1929 only about 250 philanthropic foundations existed in the country. A decade later, another three hundred had been added. Before the stock market crash, tax advantage had not been a powerful inducement to charity in the United States; by 1935, it was. Significant increases in taxes began during the Herbert Hoover administration, with the Revenue Act of 1932. Prior to that year the maximum rate the richest Americans paid on annual income was 20 percent. The 1932 bill raised the rate to 55 percent and made stock that was distributed as a dividend subject to income tax. The Revenue Act of 1934, which took effect in January 1935, raised the maximum tax rate on incomes of more than \$1 million to 63 percent and imposed a hefty estate tax as well. For the first time in American history, tax avoidance through charitable deductions was a significant incentive to philanthropy. Spurred by the need to reduce taxable income, several foundations that would remain among the country's largest and most influential philanthropies for the

rest of the twentieth century received charters in the mid-1930s, notably the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in 1934, the Ford Foundation in 1936, and the Lilly Endowment in 1937.

Most charitable giving in the United States had limited goals: a scholarship pledge to a patron's favorite college or a check to build a wing on the local hospital, for example. That was true in the 1930s as well, but, prompted by the mixed motives of self-interest and civic obligation, a small number of national foundations developed much larger agendas, with long-term repercussions. Most importantly, a few foundations began to champion such causes as improvement of race relations, a greater international role for the United States, and the development of research hospitals.

During a decade when Jim Crow segregation retained its firm grip, the Chicago-based Rosenwald Fund continued its aggressive program of building Rosenwald Schools. By 1939, almost 750,000 black children were studying in more than 5,300 clean, brightly-lit schoolhouses scattered throughout fourteen southern states. The Rosenwald Fund, along with the Rockefeller-supported General Education Board, also provided grants to sustain black colleges. During a decade when many American hospitals refused admittance to minority patients, the Rosenwald Fund built several regional health centers throughout the South to serve blacks.

In 1937, the Carnegie Corporation commissioned Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal to begin a major examination of the problem of race in America. Myrdal's lengthy two-volume study, finally published in 1944, argued that Americans had to resolve their central "dilemma" by making their intellectual endorsement of equality a social reality for the country's African Americans.

If Depression-era philanthropy help to sow the seeds of a later civil rights crusade, it also nourished internationalism during an era that shunned formal external alliances. The Rockefeller and Kellogg foundations, two of the country's largest philanthropic organizations, funded projects throughout Asia and Latin America to promote improved public health. The Guggenheim Foundation expanded a fellowship program formerly restricted to Ameri-

can citizens so that South Americans could study in the United States. The Rockefeller Institute mounted a major worldwide campaign against yellow fever, and foundation-supported scientists created the first vaccine against the disease in 1937.

Philanthropy not only battled yellow fever and other insect-borne scourges, it helped to reshape healthcare during the 1930s. Prior to the early twentieth century, physicians visited most sick Americans in their own homes. Hospitals were considered charity institutions for the poor. Only in the 1920s did the middle class begin to trickle into hospitals, led by women wanting to use the "Twilight Sleep" process to give birth painlessly. Philanthropy accelerated that trend during the 1930s by supporting the idea that hospitals should not only treat paying patients but should be centers for advanced medical research and teaching as well.

One of the most popular songs of the Great Depression asked, "Brother can you spare a dime?" Philanthropy's "dime" was not sufficient to solve the era's complex problems. It was, however, a significant player in the decade's events.

See Also: CHARITY; EDUCATION.

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JUDITH SEALANDER

PHOTOGRAPHY

The technologies of photography changed immensely in the first four decades of the twentieth



Gordon Park's memorable portrait of a government-employed cleaning woman, photographed in Washington, D.C., in 1942.

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This famous image, shot by Arthur Rothstein in 1936, shows a farmer and his sons on their Oklahoma farm during the Dust Bowl. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

century, increasing the sorts of pictures that could be taken and printed for mass distribution. Among the innovations was the portable 35-millimeter Leica, introduced in the 1920s, which permitted rapid, unobtrusive, spontaneous use. In addition, photoelectric exposure meters, which came on the market in the early 1930s and soon became standard equipment, allowed photographers to measure luminance and determine proper lens aperture (called f-stop) calibration. The annual *U.S. Camera* charted the modernization in photography beginning in 1935 with the best new photographic work chosen by juries chaired by photographer Edward Steichen. During the 1930s, the annual included works by Arnold Genthe, M. F. Agha, Paul Outer-

bridge, Charles Sheeler, and Edward Weston. It remains the comprehensive, primary-source overview of the era's developments.

The "big picture" magazine was a further innovation that helped broaden the profession of the news photographer, photojournalist, and commercial photographer beyond the fashion and celebrity photographs by Steichen and Baron A. De Meyer that appeared in *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, and similar magazines, or Nickolas Muray's work for *Harper's Bazaar* and *McCall's*. Photography in advertising was in its infancy in the 1920s. J. Stirling Getchell worked for the J. Walter Thompson agency until he opened his own from in 1932. *Advertising and Selling* credited him in 1934 with a revolutionary use of

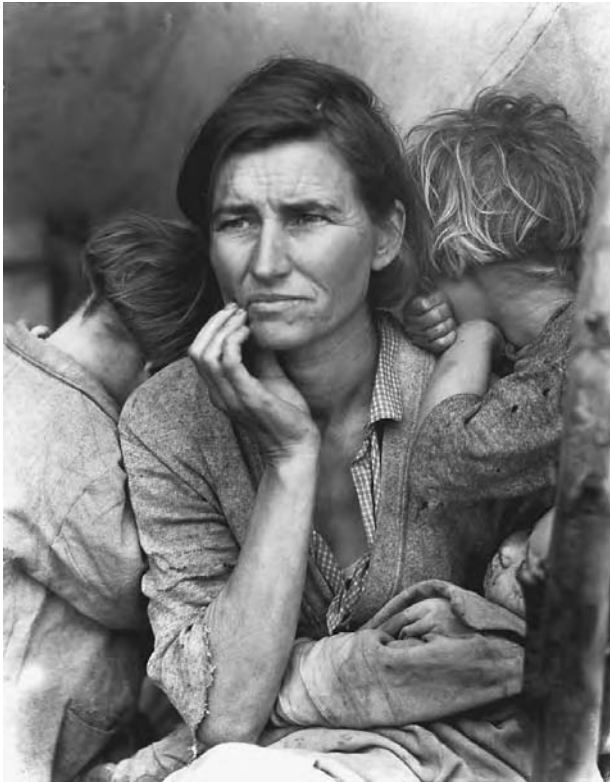


Lewis Hine's well-known photograph of a homeless man sleeping on a dock in New York City in 1935. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

photography and inventing tabloid layouts with work by Steichen, Anton Bruehl, and Margaret Bourke-White. Berenice Abbott, Charles Sheeler, and others contributed to a "futuristic" style of dramatized, cubistic, or manipulated image. Commercial photography became a recognized profession by 1938. Henry Luce, publisher of *Time*, launched *Fortune* in 1929 and hired the German photographer Erich Salomon, a pioneering Leica user, as staff photographer. Bourke-White rose to fame with her Leica work for *Fortune*, which included innovative journalistic realism and aerial photography.

When Luce began publishing the weekly *Life* in 1936 he developed the *picture essay*, a collaboration

of editors, photographers, and writers who worked according to a shooting script. Luce described *Life's* mission as, "to see the world; to eyewitness great events; to watch the faces of the poor and the gestures of the proud; to see strange things . . . to see man's work." Bourke-White produced the photographs for *Life's* first cover story, which described the lives of the workers constructing Montana's Fort Peck Dam. Bourke-White also served as associate editor, believing in Luce's theory of the "mind-guided camera." Other staff photographers at *Life* included Alfred Eisenstaedt, Thomas D. McAvoy, and Peter Stackpole. The magazine became so popular that Luce had to print over a million copies of each issue to meet demand.



One of the most celebrated Depression-era images is this portrait of a migrant mother, photographed by Dorothea Lange in Nipomo, California, in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

In 1937 Gardner "Mike" Cowles, Jr., and his brother John began publishing the monthly *Look*, which became *Life's* most successful competitor. Immediately popular, *Look* went biweekly as circulation soared to two million by 1938. By 1939, however, *Look's* fortunes had plunged, with circulation cut in half as more than a dozen new picture magazines appeared on newsstands. *Look* also lost readers because of its failure to use quality paper and printing and its poor layout design. By 1940, however, *Look* had gained new professional staff members and a new editor, Dan Mich, and the magazine prospered during the war years.

In addition to these commercial photographic ventures, several New Deal agencies promoted photography during the Depression. The Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration, for example, hired New York photographer Bere-

nice Abbott to prepare a portrait of the metropolis, which was published as *Changing New York* in 1939. Abbott used as large a view camera as possible to capture the city's minute details.

In 1935, Rexford Tugwell, head of the Resettlement Administration (RA), formed a historical section within the RA to produce a "pictorial documentation of our rural areas and rural problems." Tugwell was especially interested in recording the consequences of the Dust Bowl. He appointed Roy Emerson Stryker to head what became the Farm Security Administration's (FSA) documentary photography unit. Stryker began the project with the photographers Arthur Rothstein, Carl Mydans, and Walker Evans. Dorothea Lange, who had documented the plight of migrant workers for the state of California, joined the FSA team, along with Paul Carter, Theodor Jung, Russell Lee, Ben Shahn, Arthur Siegel, John Vachon, and Marion Post Wolcott, and later Jack Delano, John Collier, Gordon Parks, and others. Stryker assigned projects but left the choice of equipment, technique, and style to the photographers, who were directed "to speak as eloquently as possible of the thing to be said in the language of pictures." The FSA distributed the pictures free to newspapers and magazines to win support for New Deal programs and aid for the rural poor. FSA photographers amassed thousands of images, which are now held by the Library of Congress.

Steichen observed in 1938 that the FSA photography unit produced "a series of the most remarkable human documents ever rendered in pictures." These photographs "told stories and told them with [such] simple and blunt directness that they made many a citizen wince"; they conveyed "a feeling of a living experience you won't forget." In 1940, documentary filmmaker Pare Lorentz described the FSA photographs as showing "group after group of wretched human beings, starkly asking for so little and wondering what they will get." Some critics, however, labeled them "subversive." Was it art, they asked, or rather sociology, journalism, history, education, or propaganda?

In many cases, writers teamed with photographers to add depth to the documentation. John Steinbeck's 1938 pamphlet about California mi-

grant workers was illustrated with Lange's photographs, and Horace Bristol took a series of photos while traveling with Steinbeck on a research trip for *The Grapes of Wrath*. The writer Erskine Caldwell teamed up with Bourke-White for a book on Deep South poverty called *You Have Seen Their Faces* (1937). Archibald MacLeish provided a poem to accompany FSA photos in *Land of the Free* (1938). Lange collaborated with Paul Taylor on *An American Exodus: A Record of Human Erosion* (1939), in which some photographs were set alongside the subject's own words. James Agee and Evans investigated the lives of southern tenant farmers in *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941).

Depression-era photographers also won acclaim as artists. From 1929 till his death in 1946, Alfred Stieglitz, the guru of American photography, presided over a gallery called An American Place in New York. Stieglitz encouraged Ansel Adams's career with a one-man show in 1936, a year after Adams's book on technique, *Making a Photograph*, appeared. Adams, Imogen Cunningham, John Paul Edwards, Willard Van Dyke, and Weston founded Group f.64 (f.64 is a lens aperture setting that produces great detail) in California in 1932; the group was dedicated to "pure" or "straight" photography using view cameras with super-speed panchromatic film, and close control over the printing process. Lange, William Simpson, and Stackpole later joined Group f.64. Weston won the first Guggenheim Fellowship for photography in 1937; Evans received a Guggenheim in 1940; Lange, in 1941.

During the 1930s, art museums began to value photography and started adding prints to their collections. The Museum of Modern Art in New York organized an exhibit of Evans's photographs of vernacular and Victorian architecture in 1934, and gave his work another show in 1938. The Baltimore Museum of Art mounted an exhibit of Steichen's work in 1938. Adams curated the Pageant of Photography exhibition at San Francisco's 1939 Golden Gate Exposition. In 1940, Adams helped Beaumont Newhall create the Museum of Modern Art's Photography Department.

As World War II erupted, photographers mustered. Lange documented the internment of Japanese-Americans on the West Coast. The U.S.

Navy commissioned Steichen to organize photography of the war at sea. New picture magazines covered it all.

See Also: EVANS, WALKER; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); LANGE, DOROTHEA; HINE, LEWIS; ROTHSTEIN, ARTHUR.

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BLANCHE M. G. LINDEN

PLANNING

In the twentieth century, planning entered the mainstream of American life in the wake of indus-

trialization, urbanization, and modernization. Many planners started in the city planning movement of the Progressive era. During the wartime mobilization of 1917 and 1918, American planners became aware of the limits of a federalist system built on the bedrock of anti-statist values. Government committees sponsored by Herbert Hoover explored the potential of planning throughout the 1920s, and landmark social science studies at the end of the decade led to the creation of the first national planning agency in U.S. history. Between 1933 and 1943, national planners participated in the New Deal response to the crises of the Great Depression and World War II.

THE NEW DEAL AND PLANNING

Between 1929 and 1941, the American economy suffered dramatic declines in investment, production, employment, income, and consumption. Unwilling to entrust the future to Republican Herbert Hoover, millions of Americans voted for Democrats in the congressional elections of 1930 and 1932, and Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt won the presidential election of 1932 after promising a “new deal” for the American people. In this changed economic and political climate, the possibilities for planning seemed promising. Historian Charles A. Beard, business leaders Gerard Swope and Owen Young, and activist Rexford Tugwell sparked a national debate over planning.

In July 1933, Roosevelt appointed the National Planning Board under Title II of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The name, structure, and funding of the planning agency changed over time from the National Planning Board (1933–1934) to the National Resources Board (1934–1935) to the National Resources Committee (1935–1939) to the National Resources Planning Board (1939–1943). Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes sought people with professional expertise to serve on the board, and New Deal planning maintained continuity of leadership and vision from exceptional people with backgrounds in significant areas of American life. Frederic A. Delano, Roosevelt’s uncle, had worked in railroad management, city planning in Chicago, and regional planning in New York and Washington, D.C. Political scientist

Charles E. Merriam built a social science network at the University of Chicago and founded the Social Science Research Council in 1923. Economist Wesley Clair Mitchell conducted business cycle research, founded the National Bureau of Economic Research in 1920, and led the President’s Research Committee on Social Trends from 1929 to 1933. Boston manufacturer Henry S. Dennison experimented with firm-specific planning, helped professionalize business management by founding the American Management Association, and participated in a range of advisory roles. Philanthropic manager Beardsley Ruml used his leadership of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial during the 1920s to create and fund a national social science network in collaboration with Merriam. Between 1921 and 1933, all five men worked on Hooverian projects that led to their appointment to Roosevelt’s National Planning Board. New Deal planning represented more than a short-term response to the Depression—it emerged from a complicated institutional network of private and public groups built since 1900.

THE NEW DEAL PLANNERS

During the nineteenth century, most Americans assumed that *laissez-faire* economic distinctions between private and public sector activity lay at the core of institutional life. New Deal planners came to see that modernization of the nation’s economy, society, and culture called for new kinds of cross-sectoral institutions that would allow cooperation and coordination between business, government, social scientists, and public policy actors using private funds to shape public policy. Delano, Merriam, Mitchell, Dennison, and Ruml represented a new generation of policy actors.

Delano had moved up the managerial ranks of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad to join the social elite of turn-of-the-century Chicago. Active in Daniel Burnham’s famous Chicago Plan, by the end of the 1920s Delano helped lead the National Capital Park and Planning Commission in Washington, D.C., and the Regional Plan of New York and its Environs.

Merriam, the first political scientist hired by the new University of Chicago, established his reputa-

tion through a series of research projects, often using Chicago as his social science laboratory. Although his political career as alderman and mayoral candidate proved short-lived, Merriam moved into advisory work during and after World War I. In the 1920s, Merriam, Ruml, Mitchell, and other social scientists made the University of Chicago one of the premiere research institutions in the world when they established the new Social Science Research Council.

Mitchell, an institutional economist trained at the University of Chicago, began his professional career at the University of California at Berkeley, studying fluctuations in the business cycle. Shortly after moving to Columbia University in New York, Mitchell published his seminal work, *Business Cycles* (1913). In the 1917 to 1918 period, Mitchell worked with Dennison and economic historian Edwin F. Gay in the Price Section of the War Industries Board. Frustration with the inadequacies of federal statistical analysis led Mitchell and Gay to co-found the National Bureau of Economic Research in 1920. In 1927, Mitchell succeeded Merriam as head of the Social Science Research Council.

Dennison co-founded the Twentieth Century Fund (1920), experimented with countercyclical business planning, and worked with a variety of private and public groups that brought him in touch with other Hooverian planners.

After finishing a doctorate in psychology at the University of Chicago, Ruml moved into applied psychology at the Carnegie Institute of Technology and the Committee for the Classification of Personnel in the Army, where he designed tests to place draftees in military occupation slots. After he was noticed by Raymond B. Fosdick, adviser to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Ruml was hired as director of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial. Between 1921 and 1933, Ruml brought together social scientists (Social Science Research Council), business firms (the Dennison Manufacturing Company), philanthropies (Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial, Rockefeller Foundation, the Carnegie Corporation, and the Russell Sage Foundation), and research institutes (the National Bureau of Economic Research and the Brookings Institution) in a national social science network.

These five planners came together under the leadership and vision of Herbert Hoover in the 1920s during Hoover's tenure as secretary of commerce. Hooverian committees conducted studies of the business cycle, unemployment relief, and countercyclical public works planning in reaction to the short recession of 1920 to 1921. These planning institutions, funded with private philanthropic monies, brought together social scientists, new cross-sectoral institutions, representatives of the business community, and the public. These efforts culminated in two landmark social science studies, the first national inventories of their kind—*Recent Economic Changes* (1927–1929) and *Recent Social Trends* (1929–1933). Hoover's voluntarist, ad hoc planning during the 1920s laid the foundation for a shift toward a more statist national planning in the 1930s.

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF NATIONAL PLANNING

The Depression served as a catalyst that made possible the transition from New Era to New Deal planning. Between 1929 and 1933, economic, social, and political conditions changed dramatically. Under Roosevelt, the Democratic Party and New Deal reformers brought planning to the federal government. Using pre-1933 experiences in social science research, personal and professional contacts, and institutional networks in business, the social sciences, and philanthropy as their base, Roosevelt's planners came together in 1933 as an advisory planning body.

Between 1933 and 1939, New Deal planners engaged in a flurry of activity, taking inventory of natural, technological, and economic resources; expanding physical planning to broader social and economic planning; establishing regional planning bodies in New England and the Pacific Northwest; and creating planning agencies in most of the states. Rather than developing rigid blueprints for the future, they saw planning as a national policy process that would create cooperation among interest groups, coordinate policy recommendations by experts, and buttress democracy through leadership by the president and Congress. Delano, Dennison, and Ruml led efforts to formulate the new policy of compensatory spending in response to the reces-

sion of 1937, while Merriam led the fight for executive branch reorganization. During mobilization for World War II, the National Resources Planning Board conducted defense production planning, industrial site location studies, and established a national roster of scientific experts. Postwar planning reports recommended broadening social security coverage, compensatory spending to launch the consumer society, and benefits for military and home front veterans.

Perhaps the most lasting and significant of the planners' efforts came in the form of a second "Economic Bill of Rights" that not only served as the cornerstone of Roosevelt's 1944 campaign but also as the agenda for postwar liberalism. The New Deal planners argued that postwar Americans should have the right to work, food, clothing, shelter, medical care, and security; freedom from "irresponsible private power, arbitrary public authority, and unregulated monopolies"; freedom of speech and association; equality before the law; and opportunities for education and recreation. As practical legacies, the planners left the country with public works planning, compensatory spending policy, executive reorganization, the federal income withholding tax, the G.I. Bill of Rights, and the Employment Act of 1946. However, the New Deal planners overlooked rising tensions between the executive and legislative branches, the bureaucratic turf wars within and between federal agencies, the country's historic anti-statist fear of centralized power, and the complexities of the modern American political economy.

Congress abolished the New Deal planning board in 1943. Once presidential support and monies faltered, the planners fell victim to resurgent congressional conservatism. Conservatives in Congress used rhetorical ploys of red baiting, indirect attacks on Roosevelt, and accusations of waste, duplication of effort, and creeping socialism to bury the agency by sending its records to the dustbins of the National Archives.

Delano and Merriam had both come to national planning in part through city and regional planning. Since 1900, planners had created a range of organizations, including the American Planning and Civic Association (1904), the National Confer-

ence on City Planning (1909), the American City Planning Institute (1917), the American Institute of Planning (1934), and the American Society of Planning Officials (1935). City planning in Chicago and Washington, D.C., and regional planning in New York centered on housing, roads, and economic infrastructure. Professional architects, landscape architects, engineers, and city planners brought economy, efficiency, rationality, and industrialism to their work. But not all planners assumed these same values. Members of the Regional Planning Association of America (1923–1933) hoped to bring greenbelt cities to Depression-era America. Disillusioned by the technocratic nature of modern life, these planners sought to combine community, cooperation, and decentralization in human-scale cities called "new towns."

THE REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION AND GREENBELT TOWNS

Inspiration for the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA) came from Charles Whitaker, editor of the *Journal of the American Institute of Architects*, and Clarence Stein, a skilled organizer. Whitaker, head of the New York City planning committee, brought together a small group of visionaries that included Robert Kohn, director of housing production for the Emergency Fleet Corporation of the U.S. Shipping Board during World War I. Conservationist Benton MacKaye, educated in forestry at Harvard, provided a broad naturalist perspective seen in his 1921 proposal for an Appalachian hiking trail. Through the Appalachian Trail Conference in 1925, MacKaye helped found hundreds of Mountain Clubs that built most of the Appalachian Trail by the mid-1930s. New York City developer Alexander Bing founded the City Housing Corporation to build RPAA-inspired new towns in Sunnyside, Queens, New York (1924), and Radburn, New Jersey (1927). Bing's financial skills complemented the writing of Lewis Mumford, who served as the public voice of the RPAA. Henry Wright used his experience as landscape architect and subdivision designer in Saint Louis, Missouri, to analyze and evaluate RPAA plans. These people worked to create an alternate vision of city and regional planning that was showcased in a special May 1925 issue of *Survey Graphic* and in work on

Governor Al Smith's 1926 New York State Commission on Housing and Regional Planning.

Lewis Mumford became the most influential RPAA member as he wrote about the possibilities of the modern city. Growing up in the laboratory of New York City, Mumford was strongly influenced by the work of Scottish biologist and urbanist Patrick Geddes and by Ebenezer Howard's Garden City movement. From his base in Sunnyside (1925–1936) and later the small town of Leedsville in upstate New York, Mumford drew on the RPAA's twice-weekly meetings to mold his urban vision. Although the RPAA held high hopes for early New Deal projects, most members quickly became disenchanted with the administration's limited program for new towns and the narrowness of the regional planning of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Through his influential "The Skyline" column in *The New Yorker* magazine (1931–1963), Mumford critiqued mainstream city and regional planning. He initially hoped to use modern technology—electricity, the automobile, and roads—as a complement to small communities that were enveloped by a natural belt of greenery, where residents could walk, garden, and engage in recreation.

Under Rexford Tugwell, the Resettlement Administration built three experimental towns to provide models for the future: Greenbelt, Maryland, near Washington, D.C.; Greenhills, Ohio, near Cincinnati; and Greendale, Wisconsin, near Milwaukee. Drawing on the British Garden City ideal and the model of the RPAA's Radburn, New Jersey, these towns demonstrated how to bring together the best features of urban and rural living in a new kind of suburban life that mixed cars and people, housing and walkways, roads and trees, planners and citizens, private builders and government officials. Yet even these few projects proved highly controversial. Critics derided the Greenbelt towns as too expensive, too much like socialism, and too thoroughly New Deal inspired. All three towns were sold to private developers in the early 1950s, yet they remain highly regarded communities to home buyers and models for urban planners.

THE LEGACY OF PLANNING

Members of the RPAA presented an alternate vision of decentralized community building best

seen in Mumford's commentaries. Planning in the 1930s brought together a diverse set of people, ideas, institutions, and projects. National planning directed by experts in city and regional planning, social science, organized philanthropy, and business management engaged in advisory planning through cross-sectoral institutions to promote natural resources planning, a range of national inventories, compensatory spending policy, executive reorganization, wartime use of expertise, and planning for postwar consumer culture. Yet planning remained highly controversial in a society and culture that historically feared centralized, public power. Romanticizing the voluntarist vision of an older agricultural republic, many Americans remained wary of statist planning. During a decade wracked by the destructive actions of Communists and fascists, conservatives in Congress used this fear of collectivism to attack planners, the New Deal planning agency, and the RPAA planning vision. In 1943, Congress abolished the only national planning agency in U.S. history. By the early 1950s, the greenbelt towns, now owned by private developers, expanded the crabgrass frontier of suburban America. After World War II, planning continued through private and cross-sectoral institutions that scholars have only begun to study.

See Also: GREENBELT TOWNS; MUMFORD, LEWIS; NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD (NRPB); REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (RPAA).

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PATRICK D. REAGAN

POETRY

Poetry published in the United States during the 1930s was, as in any other era, extremely varied aesthetically and ideologically. However, in general it was marked by social engagement and a concern for history, ethnicity, race, and region. It was also a period in which writing associated with the organized Left, particularly the Communist Party, in no small part set the poetic agenda.

The economic crisis of the Great Depression and the various political crises that the financial collapse engendered brought politics and ideology into the foreground of much 1930s poetry. This was not only true of the work of such left-wing poets as Muriel Rukeyser, Joy Davidman, Edwin Rolfe, Langston Hughes, Sterling A. Brown, and Horace Gregory, but also that of writers with announced right-wing, sometimes even fascist, sympathies, such as Ezra Pound and Wallace Stevens. Also, left-wing institutions that supported the work of radical poets, such as the journal *New Masses*, gained an increased prominence. At the same time, "mainstream" institutions became more open to the Left and poetry of social engagement generally. For example, a number of radical poets, including Rukeyser, Davidman, and Margaret Walker, won the prestigious Yale Younger Poets award during this period. The leading poetry magazine, *Poetry*, featured "social realist" issues edited by prominent leftist poets.

The political engagement of many poets, both left and right, had a tremendous impact on the form of poetry in the 1930s. An overriding concern for poets of the era was the relationship between high literary culture and the new popular culture industries that came of age by the end of the 1920s (e.g., sound film, pulp fiction, radio, comic books, advertising, phonograph recordings). Some poets, generally the more politically conservative ones, such as Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, Alan Tate, and John Crowe Ransom, maintained a "high modern" antagonism to popular culture and often looked back to an idealized vision of an earlier historical moment, whether the Holy Roman Empire or the pre-Civil War South, for a model of organic society.

The more Left-influenced poets, including some of the older modernist generation (e.g., William Carlos Williams, Archibald MacLeish, and Langston Hughes), as well as the younger radicals, often, though not universally, engaged popular culture in a more positive fashion. These writers considered how to address the working class, “the people,” or some other oppressed group (e.g., African Americans), whether in modernist or traditional high literary forms, in adaptations of folk culture or popular commercial culture, or some amalgamation of the above. The manner in which various poets answered the question of how one might speak by, for, of, and to the people had tremendous implications for poetic diction, rhythm, rhyme, received forms (whether the sonnet or the blues), theme, intertextual relationships, voice, the arrangement on the page—and in fact what constitutes poetry. Of course, such poets as Carl Sandburg and Vachel Lindsay (and Walt Whitman for that matter) had considered these issues decades earlier, but the question of audience, form, and cultural work took on a new intensity in atmosphere of the Great Depression.

Leftist influence during this era can be roughly divided into two periods. The first, from about 1928 to 1935, was dominated by the notion of an oppositional culture that was rooted in a workers’ or folk tradition that allegedly existed outside of commercial culture. Left-influenced artists who subscribed to this approach tended to look for or imagine “folk” cultures or a “worker” culture that lay outside of mass consumer culture—though they were often also influenced by the formal artistic radicalism of the early twentieth-century modernists (who, as mentioned earlier, often looked back to an idealized pre-capitalist community). They were not only interested in folklore and documentary, but in recreating a distinctive working-class or folk voice in a manner that was paradoxically engaged and objective. For example, the African-American poet Sterling A. Brown in the title poem of his 1932 volume *Southern Road* combines the form and subjectivity of the blues and the collectivity of the chain gang call-and-response song.

The second period was the Popular Front era of the later half of the 1930s. A notable aspect of Pop-

ular Front aesthetics was a cultural mixing of the “high” and the “low,” of the “popular” and the “literary,” of Walt Whitman and the early T. S. Eliot, of folk culture and mass culture, of literary and non-literary documents, of different genres and different media. This mixing of high and low frequently functioned satirically, as seen, for example, in the work of Kenneth Fearing, Frank Marshall Davis, and Langston Hughes, which often made use of a pastiche of the diction and rhetorical styles of hard-boiled fiction, advertising, journalism, newsreels, political speechmaking, and radio drama. Although the relation of these artists to mass culture was less adversarial than that of their high modernist predecessors, a critique of mass culture that highlighted some awareness of the costs of using the resources of mass culture was an important part of even those artists who seemed most sanguine about the possibilities of such a usage.

Another important feature of much Popular Front art is an interest in race and ethnicity and the relation of racial identity and ethnic identity to American identity. This aspect of the Popular Front has often been misunderstood in that Popular Front constructs of “the people” have been set in opposition to particularized ethnic or racial identity. However, when one considers the poetry of Sterling A. Brown, Don West, Aaron Kramer, Frank Marshall Davis, Langston Hughes, Waring Cuney, and Margaret Walker, to name but a few of many examples, it is clear that race and ethnicity remain overriding concerns during the Popular Front, albeit concerns that are as much about transformation of identity as they are tradition.

Finally, many of the artistic, literary, or quasi-literary works of the Popular Front era are marked by concerns with place and history in American identity, an interest that is often closely connected to the above mentioned concern with race and ethnicity. While the place represented, recreated, and dissected is most commonly a specific city or urban neighborhood, such representations are frequently rural, as seen in Don West’s poems of the southern mountains. These concerns mark not only the work of poets commonly associated with the Left of the 1930s, but also the work of older writers, including Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and, more

obliquely, Wallace Stevens, as well as that of the conservative poets, including Alan Tate and Robert Penn Warren, who were associated with the Agrarian literary circle of Vanderbilt University in Nashville. Interestingly, Tate, Warren, Cleanth Brooks, and others associated with the Agrarians published some of the seminal works of the New Criticism during this period, particularly Warren's and Brooks's 1938 *Understanding Poetry*, which enshrined a formalist modernism detached from author and social engagement as the dominant model for literary evaluation.

As noted above, there were considerable aesthetic and ideological differences among poets during the 1930s. Even among writers who could be considered leftist, or among those who could be seen as conservative, there were different emphases in aesthetics and political concerns. However, poets of the era generally examined the generic limits of poetry, often with questions concerning who poetry is written for and what poetry can do in the mind. Certainly these questions had been asked and answered before the 1930s, particularly in the modernist era preceding the 1930s. What is unusual about these poets, and the radical poets, critics, and journals of the 1930s generally, is that they placed these questions in the foreground.

See Also: FOLKLORISTS; LITERATURE; POPULAR FRONT.

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JAMES SMETHURST

POLITICAL REALIGNMENT

American political scientists have often analyzed the two major U.S. parties according to three internal dimensions: the party as an organization, the party in government, and the party in the electorate. The study of political realignments, or realigning elections, is concerned with a rare, significant, long-term change in the voting behavior and party identification of the electorate. Such a change also affects the party as an organization (e.g., the chairmanship, activities, finances, and apparatus of the Democratic National Committee [DNC] or Republican National Committee [RNC]) and the party in government (e.g., partisan control of the presidency and Congress and the policy agenda identified with a party through its national platforms and legislative behavior).

In a 1955 journal article on critical elections and a 1959 article on secular realignment, political scientist V. O. Key, Jr., defined a critical election as “a type of election in which there occurs a sharp and durable electoral realignment between parties” (Key 1955, p. 3). In adopting the term “secular realignment” in his 1959 article, Key characterized a critical or realigning election as a “secular shift in party attachment,” that is, “a movement of the members of a population category from party to party that extends over several presidential elections and appears to be independent of the peculiar factors influencing the vote at individual elections” (Key 1959, p. 199).

Since Key's articles were published, political scientists and historians have disagreed about several aspects of realignment, but there is scholarly consensus that enduring changes occurred in U.S. voting behavior and party identification from 1928 to 1936 that benefited the Democratic Party and made it the majority party until the 1968 presidential election.

According to some scholars, the presidential election of 1928 foreshadowed the New Deal re-

alignment that was eventually confirmed by the 1936 presidential and congressional elections. Al Smith, the Democratic presidential nominee of 1928, was a Catholic, antiprohibition governor of New York who lost decisively to Herbert Hoover. Not only did Smith fail to carry his home state in the electoral college, but he also lost several normally Democratic border and southern states to Hoover. Smith, however, did carry the two most Catholic states, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and proved to be more attractive to non-Irish Catholics, African Americans, Jews, immigrant women, and industrial workers than previous Democratic presidential nominees. In short, according to this interpretation, the urban, northern, multiethnic base of Smith's popular vote in 1928 served as the demographic foundation for the later, New Deal realignment of the Democratic Party.

The widespread, severe economic suffering caused by the Great Depression contributed to the Democrats winning control of the U.S. House of Representatives in 1930 and both houses of Congress and the presidency in 1932. The Democrats also gained congressional seats in 1934, a rare accomplishment for the president's party in a midterm election. Until the results of 1936 presidential and congressional elections were analyzed, however, it was not certain during Roosevelt's first term if a long-term realignment of voting blocs establishing the Democratic Party as the new majority party had been effected. For example, African Americans, who were suffering economically more than whites, voted about 65 percent Republican for president in 1932. Leaders of political movements of economic protest criticized Roosevelt, the New Deal, and the Democratic Party for being too cautious, moderate, and ineffective in combating the Great Depression, and they threatened his reelection.

But Roosevelt was re-elected with more than 60 percent of the popular vote and carried 46 of the 48 states in the electoral college. While maintaining the pre-New Deal Democratic loyalty of southern whites and Irish Catholics, Roosevelt received overwhelming majorities from African Americans, Jews, non-Irish Catholics, urban residents in general, and labor union members. The New Deal's social wel-

fare programs, public works projects, and labor reforms, especially the Wagner Act of 1935, were instrumental in developing organized labor as a major source of votes, campaign finance and services, and interest group strength for the Democratic Party during and long after the New Deal realignment.

As a consequence of the 1936 election results, the Democratic Party became the nation's majority in voter registration for the first time since 1856. Many rural, non-southern white Protestants who had voted Democratic from 1932 to 1936 began to return to the Republican Party in 1938, and there was a steady decline in the national Democratic Party's electoral appeal to southern whites after World War II and, to a lesser extent, to Catholics by the late 1960s. Nonetheless, the political realignment of voting blocs, party identification, and electoral behavior stemming from the Great Depression, the New Deal, and Franklin D. Roosevelt enabled the Democratic Party to dominate the presidency, Congress, and policymaking, and even to influence the internal politics of the Republican Party long after the Great Depression.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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SEAN J. SAVAGE

POPULAR FRONT

In 1935 the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International (Comintern) announced the opening of the "Popular Front." The campaign called for an international alliance against fascism and shifted Communist emphasis away from building proletarian revolution. In the United States, the Communist Party responded by reducing opposi-

tion to the New Deal, re-concentrating efforts in the mainstream of the trade union movement, and building alliances against fascism in Germany, Japan, Italy, and Spain. Internationally, the Popular Front took multiple forms. In Spain, the Popular Front organized to defeat fascist forces under Francisco Franco. In Chile, the Popular Front political party organized workers against old ruling parties and won the 1938 presidential election. In China, Soviet influence persuaded Chinese Communists to compromise with the Nationalist Party to defeat Japanese imperialism. In August 1939, the Comintern retracted its popular front campaign after Stalin and Hitler signed a nonaggression pact. In 1941, Germany attacked Russia, and a "democratic" anti-fascist emphasis returned to international communism's line.

Its populist undertones and democratic rhetoric made the Popular Front the high point of Communist influence in U.S. history. Earl Browder, general secretary of the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA), famously declared during the Popular Front that "Communism is Twentieth-Century Americanism." Browder's 1938 book *The People's Front* invoked mainstream liberal American appeals: support for Roosevelt and trade unions, freedom of the press, democracy and the constitution. Abraham Lincoln was embraced as an American freedom fighter during the Popular Front, and American leftists, including the poet Langston Hughes, volunteered to fight in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in Spain. Black Americans also responded to the Popular Front's appeal for interracial solidarity against fascism. In 1936 the Communist Party helped to organize the National Negro Congress in Chicago and opened its "Negro People's Front," a companion movement to the larger Popular Front. James Ford, the black vice-presidential candidate for the CPUSA in 1932 and 1936, published *The Negro and the Democratic National Front* in 1938, praising Communist efforts in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), the Southern Negro Youth Movement, and the defense of Ethiopia against Italy.

The Popular Front also promoted "people's culture." The American Writers' Congress was created by the CPUSA in 1935 to replace its John Reed

clubs. Shortly thereafter the Popular Front League of American Writers was formed. League work was carried on by a broad range of American writers: Nelson Algren, Kenneth Rexroth, Meridel Le Sueur, Franklin Folsom, among others. African-American writers were among the league's most enthusiastic supporters: Richard Wright, Langston Hughes, Gwendolyn Brooks, Margaret Walker, Arna Bontemps, and Frank Marshall Davis were members. In the visual arts, the Mexican Popular Front artists Diego Rivera, Jose Orozco, and David Siqueiros and the American populist Thomas Hart Benton impressed folk materials and a progressive representational style on American painting. Swing, jazz, and folk music, particularly the ballads of Paul Robeson, were enlisted against fascism, if not for communism, during the Popular Front.

The Popular Front remains the most vexing period in U.S. Communist history: Detractors perceive its ideological compromises as fatal to international proletarianism, while admirers value its capacity for progressive political and cultural alliances.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; FASCISM.

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BILL V. MULLEN

POST OFFICE MURALS

In October 1934 the Section of Painting and Sculpture was established within the U.S. Department of



A mural by Ann Hunt Spencer adorns a post office in 1942 in Southington, Connecticut. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the Treasury. From 1938 until its closure in 1943 it was referred to as the Section of Fine Arts. The Section was assigned one percent of construction funds to decorate new federal buildings, many of which were post offices. Although involved in prestigious projects decorating government buildings in Washington, D.C., the Section of Fine Arts is best known for the post office art that it commissioned. In total, the Section decorated buildings in more than one thousand American cities and towns.

Edward Bruce was the director of the Section of Fine Arts. A businessman, artist, and ardent New Dealer, Bruce had been director of the Public Works of Art Project that was attached to the Civil Works Administration during 1933 and 1934. Bruce's strong convictions about government funding of

the arts influenced the Section's work. He believed that federal sponsorship needed to be justified through work of high quality, and although the Section of Fine Arts aided many artists, in contrast to the Federal Art Project of the Works Progress Administration, it did not prioritize the provision of relief. Commissions were awarded through competitions of invited artists, a practice that was intended to favor established artists. Of the 850 artists employed by the Section of Fine Arts, only one-sixth were women and only three were African Americans. Bruce was also prescriptive about the style of art that would decorate the post offices. An enthusiast for realism and the American Scene, he approved only one abstract mural—by Lloyd R. Ney in New London, Ohio.

The aim of the post office murals was to make “art a part of daily life.” This was achieved at the outset through the artists working in public spaces, interacting with the community, and demystifying the creative process. Generally, the muralists worked either with oil and canvas that was glued to the wall, in *buon fresco* that involved painting directly on wet plaster, or in *fresco secco* in which paint was applied to a dry wall. In addition, some murals were relief sculptures, using wood, plaster, or stone.

The post office was a major focus of American communities and an obvious link between the people and the federal government. However, the Section of Fine Arts did not proclaim federal authority through triumphal symbolism or, normally, through explicit references to the New Deal and its programs. Rather, the murals reflected local community characteristics, registered their histories, and celebrated their citizens. The murals contained powerful mythic images of the United States as expressed in representations of the family, pioneers, farmers, and workers, and they embedded such values as liberty, democracy, individualism, and opportunity. Although the artists of many post office murals were inspired by the Mexican revolutionary muralists—Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, and Jose Clemente Orozco—their work tended to lack similar critical perspectives. Rarely did the murals engage with the impact of the Depression, and they tended to omit representations of conflict based on race, class, and gender. As such, they not only confirmed the strong bonds between localities and the state, they also proclaimed the vitality and strength of national values and institutions, offering hope for the future beyond the economic crisis.

See Also: AMERICAN SCENE, THE; ART; FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP); RIVERA, DIEGO.

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STUART KIDD

POUR. *See* PRESIDENT’S ORGANIZATION FOR UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF.

PRESIDENT’S COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL TRENDS

Established in 1929 by the newly inaugurated Herbert Hoover, the President’s Committee on Social Trends was a group of leading social scientists and foundation officials whose task was to collect data on leading social institutions and behavior. Hoover had utilized this survey approach since his days as food administrator during World War I, and he had made it a keystone of his work as secretary of commerce. Hoover’s view of social science perceived the collection and description of facts as leading automatically to obvious conclusions. On several occasions he noted his intentions of basing his social policies upon the data of the social trends study.

The chairman of the committee was Columbia University economist and director of the National Bureau for Economic Research Wesley Mitchell. Mitchell and Hoover had known each other since their government service in World War I. Like Hoover, Mitchell believed in the slow accumulation of statistical facts that could eventually lead to social improvement. The committee’s vice-chairman was Charles Merriam, founder of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and long-time collaborator with Mitchell on social science committees. Almost all of the contributors had a close relationship with the SSRC.

More significant for the actual writing of the report were the director and assistant directors of research, William Ogburn and Howard Odum, both possessors of doctorates in sociology from Colum-

bia. Ogburn, in particular, insisted upon absolute objectivity and absence of opinions. His favorite chapters included little beyond statistics. Fearing that some chapters would include recommendations, Ogburn sent out a memorandum promising to prevent acceptance of any chapter with conclusions or recommendations. While the more politically astute Mitchell and Merriam blocked his veto in several cases, almost all of the chapters bore Ogburn's imprint.

The Committee's final product, *Recent Social Trends*, finished in early 1932, was thirty chapters and over 1,500 pages. The subjects ranged from agricultural and forest lands to taxation and public finance. While most reviews were complimentary, others noted its limitations. Adolf Berle, soon to become a member of Franklin D. Roosevelt "brains trust," stated that the work needed a "master" to interpret the data and develop specific policies. The historian Charles Beard saw *Recent Social Trends* as a crisis in the empirical method. Berle and Beard's predictions were borne out. The book did not provide a basis for social reform or legislation, even in the Great Depression, but it does serve as a splendid overview of American society at the beginning of the 1930s.

See Also: SOCIAL SCIENCE.

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MARK C. SMITH

PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT (PECE)

The President's Emergency Committee for Employment (PECE) was President Herbert Hoover's first organizational response to the economic crisis that

became the "Great Depression." In October of 1930, Hoover appointed Colonel Arthur Woods to head PECE, a federal "employment committee," modeled on a similar federal organization established during the recession of 1921 and 1922 (also created by then Secretary of Commerce Hoover and chaired by Woods).

PECE's stated goal was "job-creation." This aim was to be accomplished by expanding federal employment, encouraging the expansion of locally financed public construction, and stimulating private sector job-creation schemes. The committee's literature urged Americans to "give a job" and "spread the work." Local governments were called upon to initiate construction projects already planned, and PECE officials advocated a large increase in federal public works spending. The committee also encouraged local private relief efforts and served as a clearinghouse for information on relief. However, the PECE did not raise relief funds directly nor did it attempt to encourage needed public appropriations for direct aid to the unemployed.

In hindsight, the PECE has been viewed as an ineffectual response to the emerging Depression, an example of Herbert Hoover's outdated "voluntarism" (reliance on private initiatives) and his resistance to a more aggressive federal policy. But in the fall of 1930, the Depression was not yet "great," and the PECE's re-employment proposals seemed to most Americans to be adequate, even innovative, experiments.

By the spring of 1931, however, the administration's anti-Depression policies were in disarray. Unemployment had reached unprecedented levels; private industry was laying off workers rather than creating jobs; and financially strapped local governments were reducing public employment. There was growing sentiment in the social work community and in Congress that a federal relief appropriation might soon be necessary. In April, PECE chairman Arthur Woods, disillusioned by the administration's refusal to fund a more generous federal public employment program, resigned. In August 1931 the PECE was reorganized and renamed the President's Organization for Unemployment Relief (POUR).

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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JEFF SINGLETON

PRESIDENT'S ORGANIZATION FOR UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF (POUR)

The President's Organization for Unemployment Relief (POUR), created in August of 1931, was the Hoover administration's second federal committee to promote voluntarist solutions to the unemployment crisis. Although the POUR resembled its predecessor, the President's Emergency Committee on Employment (PECE), there were important differences between the two committees. The PECE, created in October 1930, had played a minimal role in national relief policy, focusing instead on encouraging local public employment and private sector job creation. The POUR's mandate, by contrast, was to organize a national fundraising campaign to finance local relief for the unemployed.

The POUR fund drive was, in large measure, a response to the growing demand for a federal relief appropriation. The issue had been raised in late 1930 during a congressional debate over drought relief to farmers and by the fall of 1931 support in Congress for a more active federal role in the unemployment emergency was growing.

The administration's response to these pressures was a national fund drive modeled on the Liberty Loan campaigns of World War I and the Community Chest drives of the 1920s. During the

fall of 1931, advertising agencies prepared full-page ads that the POUR distributed to newspapers and magazines. Press services and newspapers donated space for publicity. Thousands of billboards throughout the country carried POUR's slogan, "Of Course We Can Do It." Over one hundred colleges organized benefit football games and air shows were staged throughout the country to raise funds for the unemployed.

The POUR raised significant sums, as private spending for relief nearly doubled during the winter of 1931 and 1932. But the national private relief drive was not only inadequate to meet the needs of the mass of unemployed, it was counterproductive. By portraying the unemployed as needy and advertising the existence of large relief funds, the POUR drive encouraged mass applications for aid. The large urban relief organizations established in November and December of 1931 with POUR funds were on the verge of collapse by the following spring, generating a relief crisis that required federal intervention.

See Also: HOOVER, HERBERT; PRESIDENT'S EMERGENCY COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT (PECE); UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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PRODUCTION CODE ADMINISTRATION (HAYS OFFICE)

In the early 1920s notorious sex scandals, as well as racy movie content and advertising, raised strong cries for state and federal regulation of the movies. To forestall official intervention, the motion picture industry committed to self-regulation under a so-called czar: Will Hays, an influential Republican politician and prominent Presbyterian elder, headed a new trade organization, the Motion Picture Producers and Distributors Association (MPPDA), soon known as the Hays Office.

Self-regulation failed to mute critics, however, who found the continuing preoccupation with sex and crime in the movies a baleful influence on American culture and society, and especially on the nation's youth. Hays periodically found it necessary to reinforce the industry's moral façade. In 1924 he announced a "formula" to ensure that only material of "the right type" would be filmed. In 1927 the Hays Office issued a set of "don'ts" and "be carefals" to govern filmmaking. In 1930 a production code was promulgated—primarily the work of Jesuit priest Daniel Lord and influential Catholic trade publisher Martin Quigley—that stressed "no picture will be produced which will lower . . . moral standards."

None of these documents functioned adequately, as industry critics recognized, and by 1933 some forty religious, civic, and educational organizations were calling for government regulation of the movie industry. In late 1933 American Catholic bishops, concerned about the moral values depicted in motion pictures, organized the Legion of Decency (joined in its goals by many non-Catholic groups), which undertook to boycott films violating the production code's strictures. This decency campaign, accepted by Hays in preference to government intervention, benefited from the Church's hierarchical structure, as well as the industry's economic slump resulting from the Great Depression, and it quickly put teeth into the code, which could no longer be disregarded.

After mid-1934 all films exhibited in the industry's theatre chains—the vast majority of U.S. motion picture venues—needed Production Code Ad-

ministration (PCA) approval. By the end of the decade, Hays estimated that 98 percent of films distributed in the United States carried the PCA "seal of approval." Code implementation began with script vetting and continued through production. Code-approved movies respected religion, law enforcement, and the family; avoided miscegenation, nudity, and profanity; and presented "correct standards of life." The co-existence of moral didacticism with box-office necessity meant that "wrong" could be shown provided that before a film's conclusion there were "compensating moral values," such as regeneration, suffering, punishment, or "a lesson learned."

In June 1934 Joseph Breen, a devout 43-year-old Catholic, former Philadelphia newspaperman, and one-time U.S. counselor official, whose church ties had brought him to Hollywood and the MPPDA, became director of the PCA, which after Hays's 1945 retirement became known as the Breen Office. Shrewd and hardworking, Breen remained its head until 1953, except for a 1941 to 1942 industry stint. Throughout his tenure the conservative Breen was concerned with both moral values and political content, a censorship that kept most films bland and noncontroversial. The PCA and the Legion of Decency lost their clout in the early 1950s as a result of economic changes in the industry, shifts in public taste, and anticensorship court rulings.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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DANIEL J. LEAB

PROHIBITION

By the onset of the Great Depression, national prohibition was beginning to stagger. The ban on alcoholic beverages was ignored by a sizeable minority of Americans and disliked by many more. Nevertheless, both politicians and the general public assumed the dry law to be permanently embedded in United States public policy because of its status as a constitutional requirement. Not the least of the unexpected consequences of the Depression was the creation of circumstances in which national prohibition was overturned.

THE EIGHTEENTH AMENDMENT AND THE VOLSTEAD ACT

Advocates of temperance concluded during a century-long crusade that the only workable solution to the problem of alcohol abuse was government-enforced elimination of beverage alcohol. The movement to prohibit drinking attracted a broad base of support from women, churches, employers, urban social and political reformers, and rural nativists. Eager to avoid the backsliding that had followed earlier local and state liquor bans, members of the temperance movement began in 1913 to seek a constitutional amendment on the assumption that, once approved by the necessary two-thirds of Congress and three-fourths of the states, it could never be repealed. Prohibitionists benefited from the wartime atmosphere of 1917 and 1918 and achieved ratification in January 1919 of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which banned the manufacture, transportation, sale, import, and export of intoxicating beverages. The widespread support for the liquor ban was reflected in its approval by more than two-thirds of each house of Congress and then by forty-five state legislatures. Before prohibition took effect one year later, Congress adopted the Volstead enforcement act, which defined as intoxicating any beverage

containing more than 0.5 percent alcohol (thus including beer and wine as well as distilled spirits). Alcohol prohibition appeared to be both absolute and unshakeable.

PROHIBITION IN PRACTICE

During the 1920s most Americans observed prohibition most of the time. Alcohol consumption dropped by nearly two-thirds, according to the best estimates. Resistance was concentrated in ethnic communities where recent immigrants saw no harm in drinking, and among the urban upper classes who were able to afford the high price of bootleg liquor and inclined to regard it as culturally sophisticated to ignore the dry law. Other citizens, both urban and rural, took advantage of Volstead Act loopholes allowing the personal use of wine fermented from natural fruit juices and the prescribing of spirits for medicinal use. Despite the less than complete observance of the dry law, not to mention a wave of films and novels depicting drinking as widespread and fashionable, its constitutional status kept prohibition firmly in place. Its advocates frequently gave prohibition credit for the unprecedented prosperity of the 1920s. In the 1928 presidential campaign Democratic candidate Alfred E. Smith talked of ending prohibition while Republican Herbert Hoover defended it as “a great social and economic experiment, noble in motive and far-reaching in purpose” (New York Times, February 24, 1928, p. 1) Hoover’s landslide victory was taken as evidence of continuing support for the liquor ban.

PROHIBITION CRITICS

Arguments against prohibition predated the autumn 1929 economic collapse. Opposition to the dry law came most prominently from the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA) and the Women’s Organization for National Prohibition Reform (WONPR). The AAPA complained that giving federal and state authorities the power to control an individual’s choice of drink was putting too much power into the government’s hands. Furthermore, the liquor ban was producing alarming enforcement practices, including warrantless searches of automobiles, wiretapping of telephones, and gun battles between prohibition

agents and bootleggers in which innocents had been killed. The WONPR, worried that prohibition was causing a breakdown of respect for law and the Constitution, echoed these concerns.

THE PRICE OF PROHIBITION

Economic hard times focused attention on the costs of alcohol prohibition, which the AAPA claimed had totaled more than \$300 million in enforcement expenses and \$11 billion in lost tax revenues by 1931. Enforcing the law increased police costs, jammed federal and state courts, and dramatically expanded the prison population. During the 1920s federal criminal cases more than quadrupled, to more than 85,000 per year; most involved Volstead Act violations. By 1930 two-thirds of those found guilty received only fines, but still federal prisons bulged with twice the number of inmates for which they were designed, and an overflow resided in state and local jails. Not only did taxpayers bear prohibition's considerable direct costs, the AAPA complained, but the outlawing of the liquor trade, once the nation's seventh-largest industry, also eliminated many legitimate jobs and did away with liquor taxes, an important source of government revenue. Ending prohibition, antiprohibitionists argued, could eradicate the federal budget deficit, create employment, and ease the Depression. Temperance advocates responded that the AAPA consisted of wealthy businessmen simply trying to reduce their income taxes. The economic cost of prohibition was unintentionally underscored in 1931 by the successful federal prosecution of the nation's most notorious bootlegger, 32-year-old Alphonse Capone of Chicago. Like many other ambitious young immigrants who found few opportunities open to them in legitimate business or even organized crime (gambling, prostitution, loan-sharking), Al Capone turned to bootlegging. He prospered in a business that, as he pointed out, satisfied a public demand, and targeted (albeit violently) only rival bootleggers, not paying customers. Despite a great deal of effort, federal prohibition agents were unsuccessful in thwarting him until they apprehended him not for Volstead Act violations, but for income tax evasion. Capone's conviction served as a reminder that bootleggers were not paying taxes on income from an illegal trade, while

the government was spending a great deal to enforce prohibition.

INVESTIGATING PROHIBITION

Upon taking office in 1929, President Herbert Hoover appointed a presidential commission to study prohibition and the general problem of crime. By the time the National Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement released its report in January 1931, the U.S. economy was in shambles. Commission chairman George Wickersham and his ten colleagues called for continuation of the liquor ban, but their individual statements revealed skepticism as to whether the law was enforceable, at least at an acceptable cost. Seven of the commissioners indicated that they actually favored immediate or eventual adoption of the Swedish system of licensing responsible drinkers to purchase controlled amounts of alcohol from state dispensaries.

PARTISANSHIP ON PROHIBITION

Despite the Wickersham Commission report, Hoover continued to defend prohibition. The 1932 Republican Party platform pledged continued enforcement of the law, but it also gave tepid support to a qualified proposal for a constitutional amendment that would allow states to exempt themselves from national prohibition. Hoover was widely perceived as the candidate of an alcoholic as well as economic status quo. The Democratic Party struck a different pose. Alfred E. Smith and his supporters, including Democratic National Chairman John J. Raskob, a leader of the AAPA, demanded that the party platform endorse repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. Franklin D. Roosevelt, who had avoided the issue throughout his career, grudgingly agreed. The party convention embraced a platform plank calling for immediate and unqualified repeal more enthusiastically than it supported Roosevelt's nomination. When Democrats swept to a landslide victory in November 1932, the party position on repeal, one of its clearest contrasts with the Republicans, was given partial credit.

REPEALING PROHIBITION

Congress acted on a prohibition repeal amendment even before Roosevelt took office. The

Seventy-second Congress, meeting in a lame-duck session from December 1932 until March 1933, was unable to agree on measures to deal with a collapsing economy, but it did adopt by more than a two-thirds margin in each house a constitutional amendment overturning the Eighteenth. Congress heeded AAPA and WONPR demands that the proposed amendment not be sent for ratification to state legislatures, where dry sentiment was thought to be still strong; instead, ratification was entrusted to specially elected state conventions. When he took office on March 4, Roosevelt quickly called the Seventy-third Congress into session. One of his first proposals for improving the economy and public spirits involved revising the Volstead Act to allow the manufacture, sale, and taxation of beer with 3.2 percent alcohol content. Promptly adopted, the Beer Bill made weak beer legal beginning April 7, 1933. To many Americans, the worst of prohibition was over. With breweries immediately hiring twenty thousand workers and the federal government receiving \$4 million in tax revenue during the first week of sale, the return of beer was hailed as a step toward economic recovery.

Despite the unprecedented requirement of state ratifying conventions, the repeal amendment moved forward rapidly. Most state legislatures quickly agreed to offer voters one slate of convention delegates pledged to support the new amendment and another committed to retaining the Eighteenth. The electorate left no doubt as to its preference. Between April and November thirty-seven states held delegate elections, and nationwide 73 percent of voters expressed a preference for prohibition repeal. Only South Carolina, by a 52 percent margin, favored retaining the alcohol ban. When the final state conventions were held in Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Utah on December 5, 1933, ratification of the Twenty-first Amendment was completed.

Repeal increased legal employment and largely wiped out the illicit liquor trade. During the 1930s alcohol consumption remained well below pre-prohibition levels—some Americans had learned to do without liquor during prohibition, and others found it difficult to afford in the depressed economy. But the end of prohibition was one of the

events of 1933 that reduced social discontent and raised spirits.

See Also: ASSOCIATION AGAINST THE PROHIBITION AMENDMENT (AAPA); CAPONE, AL; LAW ENFORCEMENT.

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DAVID E. KYVIG



This women in Peoria, Illinois, was photographed by Arthur Rothstein in 1938 as she signaled to a man in the street that she was engaged in prostitution. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

PROSTITUTION

During the Progressive era, prostitution came to symbolize broader anxieties having to do with urbanization, mass consumption, and class and gender roles. Although Americans' preoccupation with prostitution diminished after World War I, it resurfaced in the early years of the Great Depression. Increasing concerns about prostitution reflected a broader climate of gender anxiety. Particularly in the early 1930s before the advent of the New Deal, many Americans believed that the economic crisis might lead to social and sexual chaos. Unable to comprehend the vastness of the nation's economic troubles, they often translated them into problems of gender instead. Thus, images of fallen women populate the Depression-era cultural landscape.

Such images directly influenced state policy and action, shaping employment and welfare options not only for prostitutes but for a much broader group of women.

Particularly in the 1930 to 1933 period, prostitution was a topic of widespread comment and concern. Critics drew a direct connection between increasing unemployment and rising rates of vice and crime. A committee of prominent New Yorkers, known as the Seabury Committee, found in 1931 that prostitution was on the increase in their city. They claimed that women were becoming prostitutes because more legitimate jobs were unavailable. A sociologist at Brooklyn College noted that African-American women were at greater risk than white women for becoming prostitutes. Not only were African-American women more financially

vulnerable, but urban vice tended to be concentrated in black residential areas like Harlem. Focusing on Chicago, sociologist Walter Reckless noted a similar rise in white and black prostitution. Like the Seabury Committee, he attributed the increase to women's unemployment, but also to the breakdown of traditional family constraints and the allure of urban leisure activities. Reckless downplayed women's financial motives for becoming prostitutes, arguing instead that sexual commerce afforded prostitutes excitement, glamour, and independence, thus appealing to their selfish, modern sensibilities.

For some commentators, even more distressing than the fact of prostitution was the perverse gender arrangements it supported. The Seabury Report on vice in New York expressed concern that pimps and nightclub proprietors relied on prostitutes for their livelihoods. Citing conventional wisdom about the prostitute's relation to male dependents, another writer noted that prostitutes typically supported male pimps, as well as corrupt police and city officials. As such observations suggest, prostitution signified both Depression-induced social instability and the potential reversal of male and female economic roles.

Concerns about the prostitute's usurpation of male economic authority are also evident in fallen woman films, such as *Susan Lenox*, *Her Fall and Rise* (1931), *Blonde Venus* (1932), and *Baby Face* (1933). In such films, prostitutes obtain wealth and power by sexually emasculating their male associates. The heroines of such films embody negative traits, such as selfishness, moral weakness, and duplicity. By using their sexual wiles for material gain, they wreak havoc on their male counterparts' lives, much as the Depression devastated the lives of much of the male moviegoing public. Narrative closure occurs in these films when masculine authority is restored and the prostitute-heroine is punished for her transgressions.

Concerns about rising rates of prostitution also infused the early Depression discourse on transiency. Many commentators alleged that women's participation in the "transient horde" was on the rise, and that most female transients engaged in prostitution. Thomas Minehan fed such fears with his

1934 volume, *Boy and Girl Tramps of America*. According to Minehan, prostitution was normalized within the transient community, and prostitutes were often young girls who traded sex for food and protection. In another sensational account, female transients prostituted themselves with as many as twenty men at a time, thus making up for the lack of women within the transient community.

Sensationalized accounts of prostitution and female transiency directly influenced early Depression welfare policy. Prior to the New Deal, prostitution was a major focus of municipal relief. Some jobless women objected to the implication embedded in municipal relief policy that they were at risk for becoming prostitutes. Instead of focusing on their supposed sexual exploits, such women suggested, journalists and others might do well to consider women's real relief needs. In a 1931 letter to *The New Republic*, one woman wrote, "The need is for agencies to which women of pride and independence—not potential prostitutes—can turn, and in which they will receive aid uninjurious to their self-respect."

Such women had to wait some time before their pleas for dignified relief were met. Reflecting the broader climate of concern about prostitution, initial New Deal relief policy focused disproportionately on the plight of the sexually vulnerable "woman alone." The needs of single, needy women were a major focus of the White House Conference on the Emergency Needs of Women, convened in November 1933. Rose Schneiderman, president of the Women's Trade Union League, set an urgent tone for the conference when she observed that countless young women lacked not only jobs but shelter, and that many had little recourse but to sell their bodies. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt reiterated Schneiderman's concern, and following the conference, the newly formed Women's Division of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration prioritized the needs of single, needy women. Only gradually, as the social and sexual panic of the early Depression years subsided, did federal relief administrators redirect their attention to the needs of jobless women who were not at risk for becoming prostitutes, but whose primary concern was supporting their children and other family dependents.

In the early Depression years, the widespread preoccupation with prostitution obscured women's real relief needs and disadvantaged them relative to men. At a time when male citizenship ideals were under stress, figures like the prostitute, the girl tramp, and the fallen woman heroine signified the potential disruptiveness of women in public. Much as the fallen woman film celebrated the restoration of masculine authority while blaming the prostitute-heroine for social chaos, New Deal social policies promoted masculine providership while reinforcing women's subordinate domestic roles. By the late 1930s, Americans no longer believed that the economic crisis would result in widespread social or sexual chaos. Complacency led to diminished visibility for the prostitute, if not to equitable and dignified work and welfare options for a majority of American women.

See Also: FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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HOLLY ALLEN

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION

In March 1930 a bone-chilling wind assaulted two thousand men standing outside an Episcopal church on Twenty-ninth Street in Manhattan. The long line twisted its way up Fifth Avenue, filled with people who had heard that the church was dispensing food to the poor. A quarter of them were turned away when the rations ran out. The sight of the long line of needy New Yorkers unnerved the city's residents because many of those waiting for food were clearly in anguish over accepting charity to survive. Many people carried a great psychological burden during the Depression because they had become unwilling participants in the economic breakdown. Americans wanted to work and had believed they would be rewarded for their hard work; most who received welfare aid, from clothing to food and medical supplies, did so reluctantly.

Some critics claimed that people on welfare were freeloaders, but these criticisms did not take into account the shame felt by most able-bodied citizens forced out of work and only able to survive through government welfare programs and private charity. Regardless of class status, many families tried to hide their problems, acting as if they were doing well so those around them would be fooled.

Family life had been changing dramatically during the twentieth century and the transformation continued during the Depression. Family roles were muddled when the traditional male role of breadwinner became unavailable for many men. Merely keeping families together during economic duress became difficult as people lost their homes and livelihood. Some couples delayed weddings due to the uncertainty, while others put off divorce because they could not afford to separate. For many children, the Depression altered their role in maintaining family order. Children had to grow up faster during the crisis; many were forced to forgo formal schooling and get a job at an early age, while also often taking on parental roles to provide solace to those within their own families.

Historian Harvey Green argues that domestic violence and child abuse increased during the Depression. Family disputes over finances, food, and

other basic necessities caused tensions to increase. Men and boys often simply fled the home out of embarrassment, frustration, or the inability to cope with the new economic reality. Thousands of people, young and old, became traveling hobos, riding the rails in search of work or some form of relief.

Men's self-image, which had been strengthened by the nation's victory in World War I and the subsequent prosperity of the 1920s, took a beating during the Great Depression. In many cases, men arrived at work to find the doors locked, with little or no explanation. Some families were able to make ends meet by having the wife and children work, a situation that could be humiliating for the husband and father. Studies, such those undertaken by sociologist Mirra Komarovsky for her book *The Unemployed Man and His Family* (1940), revealed that many unemployed or underemployed men suffered from impotence. Both historian T. H. Watkins and writer Edward Robb Ellis also state that the birth-rate slipped as unemployment grew.

During the 1920s, many Americans had begun to equate self-worth with material possessions. Therefore, when times turned bad, people felt worthless. The nation's traditional optimistic outlook was replaced by the reality of economic chaos and confusion. Even among those fortunate or wealthy enough to avoid economic disruption, the Great Depression took a psychological toll. According to Green, psychiatrist's offices were packed in the early 1930s with those from the upper classes attempting to cope with the economic mayhem. The confidence of the average American fell to a general malaise and inertia as unemployment grew and the Depression set in. People waited for something to happen, spinning in circles as they fought to survive.

Suicide became a part of everyday conversation, particularly as the stories of bankrupt Wall Street traders jumping from tall office buildings entered the public mindset. Urban legend regarding mass suicides during the Great Depression far outstripped reality. However, the national suicide rate did increase in late 1929 and continued to increase until 1933—from 13.9 per 100,000 to an all-time high of 17.4 per 100,000. In one widely publicized example, James J. Riordan, president of the New

York County Trust Company, killed himself in November 1929 because of the deep shame he felt over losing other people's money, as well as his own loss of funds. Fearing that news of his suicide would cause a run on the bank's deposits, the board of directors did not release a public statement until after the bank closed on Saturday afternoon.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal began to reverse some of the psychological damage inflicted by the Great Depression. The New Deal relief programs helped people to realize that the collapse was societal, and not the result of individual failure. The New Deal enabled many Americans to deflect some of the guilt they felt for their personal economic failure.

The entertainment industry helped divert people's attention during the Great Depression. Hollywood actually entered a boom period, with about eighty million people going to the movies each week. Popular radio entertainers, including Bing Crosby, George Burns, and Gracie Allen, also helped distract Americans from their difficulties.

The Depression left deep emotional scars on the American psyche. The stock market crash destroyed the nation's feeling of invincibility and left its people anxious and guilt-ridden. For a decade, the Depression defined life in the United States, leaving an imprint on the nation that remains apparent at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Whenever the economy sputters, as with the late 1990s dot-com fallout and subsequent recession, many people are gripped by fears of another Great Depression.

See Also: FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; MEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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BOB BATCHELOR

PUBLIC POWER

Seeking to combat the ravages of the Depression by stimulating employment on the one hand, and by furthering the acceptance of public ownership and regulation of electric utilities on the other, the federal government after 1932 developed huge power projects in widely separated regions of the United States. Using Public Works Administration grants and loans, as well as Works Progress Administration labor and funds, the federal government helped districts and communities around the country either acquire privately-owned power properties or construct public electric facilities to compete with private companies. By the spring of 1939 more than a billion and a quarter dollars in public funds were distributed to more than 1,450 separate projects that established or improved public power facilities. Through Rural Electrification Administration loans, chiefly to farmers' cooperatives, the federal government brought electricity to 462,817 consumers in rural areas by 1940. With the completion of all these projects by 1940, close to nine million kilowatts of new electric generating capacity were added to the nation's generating capacity—approximately a 25 percent increase.

U.S. territory east of the northern Great Plains and above the border states, a region that contained more than half of the nation's electric generating capacity, as well as numerous consumers of electricity, was relatively lacking in major governmental endeavors in electric service. Attempts to develop the Passamaquoddy project in Maine, to produce power and improve navigation along portions of

the Saint Lawrence River, to use the New York State Power Authority to harness the Niagara River, and to include power generation as a component of flood control activities in New England were never realized during the Great Depression.

During his 1932 campaign for the presidency, Franklin D. Roosevelt called for public power in a speech in Portland, Oregon: "When a community, a city, a county, or a district is not satisfied with the service rendered or the rates charged by the private utility, it has the undeniable right as one of the functions of government . . . to set up . . . its own governmentally owned and operated service." He further stated that "state owned or federal owned power sites can and should be developed by government itself." With this encouragement, many areas with high rates of electric consumption soon found themselves within transmission range of one or more public power projects. By the 1940s both Tennessee and Nebraska were considered all public-power states. Many of these projects competed with privately-owned electric utilities and provided a "yardstick" to measure rates. In some cases, privately-owned utilities entered into sales agreements that affected all or parts of their facilities.

Three major public power developments were fully launched during the Depression years: the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in the southeastern United States, the Boulder Canyon Project in the southwest, and the Columbia Basin Project in the northwest. To further widespread public acceptance of such projects, the Roosevelt administration undertook the development of a National Power Policy to make electricity "more broadly available at cheaper rates to industry, to domestic, and to agricultural consumers." In furthering this goal the Army Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the TVA constructed projects for the public generation and transmission of electricity, and the federal government created agencies to assist states and their political subdivisions in financing acquisitions of existing private facilities, or in constructing duplicate facilities to compete with them.

By 1940 there were twenty-six public power projects sponsored by the federal government, 477 sponsored by the Public Works Administration, 362 by the Works Progress Administration, and 392 by

the Rural Electrification Administration. Many of these projects aroused strong opposition from utility companies, southern congressmen devoted to states' rights, and many well-to-do citizens and other Americans fearful of what they called "creeping Socialism." Opponents to the development of public power facilities found an effective voice in the Liberty League, a conservative organization that opposed the New Deal. Much of the opposition focused on the fight of George W. Norris to further public development of the hydroelectric potential at Muscle Shoals in Alabama, which became the locus of the Tennessee Valley Authority with the advent of the New Deal. In addition, the Public Utilities Holding Company Act of 1935, which declared that pyramided holding companies beyond the second level were illegal, caused consternation for many private power companies.

See Also: RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION; TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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RICHARD LOWITT

PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT

The Public Utilities Holding Company Act of 1935 (PUHCA) was New Deal legislation that broke the grip that a few holding companies had exerted over the nation's natural gas electric power production. The law aimed to simplify the utilities' corporate structure, eliminate absentee management, protect consumer interests, and foster an orderly and efficient national utility system through state and federal regulation. It required any company that generated or sold electricity or gas in interstate commerce to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and to publicly disclose information relating to its finances, operations, and management structure. Purely intrastate utilities were exempt from federal regulation.

The number of private electric companies in the United States more than doubled between 1900 and 1920, reaching 6,500. That trend reversed sharply during the 1920s as holding companies consolidated local electric and gas companies into vast utility empires. Holding companies obtained controlling interest in local power-producing companies and could themselves be owned by other holding companies, creating a pyramid structure in which the top companies could be several layers removed from the actual utility operations. By 1930, a handful of holding-company groups commanded most of the energy generated and sold within the country. Most conspicuously, Samuel Insull chaired

multiple boards of directors that controlled utilities in thirty-two states, combinations that made state regulation ineffective. These utility empires freely employed their concentrations of wealth to exert influence over state and local governments and newspapers in order to shape public opinion and policy.

Monopoly status in their localities made gas and electric utilities seem safe investments. They grew even more profitable in the 1920s as technological advancements increased production while the economic boom increased demand for electricity. Despite reductions in the cost of production, however, utility rates rose as holding companies charged their subsidiaries excessively high fees, drained the more profitable utilities to finance their acquisition of additional subsidiaries, and ran up dangerously high debts. The economic downturn following the 1929 stock market crash caused many holding company pyramids to collapse when they could not meet their debts, and their bankruptcies cost investors hundreds of millions of dollars. When Samuel Insull's house of cards collapsed in 1932, he fled the country to avoid arrest.

As early as 1928 the Federal Trade Commission had declared the holding company structure unsound and dangerous for both investors and consumers, but not until the New Deal did the federal government move to regulate utilities. Franklin Roosevelt supported such public power programs as the Tennessee Valley Authority, where government-run operations could serve as "national yardsticks" to measure private power rates. But the Roosevelt administration chose federal regulation instead of nationalization of private power production. Rather than concentrate power in federal hands, the federal government adopted an approach that resembled the antitrust and "anti-bigness" philosophy of Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. Federal regulation would simplify the utilities' structure and decentralize their management to facilitate state regulation.

Neither the Securities Act of 1933 nor the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 specifically addressed the regulation of public utilities. In 1934, Roosevelt appointed a National Power Policy Committee, chaired by Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes,

with Benjamin Cohen as its chief counsel. Cohen and Thomas G. Corcoran, who had drafted the earlier securities act, were assigned to draft a public utilities bill. Sponsored by Senator Burton K. Wheeler (Democrat-Montana) and Representative Sam Rayburn (Democrat-Texas), the Cohen-Corcoran draft authorized the Federal Power Commission and the Securities and Exchange Commission to regulate power companies to make them geographically and economically integrated. Since President Roosevelt favored abolishing the holding companies, Cohen and Corcoran added a provision by which the SEC could force holding companies to divest themselves of utilities subsidiaries within five years. This "death sentence" provision triggered intense opposition. On June 11, 1935, the Senate narrowly passed the administration's bill, but twice, on July 2 and August 1, the House defeated the "death sentence" by wide margins. In place of the geographically contiguous utility operations envisioned by the Senate bill, the House substituted a broader concept of "integrated public-utility systems" that might operate over broader regions.

Congress was deluged with so many thousands of telegrams protesting the "death sentence" that supporters of the bill suspected an organized lobbying campaign rather than a grass-roots movement. Alabama Senator Hugo Black chaired a special investigating committee that subpoenaed the records of the telegraph office and proved that the more than 14,000 telegrams had come from only eleven locations. Lobbyists for the utility companies had paid for practically all of them, randomly signing citizens' names without their knowledge. Black's investigation led to the first law requiring lobbyists to register their expenses and objectives publicly, and also contributed to passage of a compromise version of the holding company act.

Harvard law professor Felix Frankfurter and Senator Alben Barkley (Democrat-Kentucky) provided the compromise that allowed holding companies to control two geographically-related systems unless the SEC found them contrary to efficient operations. This shifted the burden of the proof from the companies to the regulatory commission. Both houses accepted the compromise on August 24, and on August 26 President Roosevelt

signed the bill into law. PUHCA required all holding companies to register with the SEC and gave the regulatory commission power to force divestiture of any operating subsidiary more than twice removed from a holding company, unless those operations could be demonstrated to serve the public interest. Utilities continued to operate as local monopolies so long as they provided their customers with reliable service at regulated rates. The SEC had the power to regulate any proposed utility merger or holding company effort to purchase utilities' securities or property from another company. The law further prohibited utilities from lending money to their parent holding company.

Even before the SEC could draft regulations, its chairman, James M. Landis, urged utility holding companies to begin voluntarily divesting themselves of their "non-integrated" affiliates. But the companies planned to challenge the new law in the courts, and few holding companies bothered to register with the SEC or comply with its call for self-regulation. As a test case, the bankrupt American Public Service Company petitioned the federal court in Baltimore to review the entire act's constitutionality. One bondholder entered the case to protect his holdings and secured the prestigious Wall Street lawyer John W. Davis as his counsel. Another creditor entered the case in favor of the act's constitutionality and employed a utility company lawyer well known for his opposition to the act. The SEC could enter the case only as a "friend of the court" rather than a participant. In November 1935 a federal judge in Baltimore found the PUHCA "unconstitutional and invalid in its entirety." The SEC responded by selecting the world's largest utility holding company, the Electric Bond & Share Company, as a test of the act's least controversial provisions. After Electric Bond failed to register voluntarily, the SEC filed suit in a more sympathetic court in New York. In January 1937 Judge Julian Mack ruled that holding companies must register with the SEC. The Supreme Court, in *Electric Bond & Share v. SEC* (1938) unanimously upheld the constitutionality of the act.

Assured of sweeping powers, the SEC redesigned the nation's utility systems by ordering divestitures and by splitting electricity and gas op-

erations. PUHCA functioned without major alteration for a half century, but increasingly came under fire from free-market critics who charged that its provisions discouraged competition. Supporters insisted that PUHCA had maintained the public interest by protecting consumers. Congress resisted outright repeal, but the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1992 significantly loosened federal regulation by exempting wholesale power production and allowing utilities to operate wholesale plants out of their service territories.

See Also: NEW DEAL, SECOND; PUBLIC POWER.

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PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION (PWA)

The Public Works Administration, popularly known as the PWA, was an organizational cornerstone of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal. During its six years in existence, from June 1933 until 1939, public works projects of all shapes, purposes, and sizes were undertaken in virtually every part of the United States and its territories. From the construction of gigantic dams on the Columbia River in the Pacific Northwest to the construction of post offices and school buildings in small southern towns, PWA administrators worked at pumping federal dollars, and hope, into the nation's economy. It is not an exaggeration to claim that the PWA, along with the other "alphabet soup" recovery agencies, such as the WPA, the TVA, and the CCC, built most of the nation's infra-



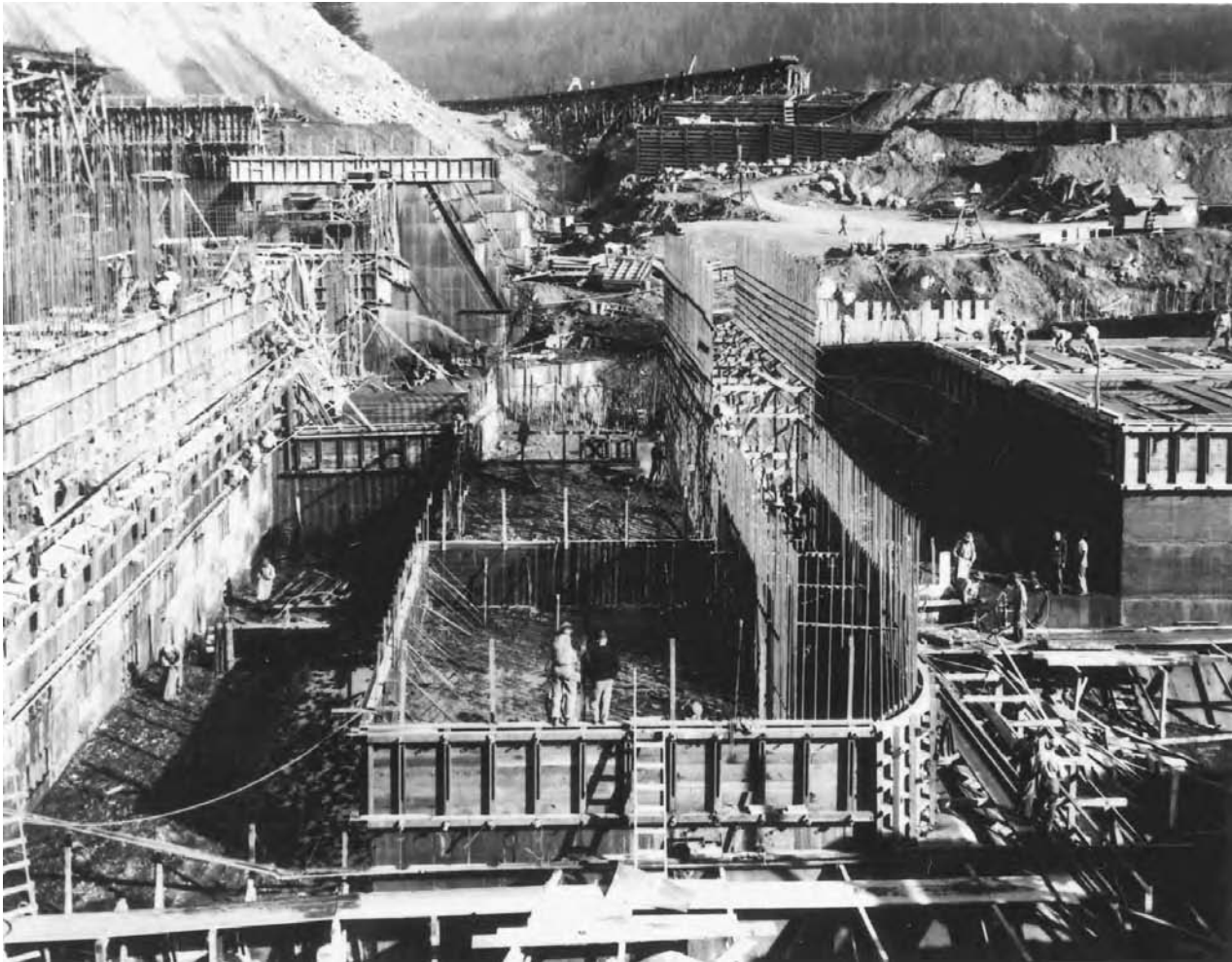
This PWA housing project, photographed in 1938 in Omaha, Nebraska, included a playground for children. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

structure during the decade of the 1930s. Seventy years later, many of these public works projects continue to function in much the same manner as they did when they were built.

The PWA originated in one of the most important statutes ever passed by Congress, the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) of June 16, 1933. Title I of the Act created a National Recovery Administration (NRA), often referred to as the Blue Eagle Program; Title II authorized the president to expend \$3.3 billion on a nationwide program of public works. President Roosevelt appointed General Hugh S. Johnson to administer Title I, and he selected his secretary of the interior, Harold L. Ickes, for the daunting task of putting together a new Public Works Administration. Because Ickes

was interior secretary, the PWA functioned for six years out of offices in the Department of the Interior. Initially, personnel in the Department of the Interior were utilized to implement the emergency legislation.

In addition to the two organizations that President Roosevelt created to implement the NIRA, other emergency statutes passed during the First Hundred Days of the new administration produced still other agencies. Combating the Great Depression required a multifaceted approach on the part of government, so the president selected Harry Hopkins, an aide from his years as governor of New York, to administer the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA), which Congress passed in May 1933. Robert Fechner was appointed director of the new



Construction in 1936 on the Bonneville Dam, a major PWA project, on the Columbia River in Oregon and Washington. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Thus, from the very beginning of the New Deal there existed considerable overlapping and duplication of functions and responsibilities. Not only were members of the public often confused by the numerous New Deal agencies with similar-sounding titles, so were the administrators. Conflicts over who was doing what, and how appropriations were divided, became a routine and sometimes humorous feature of the New Deal. The competition between FERA administrator Harry Hopkins and PWA administrator Harold Ickes was the most acute, especially after 1935 when Hopkins became head of a newly created program that replaced the FERA, the Works Progress Administration (WPA), thereby creating

more confusion between Ickes's PWA and Hopkins's WPA. In his memoirs, Ickes claimed that the choice of the similar name was intentional on Hopkins's part.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING OF THE PWA

The purpose of the PWA was to spend an initial \$3.3 billion appropriation not only with dispatch, but on necessary—that is, socially useful—public works projects. This required a staff with expertise in a number of fields, including accounting, engineering, urban planning, and the law. During the summer of 1933, Ickes, along with his deputy administrator, Colonel Henry M. Waite, concentrated

on hiring staff at the same time that they began searching for projects on which to expend PWA funds. As the New Dealers often noted, it was a most unusual situation they found themselves in: They had to create organizations that were fully functioning practically overnight. In the space of just two years, from 1933 to 1935, the PWA went from being nonexistent to employing over 3,700 people. PWA offices were set up in all forty-eight states, and in ten regional offices created for the express purpose of reviewing projects on a regional basis. The project review process normally went through state, regional, and national level reviews. Much of the work of the PWA was decentralized, but Administrator Ickes insisted on centralizing most of the legal work involved in the PWA effort. His explanation in *The Secret Diary of Harold L. Ickes* (1953–1954) underscores his unrelenting effort at keeping graft and corruption to a minimum within the organization:

I decided that instead of selecting lawyers in the states, we would select lawyers for our staff here and let all the legal work come here. . . . There are always a lot incompetent or crooked lawyers with strong political backing, and we can handle that situation better by building up our staff here than by finding a lawyer in each state.

This was not so much the case with engineers and accountants, he noted.

Although Ickes claimed it was purely happenstance, a decision made at the outset turned out to be a key organizational characteristic of the PWA. That was to divide projects into two types: federal and nonfederal. Because of the urgency of getting money pumped into the economy, administrators recognized that working through existing federal agencies would accomplish that objective much more quickly than working through state and local governments. Thus, many of the initial projects funded through the PWA were ongoing federal projects, such as the construction of Hoover (Boulder) Dam on the Colorado River. The Bureau of Reclamation finished this mammoth project ahead of schedule, in 1934, thanks to generous funding through the PWA.

Indeed, the primary beneficiaries of PWA funds throughout the 1930s were the federal govern-

ment's two principal water resources agencies, the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. In his book *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water* (1986), Marc Reisner called the 1930s "The Go-Go Years" of big dam construction. Federal engineers located sites on virtually every major river in the United States, and they proceeded to build dams in record time. Considered by most people at the time to be in the best interests of resource conservation, monumental structures such as the Grand Coulee Dam, the Bonneville Dam, and the Tennessee Valley Authority's several dams became the most visible, and permanent, features of the economic recovery program of the 1930s.

The nonfederal component of the PWA took somewhat longer to organize, yet it too was functioning within months after Congress passed the NIRA. Proposals for needed public works projects from state and local governments arrived in Washington, D.C., where they went through an elaborate screening process. Projects were reviewed by three functional offices: an engineering, a financial, and a legal division. After passing through those reviews, projects were reviewed by a Public Works Board, chaired by Ickes, and finally by President Roosevelt. In his memoirs Ickes noted how impressed he was by the president's careful review of the proposed projects and of his knowledge about them. At least initially, until he had confidence in the new agency and its staff, Roosevelt spent considerable time making sure that public works projects conformed to high standards of the national interest.

REDEFINING FEDERALISM

What was being undertaken by the PWA and other emergency relief agencies during the 1930s was nothing less than a redefinition of federal-state relations. The expenditure of what were at the time huge sums of money not only on federal projects but on public works proposed by state governments, municipalities, other public authorities, and even some private corporations, such as the railroads, was unprecedented in America's history. It amounted to a redefinition of federalism. Although the administrators themselves may not always have

appreciated how groundbreaking their work was, others did. The governor of Massachusetts, Joseph Ely, for example, called attention to this fact in communications with the PWA staff as early as August of 1933. As he wrote in a letter to Ickes:

It has been a very laborious undertaking for Massachusetts to rehabilitate the credit of our municipalities. . . . If you are interested at all in the fundamental theory upon which the federal government was created, and by which the municipalities are created, . . . it would be plain that direct contact between the federal government and the municipalities is an affront to the sovereignty of this Commonwealth.

Governor Ely, who interestingly was a Democrat, had insisted for some time that local projects in Massachusetts be screened by the appropriate state authorities, but to no avail. Both Ickes and the president decided that any number of public and private authorities, including local governments, were eligible for PWA funds.

Of course, a more serious constitutional challenge to the recovery program arose with the U.S. Supreme Court's 1935 invalidation of sections of the National Industrial Recovery Act. A number of emergency programs had to be reformulated after this controversial decision, but the PWA survived the Court's careful scrutiny. A new definition of federalism, often referred to by political scientists and historians as *cooperative federalism*, became firmly established in the nation's political history. Since the New Deal, federal appropriations, in the form of low interest loans or direct grants, have gone to all manner of private entities and public institutions operating at all levels of government.

BUILDERS TO RIVAL CHEOPS

James MacGregor Burns, a Roosevelt biographer, described the president as a "creative thinker in a 'gadget' sense." The president was idealistic yet pragmatic; the projects he cared most about were those that improved the lives of Americans in observable, day-to-day ways: better housing and schools, improved roads and public transit, airports for the new mode of transportation, more parks and forests for recreation, rural electrification, and sanitation systems for the nation's cities. It was a public philosophy shared by most of those who worked in

the Public Works Administration, including Harold Ickes. He too loved building things of permanence that would benefit the greatest number of people in the long run, a quintessentially utilitarian philosophy. While others in Roosevelt's administration concentrated on combating the Great Depression in the most immediate ways—Harry Hopkins, for instance, whose famous statement, "People don't eat in the long run," summed up his role in the New Deal—the PWA functioned with both the short- and the long-term in mind.

The PWA's dual objectives resulted in considerable criticism in the press for the relative slowness with which it operated. An editorial in a 1933 issue of *Business Week*, for example, complained that "Mr. Ickes is running a fire department on the principles of a good, sound bond house." Although such criticism smarted, and Administrator Ickes was not shy about firing back, it was a trade-off he was willing to make. But in addition to insisting that public works projects be of high quality and designed to last, Ickes insisted on keeping corruption out of his organization. This objective, too, resulted in a certain amount of delay in the project review process, but it also produced a federal agency that was remarkably free of corruption. As Roosevelt told his cabinet in December 1934,

When Harold took hold of public works, he had to start cold. He had no program and he had no organization. It was necessary to develop both. A lot of people thought that all he would have to do would be to shovel money out of the window. There have been a good many complaints about the slowness of the works program and Harold's caution. There hasn't been even a minor scandal in public works and that is some record.

In 1935 Ickes published a book titled *Back to Work: The Story of PWA*. Its purpose was to tell the American public what the agency had accomplished in its first two years in operation. (It also may have been written in anticipation of the 1936 presidential election.) More than 19,000 projects were either completed or underway, he wrote. They were located in all forty-eight states and spread across 3,040 of the nation's 3,073 counties. The U.S. territories, including Alaska, Hawaii, the Virgin Islands, and the Panama Canal Zone all had ongoing projects. A funda-

mental goal of the PWA was to distribute projects among the states and territories as equitably as possible, so a formula based on the state's population and its percentage of unemployed served as the primary method of determining how many projects each state would be granted per year. Despite these efforts at achieving fairness, critics often complained about inequities in where PWA money was going. One of the agency's most vociferous critics was the publisher and editor of Ickes' hometown newspaper, *The Chicago Tribune*; Colonel Robert McCormick's charges of favoritism produced a long-running and very public row between himself and Administrator Ickes, an individual who never avoided a good political fight.

In addition to the construction of dams previously mentioned, the first 19,000 PWA-funded projects included 522 public schools, 87 hospitals, nearly 600 municipal water systems, 433 sewer lines and sewage disposal plants, and 360 street and highway improvements. But it was in the area of public housing that the agency broke completely new ground: For the first time in America's history, the federal government embarked upon a policy of providing decent, affordable housing for all of its citizens, regardless of race. Ickes was especially enthusiastic about this aspect of his agency, for he had a life-long commitment to racial equality. In the slum clearance and public housing component of the PWA, Ickes, and indeed the president and First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, found a means to improve dramatically the lives of the nation's most desperately poor. These Americans, as often as not, were minorities.

History was made in October 1934, when the PWA embarked on its first slum clearance project. The sites chosen were in Atlanta, Georgia, and Administrator Ickes was present for the historic occasion. In his *Secret Diary* he described how a small entourage of politicians and administrators proceeded to the two sites scheduled for demolition: One near Atlanta University, a "black college," and the other adjacent to a "white college," Georgia Tech. "There I made another extemporaneous speech from a temporary platform," Ickes recalled, "spoke for a couple of minutes before the newsreel machine, and then blew up another house."

It was an impressive beginning for a program that would continue for four more years. The emergency relief program proved to be so popular with the public, and so needed, that Congress appropriated nearly \$5 billion for its continuance in 1935. The bulk of that money went to the new WPA, but PWA also received increased funding. More money was appropriated in 1936, a presidential election year. Roosevelt's landslide victory in the November election was due in no small part to the activities of the PWA and the other emergency relief programs. The 1936 election, often referred to as a realigning election, marked the appearance of a new political coalition in American politics. Due to the administration's efforts at including minorities in all phases of the New Deal recovery programs, support for Roosevelt and the Democratic Party in the 1936 election by minority groups that traditionally voted Republican (if they voted at all) was unprecedented.

THE "ROOSEVELT RECESSION" OF 1937 TO 1938 AND A 1939 REORGANIZATION

Just as the Roosevelt administration contemplated phasing out many of the emergency recovery programs, a severe economic downturn beginning in the fall of 1937 put that idea on hold. The press dubbed it the "Roosevelt Recession," with social conditions approaching those of 1933. In his 1963 book *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932-1940*, historian William Leuchtenburg described how 1938 began: "Many Americans once more neared starvation. In Chicago, children salvaged food from garbage cans; in Cleveland, families scrambled for spoiled produce dumped in the streets when the markets closed." Unemployment reached nearly 11 percent, and serious labor unrest appeared in many parts of the country. After months of debating whether to ask Congress for an emergency appropriation, President Roosevelt decided he had no choice but to go ahead once more with "pump-priming."

On June 21, 1938, Congress passed the PWA Extension Act, allotting some \$1.5 billion to be spent on public works projects. But the statute also contained stringent deadlines: Applications for projects had to be in Washington by September 30; construction had to commence by January 1, 1939; and all PWA projects were to be completed by July

1, 1940. Legislators thus recognized the necessity of responding to the dire economic conditions of 1938 with additional federal spending, but they also insisted upon a definite conclusion to the program. It was a view shared by Roosevelt, who never considered that the emergency relief effort would become a permanent feature of the federal government. Contrary to popular belief, Roosevelt abhorred deficit spending and resorted to it only because circumstances demanded it.

The PWA met the deadlines imposed by Congress. All totaled, the agency processed some 7,853 projects under the 1938 Extension Act, with the full economic effects felt in 1939 and 1940. With this accomplished, in 1939 Congress passed an important piece of legislation giving the president authority to reorganize the executive branch. Roosevelt had repeatedly asked legislators for such authority, and finally they gave him the opportunity to effect a wide-ranging administrative reorganization. Acting with dispatch, the president merged the PWA and the WPA into a single entity and renamed it the Federal Works Agency (FWA). A new administrator, John Carmody, was appointed to head the agency. In no way reflecting upon his high opinion of Ickes's talents as an administrator, the president chose someone else to run the FWA in order to relieve the 65-year-old Ickes of having to be in charge of both the Department of the Interior and the public works program. Moreover, it was becoming increasingly clear that war was about to erupt in Europe, and this would mean an entirely changed agenda in Washington. The president had other jobs in mind for his secretary of the interior.

With the 1939 reorganization the PWA formally ceased to exist. Its legacy, however, is that of a model government agency, one that not only oper-

ated efficiently and effectively, but virtually free of corruption. Two thorough congressional investigations uncovered only one minor case of fraud, for which Administrator Ickes took full responsibility. As President Roosevelt himself said, "That is some record." Seventy years later, it remains "some record" of what government can accomplish for the public good.

See Also: ICKES, HAROLD; NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA).

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JEANNE NIENABER CLARKE

PWA. *See* PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION.



RA. *See* RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION.

RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS

Unemployment more than tripled between 1930 and the beginning of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first term in March 1933. Employers slashed hourly wages by more than half, and opportunities for employment were severely limited. Most native-born white Americans suffered greatly during the Great Depression, but many of America's most visible racial and ethnic minorities had a particularly hard lot. African Americans, Native Americans, and Latino Americans not only experienced malnutrition and hunger that resulted in disease and despair, but even the most able-bodied among them were competing for far fewer jobs. Their employment and health problems were compounded when both racism and nativism reared their ugly heads. The lynching of African Americans in the South increased dramatically during the Great Depression, rising more than threefold between 1932 and 1933. Although blacks were systematically discriminated against in the South in the first New Deal relief programs, the second New Deal legislation—especially the Wagner Act of 1935, which facilitated the entry of blacks into the

Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—assuaged racial tensions between black workers and white workers and promoted worker solidarity.

The plight of Native Americans, which had been aggravated by the division of their land into small plots as a result of the Dawes Severalty Act of 1887, was exacerbated by an inefficient and corrupt Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). In 1933, President Roosevelt appointed John Collier to head the BIA. Collier, who had prior experience in urban reform during the Progressive era, immediately moved to upgrade the BIA and to prevent whites from obtaining Indian land. He secured gainful employment for thousands of Indians with the Civilian Conservation Corps, and used monies from the Public Works Administration to pay for schools. Nevertheless, many tribes, especially the Navajos, protested against the Collier engineered Indian Relief Act because it proposed to force the tribe to help prevent soil erosion by reducing its herds of sheep. Still, the Indian Relief Act permitted Indian tribes once again to gain the status of semi-sovereign nations.

THE PLIGHT OF ETHNIC MINORITIES

In 1930, as the economic catastrophe of the Great Depression became apparent, President Herbert Hoover attempted to halt the rise of unemployment in the United States. Siding with those

who advocated immigration restrictions, the president ordered that prospective immigrants who could potentially become public charges be denied visas, a policy that was on the books for the entirety of the Depression. Even under President Roosevelt, Jewish and other refugees from war-torn Europe, including thousands of children, were denied entrance into the United States.

Most Latino Americans—especially Mexicans—had been encouraged to migrate and had formed an integral part of the labor force not only on farms in the southwestern United States, but also in factories in the Midwest and East. During the Depression, many Mexicans left urban areas of the Southwest and attempted to acquire work in small towns and on farms. That action brought them into conflict with native-born white Americans with whom they were competing for scarce employment.

Perhaps the most sophisticated response by a racial minority to the Depression was cultivated by Japanese Americans. Within their niche, they created an infrastructure in which their economy was self-contained and independent of the crisis that beset the larger economy. As a consequence, many Japanese Americans had to accept public assistance during the Great Depression. Nevertheless, after 1931 their presence in California increased the enmity of native-born whites. This resentment culminated in the internment of Japanese Americans in 1942 in the midst of wartime hysteria.

The Great Depression and the New Deal constituted, at best, a mixed picture for Jewish Americans. On the one hand, the 1930s were marked by blatant discrimination against Jews who sought employment in colleges and universities, especially private institutions of higher learning. Nonetheless, many young Jewish Americans were able to obtain employment that was based on competitive merit examinations, and many were hired in Washington, D.C., as public assistants and legal personnel. The resultant cry of “Jew Deal” by other ethnics, as well as Anglo-Saxon Protestants, however, punctured whatever sense of achievement the Jewish men and women might have felt.

Unlike many Jews, most Italians were employed in working-class occupations during the

Great Depression and New Deal. Hence, their economic mobility was slower than that of most Jews. The economic position of Italian Americans deteriorated during the Depression, largely due to the huge decline in the construction industry.

RACIAL MINORITIES CONFRONTED BY DISCRIMINATION

The relations between African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Anglo-Americans in relief programs and labor unions were exceedingly complex. Although relief programs, such as those of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), promised to follow a policy of equality of opportunity, they maintained pay differentials, racial employment quota systems, and other forms of blatant discrimination. TVA policies, in short, conformed to the mores of the southern towns in which their white and black workforce was located. Indeed, historian Nancy L. Grant has argued that TVA administrators, by bungling their goals of easing, and thereby transforming, white-black relations in the valley, in reality reinforced older patterns of racial proscription and, as a result, exacerbated tensions not only between members of their racially segmented workforce but also between their workers and the predominantly white communities in which many of them resided.

In Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, and other urban-industrial areas of the Northeast and Midwest, relief work in New Deal agencies, such as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), Works Progress Administration (WPA), and the Civil Works Administration (CWA), provided much-needed relief, but also increased conflict between unemployed whites and blacks. Furthermore, after the mid 1930s, when the WPA suffered cuts in its appropriations, the competition between the unemployed of both races became more intense. In 1935, the Harlem Riot in New York City underscored these increasing tensions in race relations.

For many Mexican Americans in the Southwest the New Deal federal relief and work agencies reduced ethnic and racial conflict and ameliorated their economic condition. In New Mexico, for example, the Interdepartmental Rio Grande Board opened up available range land for subsistence

farmers. The WPA provided jobs for skilled as well as unskilled workers and stimulated an interest among white Americans in Mexican arts and crafts. Nevertheless, overburdened relief programs resulting from low tax revenues and rising costs increased tensions between Anglo-Americans and Mexicans. Anglo-Americans purveyed the stereotype that most Mexicans were lazy and on the dole. Furthermore, Anglo-American administrators in local governments believed that Mexicans were a temporary source of foreign laborers who were not entitled to relief. As a result, white administrators attempted, with some success, to engender Mexican repatriation. More than 500,000 Mexicans left the United States during the Depression.

Relations between blacks and other minorities and whites in labor unions were also variegated. Although predominantly white craft unions discriminated against blacks, and the New Deal still remained the almost exclusive domain of whites, the industry-wide policies of the CIO and the activities of the Communist Party somewhat reduced racial tensions and hostilities. Interracial unions, which undermined companies' use of nonunion blacks as "scabs," brought minority and white workers together under the banner of similarly vested interests and solidarity.

THE SOCIAL SCIENTIFIC ANALYSIS

In the midst of catastrophic economic disaster, American social scientists attempted to examine, analyze, and find solutions that would help remedy the socioeconomic problems of the country's major ethnic and racial minorities. The Chicago School of Sociologists—led by two of Robert E. Park's students, E. Franklin Frazier and Charles S. Johnson—was the most prominent group of scholars that took on the task of publicizing the plight of African Americans. Franz Boas and his students of anthropology at Columbia University in New York City performed a similar task for the Native Americans of the West.

Although another of Park's students, Emory Bogardus, an expert in race relations and professor of sociology at the University of Southern California, studied Mexican Americans, the most significant contemporary sociological works centered on

African Americans and were penned by E. Franklin Frazier—especially *The Negro Family in Chicago* (1932) and his classic statement, *The Negro Family in the United States* (1939). These two books were intended to demonstrate Frazier's revulsion against older writings that argued that black family patterns were a result of racial or cultural traits that had been acquired in Africa. For Frazier, any explanation of the family behavior of blacks in the United States during the 1930s was a direct product of slavery, emancipation, and urbanization. On the basis of statistical data obtained from the census, social service agencies, the police, the courts, and case histories from social workers, Frazier argued that most black families that were held together solely by the ties of sympathy and habit between mother and child, and those families in which the father's interest was based only upon affectional ties, became disorganized in the urban environment. Furthermore, children from these families often became delinquents, and illegitimacy, which had been a "harmless affair" in rural areas, became a serious economic and social problem in the city. Frazier thought that the patterns of behavior molded by rural folk culture were not adequate to sustain blacks when they moved to severely competitive urban areas. On the other hand, the small group of blacks whose family patterns approximated those of the white middle class generally succeeded in resisting the destructive forces of urban life. Their families tended to remain stable, and some of their children entered the middle class. In light of these findings, Frazier was committed to the argument that middle-class culture was a more valuable resource than rural folk culture for African Americans living in urban environments during times of economic plight.

Charles S. Johnson's *Shadow of the Plantation* (1934), which was a product of his study of hundreds of African-American families in Macon County, Alabama, demonstrated that the sharecropper's life in the 1930s was similar to that of the servile labor force during slavery: African-American farmers, saddled by debt, could not terminate the inexorable movement towards decline. Nevertheless, Johnson argued that there were signs of significant change as some young people migrated to the North; as some who gained education in Tuskegee

and Montgomery returned to Macon County; as many young people became literate; and as certain programs of welfare were introduced into the area. By documenting African Americans' assessments of the harsh and often brutal conditions under which they lived, Johnson, like Frazier, in essence discredited the pervasive myth among white Americans of African-American primitivism and replaced it with a sociological analysis that stressed the oppressiveness of the cotton cultivation system.

For both Frazier and Johnson, however, race relations were dynamic: The traditional southern social order was changing—perhaps even breaking up—and the North, where many African Americans had migrated during the 1920s and during the Great Depression years, had an incipient race problem. In 1941, for example, W. Lloyd Warner, a social anthropologist at the University of Chicago, Walter A. Adams, and Buford H. Junker argued that the low social status that characterized the position of African Americans in the South was paralleled in some northern cities, such as Chicago. They noted that African Americans were subordinated in those urban areas as well. The rigid segregation of African Americans and European Americans in residences, playgrounds, schools, and available occupations, as well as the primary and secondary prejudicial beliefs of European Americans towards African Americans, compelled the authors to argue that the system of race relations in Chicago bore a marked resemblance to race relations in the Deep South.

Warner and his associates were correct in pointing to the structural impediments that hampered the socioeconomic mobility of African Americans in both the North and South. Nevertheless, African-American sociologists such as Johnson and Frazier sincerely felt that dynamic forces were altering traditional patterns of race relations—primarily because they could not concede that African Americans, with whose aspirations they were in touch, accepted traditional race relations as part of a natural order. Furthermore, writing at a time when it was apparent that the United States was likely to enter World War II, both black and white liberal and radical sociologists were certain that the status of racial and ethnic minorities would be elevated in the near future. As the United States prepared to

confront the Axis Powers, these social scientists knew that discrimination against ethnic and racial minorities in the political and economic spheres was a dangerous liability. In short, they thought—and were correct—that World War II would precipitate fundamental changes in American society in terms of the status of racial and ethnic minorities. African-American participation in the conflict and the desire of the United States government to cleanse its international image would legitimize greater demands for full inclusion in the American mainstream.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ASIAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; LATINO AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; NATIVE AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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RADIO

The most important new mass medium of the Depression era had evolved dramatically in earlier decades. The development of telegraphy in the nineteenth century, along with investigations into electromagnetism, gave rise in the late 1800s to the genesis of wireless communications. At the turn of the century Guglielmo Marconi invented the first devices that transmitted bits of Morse Code via electromagnetic waves, using an oscillating electrical circuit. Wireless telegraphy soon bridged the Atlantic and announced Robert E. Peary's arrival at the North Pole, and it would dominate the wireless scene into the 1910s. Meanwhile, though, American scientists led by Lee De Forest developed vacuum tubes that could receive and reproduce the human voice and other transmitted sound. The Radio Corporation of America (RCA) was formed in 1919, after the military ceased its wartime control of wireless communications. RCA and other companies produced the first crystal radio kits, receivers for individual listeners that required the use of earphones.

The first radio station had been established in San Jose, California, in 1909, but modern radio broadcasting began with the formation in 1920 of KDKA in Pittsburgh. Victrola records were played into a "wireless telephone" or pick-up microphone and *broadcast* (a term invented at KDKA) over a three-state area; a music store soon allowed unlimited playing of its disks in return for on-air promotions. On election night 1920, amplified kits were arrayed in movie houses and other halls where Pittsburghers received returns. By 1922 local stations across the United States were broadcasting concerts, sermons, and political speeches. Vaudeville and musical performers, such as Ed Wynn and Paul Whiteman, soon appeared regularly on radio, and such broadcasters as Milton Cross, Walter Damrosch, and "Major" Edward Bowes also were heard. All remained popular through the Depression era. Bandleaders placed "wires" or radio transmitters into ballrooms and transmitted their music beyond the immediate dance floor. By 1928 shortwave transatlantic broadcasts were possible. Labor unions, political parties, and municipalities began

their own stations in this early era of democratic experimentation.

Overlapping frequencies and distorted signals increased the demand for regulation or standardization in radio. While Britain's government nationalized the airwaves in 1922, creating the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), David Sarnoff of RCA and others in the United States pushed for a commercially-sponsored system of radio networks that would dominate programming and the widest-band (AM, or "amplitude modulation") signals. In 1926 RCA's National Broadcasting Company (NBC) became the first radio network. The next year NBC transmitted the Rose Bowl game coast-to-coast. That same year the Radio Act became law, protecting the interests of networks and relegating nonaffiliated local stations to narrower, less-powerful frequencies. NBC actually ran two networks, the Blue and the Red, derived from existing station alliances; these were joined in 1929 by the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS), founded by William Paley, and in 1934 by the Mutual Broadcasting System. All of them featured predominantly musical programs, often sponsored and funded by a commercial advertiser. Product advertising thus took a quantum leap forward with the arrival of radio's electronic mass-marketing. On the eve of the Depression radio receivers were attached to loudspeakers that allowed families and other groups to listen together, and the problems of airwave static and tinny-sounding pickup microphones were increasingly overcome by technological improvements. Just as Wall Street crashed, radio was becoming a major communications phenomenon.

By the end of the 1920s domestic and small-town melodramas (the first "soap operas," presented by Palmolive and other sponsors), sermons, band and symphony broadcasts, primitive infomercials featuring "blindfold tests," quiz shows, speeches by presidents and other notables, and children's series derived from comic strips were everyday fare for millions. Educators and others condemned the lowbrow content of radio series—"This child of mine is moronic," Lee De Forest lamented—and new legislation sought to regulate the content of children's programming. By the fall



A Tehama county, California, farmer and his daughter (photographed in 1940) listen to their radio, a popular pastime during the Depression years. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

of 1929, though, the antics of Amos 'n' Andy, two shiftless and comical Negro caricatures portrayed by the white actors Charles Correll and Freeman Gosden, had conquered the national audience. *Amos 'n' Andy* appeared for a quarter hour at 7:00 P.M. every Monday through Saturday and created an unprecedented following, even among millions of African-American listeners. Supporting characters, such as the Kingfish and Senator Claghorn, helped construct a comical vision of American race relations that reinforced the passivity of most Americans regarding such issues as civil rights and lynching. Vaudeville-style ethnic programming such as *The Rise of the Goldbergs* soon followed, and a culture of celebrity grew up around such crooning variety-show hosts as Rudy Vallée and Bing Crosby. Vallée is credited with popularizing the variety show format, which became standard. Vaudeville comics such as Jack Benny, George Burns and Gracie Allen, Fred Allen, and Bob Hope also became radio stars, and like Vallée and Crosby they also crossed over into successful motion picture careers.

Journalism was a decidedly minor aspect of the networks' programming, despite the efforts of pioneering commentators such as H. V. Kaltenborn and reporters such as Edward R. Murrow and Robert Trout, and it was often obscured by the trivial but wildly popular "reporting" of gossip-dispensers such as Walter Winchell and Louella Parsons. Into the early 1930s, in short, network radio solidified its presence as mass entertainment in a box, bringing ephemeral diversions and capitalism's thirty-second fables into almost every living room and eatery.

Radio nevertheless still showed some diversity. The Depression made it far more difficult for grassroots local stations to survive, but some were able to continue to offer alternatives to the networks' mass-oriented fare. Union dues and listeners' subscriptions kept dozens of low-wattage stations on the air. In New York City, the Socialist Party's WEVD (named after the party's founder, Eugene V. Debs) dispensed news, discussions, and jazz by both black and white musicians. Regional arrangements targeted subgroups of the national audience as well, such as the syndicated networks that broadcast WMC-Nashville's *Grand Ole Opry* across

the South and WLS-Chicago's *Barn Dance* in the Midwest. Even these regional trends, though, increasingly made radio a homogeneous, standardized corporate product that, like movies, had the effect of "massifying" American culture to an unprecedented degree.

With the deepening of the Great Depression, radio brought basic political discourse into almost every home for the first time. In 1921, as secretary of commerce, Herbert Hoover had been the first American public official to give a radio address. A decade later, now a beleaguered president, Hoover was a regular but notably ineffective presence on the airwaves. He fell prey to the criticisms of such network commentators as Father Charles E. Coughlin of Royal Oak, Michigan, whose NBC-broadcast Sunday sermons became increasingly political and polemical in nature. (High listener ratings—first tabulated in the early 1930s—ensured that Coughlin kept his radio platform for a long time.) In 1932, broadcast political conventions and campaign oratory helped to ensure Hoover's defeat and a landslide victory for Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Roosevelt pioneered the intimate presidential radio address, intended solely for the mass audience in their homes. His first "fireside chat" took place just days after he took office, and he made three more such broadcasts in 1933. In the first two years of his term he spoke on national radio forty times, in public and in "fireside" settings, and his audiences were almost always large. This trend continued into his second term; a fireside chat in March 1937 was heard by a third of the entire radio audience. The intense ideological struggles between Roosevelt's New Dealers and opponents on the political right (such as Hoover and Alfred E. Smith) and on the left (such as Norman Thomas, Huey Long, and Father Coughlin) were serialized in an extended debate over the radio waves, democratizing the great political discourse of the day to an unprecedented degree. However, radio's journalistic coverage of actual grassroots suffering during the Depression was minimal. Meanwhile, radio became increasingly regulated during the New Deal. In 1934 the new Federal Communications Commission (FCC) began more intense scrutiny of the operations of networks and small stations.

Network radio's artistic standards improved markedly in the late 1930s. Executives partially took the critics' scorn to heart and sought out more substantial talent, especially in the field of writing. In 1936 CBS's *Columbia Workshop* began presenting experimental original work by Irwin Shaw, Archibald MacLeish, James Thurber, Steven Vincent Benét, and others, as well as Aldous Huxley narrating an adaptation of his novel *Brave New World*. Bernard Herrmann's musical scores enhanced the program's quality as well. Similar programs such as *The Theater Guild on the Air* (for which Arthur Miller wrote) signaled the increased translation of good drama from stage to sound studio, while the *Lux Radio Theater* adapted high-quality motion pictures to radio, featuring the original screen stars. Norman Corwin began a distinguished career as a creator of thoughtful dramatic programs, while Arch Oboler churned out hundreds of expertly-crafted mysteries, adventure stories, and kitchen-table dramas.

The most notable risk was taken in 1937 by CBS, when Orson Welles, the 22-year-old sensation of the avant-garde theater (and already a veteran radio performer), was given the *Mercury Theater on the Air*. Welles's versions of classic and popular literature caused little controversy until his October 30, 1938, broadcast of H. G. Wells's *War of the Worlds*. By then, Americans had grown familiar with broadcasts of the tirades of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini, and network news departments had intensified their coverage of such world issues as Europe's move toward war. Welles's pseudo-journalistic approach to the martian invasion, featuring a simulated news broadcast that evoked the memorable coverage of the 1937 explosion of the dirigible *Hindenburg* (which, like the "invasion," took place in New Jersey), fooled and terrified thousands of listeners, who were convinced that the war of the worlds had actually begun. The FCC warned the networks not to allow such provocative and clever deceptions in the future. The specter of censorship had also been raised in 1937, when Mae West performed a risqué comedy sketch by Arch Oboler, *The Garden of Eden*, and the FCC received hundreds of complaints. The Welles controversy showed, above all, that radio could be a powerful expression and reflection of a troubled nation's mood.

By the late 1930s radio's prominence as a social force was being acknowledged by cultural commentators and scholars. Princeton University began an Office of Radio Research to explore the content of radio programming and its impact on the attitudes and lives of listeners. Exiled Central European scholars such as Paul Lazarsfeld and Theodor Adorno provided intellectual ballast to Princeton's investigations. Adorno in particular published studies that revealed, through his Marxist critical perspective, patterns of manipulation and degradation in the consciousness of the mass of American listeners. Such perspectives were hotly debated, but they also indicated the growth of a body of critical analysis in mass communications that increasingly shaped the response of educated Americans to radio and other electronic media. It was one more indication of the wide and diverse impact of radio on American culture during the 1930s.

As the 1930s closed, radio continued to evolve. FCC pressure on the networks to surrender their monopolies increased; antitrust legislation would eventually be brought against NBC and force it to divest its Blue network. Despite the dangers of monopolization, however, unaffiliated local radio stations grew in number. Increasingly they pioneered the use of disk jockeys, listener research, and package deals with record companies, while some of them also became guardians of regional and special musical styles, such as country-western and big-band jazz. African-American musicians faced much discrimination in radio, but their invisibility in that medium allowed more bands and soloists to appear than in films or on vaudeville touring circuits. Also before 1940, FM (frequency modulation) radio was introduced, promising more true-to-life transmissions in the near future. Television's stalled development before 1940 also ensured the primacy of radio in America's living rooms. In short, despite the difficulties caused by the Depression and the dominance of the networks—and sometimes because of it—radio made stunning advances and caused decisive transformations in American communications and culture.

See Also: AMOS 'N' ANDY; COMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1934; COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS; COUGHLIN, CHARLES; FEDERAL

COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC);
FIRESIDE CHATS; WELLES, ORSON.

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BURTON W. PERETTI

RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP

Asa Philip Randolph (April 15, 1889–May 16, 1979) was a civil rights leader and the founder of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. The younger of two sons, Randolph was born in Crescent City, Florida, to Elizabeth Robinson and James William Randolph, an itinerant African Methodist Episcopal preacher. Randolph graduated from Cookman Institute (later Bethune-Cookman College) in Jacksonville in 1909. Unable to find any but manual labor jobs in the South, Randolph left for New York in 1911. There he came under the influence of Socialists and the International Workers of the World. He took speech lessons, which accounted for his Oxford English speaking style and soon became a soapbox orator, propagandizing on behalf of black unionism and Socialism, beliefs to which he adhered for the rest of his life. In 1913 he married Lucille Campbell Green, whose beauty shop earnings supported his subsequent undertakings.

Randolph opposed the entry of the United States into World War I, and in 1917 he began pub-



A. Philip Randolph, 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

lishing the *Messenger*, in which he argued that since 99 percent of African Americans were workers their logical affiliation should be with the Socialist Party. Following the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, government repression decimated the *Messenger* radical group and left Randolph a confirmed anti-Communist. With declining Socialist support for the *Messenger*, Randolph became more conservative.

In 1925 Randolph was invited to organize the Pullman Company railroad porters, the one occupation in which African Americans held a near monopoly. It was only after the Great Depression brought Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal to power that Randolph succeeded in gaining recognition for the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) from the American Federation of Labor (AFL) in 1935 and the Pullman Company in 1937. The National Industrial Recovery Act (1933) and National Labor Relations Act (1935), which guaranteed labor the right to organize and select its own bargaining agent without interference from the em-

ployer, enabled Randolph to achieve legitimacy for the union. Even before formal recognition of the BSCP by the AFL, Randolph used AFL conventions to denounce racism in the labor movement.

In the depths of the Depression the agreement between Pullman and the porters' union brought some \$2 million in income to the porters and their families and prominence for Randolph in both the black and white communities. In 1935 Randolph became president of the National Negro Congress (NNC), an umbrella organization established to help African Americans cope with the economic distress of the Depression. Randolph resigned in 1940, charging that the NNC was Communist-dominated.

By then defense preparations were pulling the country out of the Depression. Blacks, however, denied the opportunity to apply for defense jobs because of racial discrimination, remained disproportionately unemployed. When the Roosevelt administration proved impervious to their entreaties, Randolph conceived the idea of a mass march of African Americans on Washington to demand defense jobs and training. Realizing that the administration could not persuade Randolph to call off the march, scheduled for July 1, 1941, without some tangible gain, Roosevelt issued an executive order that created a temporary wartime Fair Employment Practices Committee, in exchange for which Randolph agreed to cancel the march. Uncertain how many African Americans would actually participate, Randolph was elated at the success of his strategy, and decided to keep his organization, the March on Washington Movement, intact to promote nonviolent civil disobedience in the fight for civil rights.

During the Cold War, Randolph counseled young black men to refuse to register or be drafted into a segregated military establishment. President Harry Truman capitulated, integrating the armed services in 1948. Next, in an effort to speed implementation of the Supreme Court school desegregation decision of 1954, Randolph mounted a prayer pilgrimage in 1957 and two youth marches for integrated schools in the nation's capital in 1958 and 1959. Becoming one of the AFL's two black vice presidents when the federation merged with the

Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) in 1955, Randolph launched an all-black labor group, the Negro American Labor Council in 1959 to fight racism within the labor movement. In 1963 Randolph proposed a march on Washington for jobs and freedom to be led by a coalition of civil rights organizations, major religious denominations, and the United Auto Workers. Although it marked the high point of the civil rights movement, the integrated march was somewhat marred for Randolph by his wife's death three months earlier. Afterwards the civil rights coalition dissolved into wrangling over prestige, financial contributions, and Black Power separatism. Randolph retired in 1968, after founding the A. Philip Randolph Institute in 1964 to carry on his ideas and methods.

Taking advantage of the opportunities presented by the Great Depression to form the nation's first black union, Randolph's unique contribution was promotion of nonviolent civil disobedience and a symbiotic relationship between the American labor movement and the cause of racial justice.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS (BSCP); NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS.

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PAULA F. PFEFFER

RAPER, ARTHUR

Arthur Franklin Raper (November 8, 1899–August 10, 1979) was a rural sociologist and reformer whose work mirrored the problems and promise of the American South. Born in Davidson County, North Carolina, Raper attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he studied with sociologist Howard Odum. In 1926, Raper went to work for the Commission on Interracial Cooperation in Atlanta. As research secretary for the commission, Raper monitored race relations throughout the South, described the impact of the agricultural depression of the 1920s and 1930s, and cooperated with various New Deal agencies. From 1932 to 1939, he also taught part-time at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia.

Raper endeavored to reach a broad audience, making numerous speeches across the South and publishing in both scholarly and popular outlets. Perhaps his most influential work was *The Tragedy of Lynching*, published in 1933. A study of every community where a lynching had occurred during 1930, *The Tragedy of Lynching* was widely reviewed and contributed to the anti-lynching campaign. In addition, Raper wrote three significant books on the rural South: *Preface to Peasantry* (1936), an attack on the plantation system in Georgia's Greene and Macon counties; *Sharecroppers All* (1941), coauthored with African-American sociologist Ira Reid, which portrayed the culture of dependency throughout the region; and *Tenants of the Almighty* (1943), describing Greene County's Unified Farm Program.

Raper's research was intertwined with his activism. He worked closely with the Farm Security Administration and other New Deal agencies that sought to provide relief for farmers and lift them out of tenancy. Raper also regularly challenged prevailing racial mores in his publications and actions. His transgressions of regional racial codes often drew criticism, as in 1935 when he took Agnes Scott students to historically black Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, and in 1941 when he was brought before a Greene County grand jury for using polite titles when addressing African Americans. Raper was an

original member of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

In 1939, Raper went to work for the Carnegie-Myrdal study on race in America, which led to the publication of *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (1944). Raper's report was considered by project director Gunnar Myrdal to be one of the most valuable in the study. In 1940, Raper began a two-year stint as a participant-observer of Greene County's Unified Farm Program, before moving to Washington to work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Agricultural Economics. After World War II, Raper turned to international rural development, explicitly linking his efforts in land reform and community development to his earlier work in the South.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

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CLIFFORD M. KUHN

RASKOB, JOHN J.

John Jakob Raskob (March 19, 1879–October 15, 1950) was an industrialist, financier, chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1928 to 1932, and cofounder of the American Liberty League. Born in Lockport, New York, Raskob rose from poverty to extraordinary wealth through a combination of ambition, financial acumen, and good luck. Educated at parochial schools and then the Bryant and Stratton Business School, Raskob struggled to support his mother and siblings after his father's death in 1897. In 1900 he became secre-

tary to Pierre S. du Pont, and after 1902 the two men reorganized the financial structures of the family gunpowder company. As treasurer after 1914 Raskob oversaw the investment of some of the DuPont Company's enormous wartime profits into the General Motors Corporation (GMC), and he and Pierre du Pont reorganized the struggling car-maker's operations.

During the 1920s Raskob combined business vision with increasing political activism. His greatest achievement at GMC was the creation in 1919 of the General Motors Acceptance Corporation (GMAC), which lent customers money to buy GMC cars. The first of its kind, GMAC financed two-thirds of all GMC car sales by 1927. Raskob also championed employee stock bonuses and investment plans, and by 1929 he was worth more than \$100 million. Politically Raskob contributed heavily to the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment after 1925 and to the political campaigns of Alfred E. Smith, a fellow Catholic, self-made man, and anti-prohibitionist. Prohibition struck Raskob as a dangerous expansion of federal regulatory power and as an infringement of personal liberty. In 1928 Smith, who was the Democratic presidential nominee, appointed Raskob chairman of the Democratic National Committee (DNC). Raskob transformed the DNC into a permanent organization and used his influence to advocate more business-friendly policies within the party.

The Great Depression significantly reduced Raskob's personal fortune and convinced him that the federal government should retrench its expenditures and allow business to recover without government interference. Consequently he gave strong support to conservative Democrats in their fight against Franklin Roosevelt's presidential nomination in 1932. Raskob then became a prominent critic of the New Deal. In 1934 Raskob, du Pont, Smith, and other business leaders founded the American Liberty League to warn Americans of the dangers of federal centralism and government activism. Raskob withdrew from political life after Roosevelt's landslide victory in 1936, and he eased out of his business commitments during the later 1930s. Raskob then devoted himself to his charitable foundations, and died on his country estate in Maryland

in 1950. His wife, Helena, and twelve children survived him.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE; CONSERVATIVE COALITION; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1930; ELECTION OF 1932.

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DOUGLAS CRAIG

REA. *See* RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION.

RECESSION OF 1937

In the six months between August 1937 and January 1938 the U.S. economy dropped as sharply as it had during the thirteen months following the stock market crash of 1929. From the peak in March 1937 to the trough in April 1938, stock prices fell 58 percent, employment 28 percent, and payrolls and industrial production 43 percent.

The recession came in the middle of Franklin D. Roosevelt's second term, after an extended period of slow but evident recovery. The president and his advisors understood clearly that the recession's implications for domestic politics and international ideological struggles were potentially of enormous consequence. The New Dealers had carefully constructed their public image as happy days depression busters and pointedly contrasted that with their image of Hoover and the Republicans as the party of gloom and depression. Now it appeared that the Roosevelt administration had its own depression.

Moreover, the apparent economic vitality of the new totalitarian regimes of both the left and right in Europe and Asia cast the recession as a threat not only to New Deal political survival, but to the survival in the world of liberalism itself. It became vital

for the United States to demonstrate that liberal capitalism could achieve economic recovery, not only for the economic well-being of its own citizens, but to counter the threats of fascism and communism around the world, a struggle that was highlighted at the time by the civil war in Spain. Faced with the gravest crisis of his administration thus far, Roosevelt seemed immobilized as policy advisors bickered over possible ways to reverse the downturn.

Economic conditions early in 1937 had brought Marriner S. Eccles, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, and Henry Morgenthau, Jr., the secretary of the treasury, into momentary agreement on federal fiscal and monetary policy. The inflow of newly-instituted Social Security taxes, together with the ending of veterans' bonus payments, had given the appearance of a sharply improved budgetary situation, occasioning a fear of inflationary pressures. The Federal Reserve Board responded by raising reserve requirements and supporting the Department of the Treasury's advocacy of a cutback in federal expenditures to help achieve a balanced budget for 1938.

These policies choked the frail recovery and by August the economy was showing signs of recession. At that point the policy recommendations of Eccles and Morgenthau began to diverge sharply. Since coming to Washington in 1934, Eccles had advocated federal expenditures as the most effective means of stimulating the economy during depression. When the 1937 downturn began, he backed quickly away from the monetary and fiscal constraint he had advocated earlier in the year, and he urged the president to resume spending. Morgenthau had long seen himself as the conscience of his friend and mentor Roosevelt, particularly in matters of fiscal integrity. Morgenthau had advocated balancing the budget early in 1937 as a counter to inflation and a happy consequence of recovery, but, unlike Eccles, his policy recommendations did not change when the economy began to falter. Indeed, they became even more rigid.

Morgenthau's contacts in the financial world had persuaded him that New Deal policies had been discouraging investment and inhibiting full recovery. He believed investors had lost confidence

in the administration because year after year Roosevelt had failed to deliver the balanced budget he had promised since his first campaign for the presidency in 1932. The best thing the president could do to counter the recession, Morgenthau believed, would be to boost business confidence by making a firm commitment to a balanced budget.

These opposing perspectives defined the struggle that continued through the winter of 1937 to 1938. Morgenthau had ready access to the president through their regular Monday luncheons. Early in the recession Roosevelt seemed to be leaning toward Morgenthau's point of view. Eccles, head of an independent regulatory commission, was not part of the White House inner circle, and he made his argument for increased spending through associates with better access to the president, including especially Harry L. Hopkins, a close friend of the president and head of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration since 1933 and the Works Progress Administration since 1935. Eccles corresponded with Hopkins during the latter's surgery and convalescence at the Mayo Clinic that winter. Eccles also maintained regular contact with Hopkins's assistants, Aubrey Williams and Leon Henderson, and with Beardsley Ruml, a former Macy's executive whom Eccles had appointed director of the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

As the depression deepened, the President was shaken by the German takeover of Austria on March 12, 1938, an event, ominous in itself, that precipitated another slide in stock prices. On March 22, Roosevelt left Washington for his traditional retreat at Warm Springs, Georgia. Morgenthau took a vacation to Sea Island, Georgia, at the same time. Hopkins, now recuperated, arranged meetings with the president at Warm Springs, where, armed with memos from Aubrey Williams, Leon Henderson, and Beardsley Ruml, he urged Roosevelt to endorse renewed spending. Hopkins did so not as an expedient response to the recession, but because he saw renewed spending as the foundation for a new direction in government policy where "national intervention to stimulate consumption" would provide purchasing power, making it possible for not just the privileged few but for the "whole culture" to express itself "through actions of individual consum-

ers." Such a policy, Hopkins and others argued, would lead to an increase in public purchasing power, a demand for consumer products, the opening and expansion of production and distribution facilities to meet that demand, jobs to staff those revived industries, and eventually "the abolition of poverty in America."

The argument, well designed to appeal to Roosevelt, was effective. Despite Morgenthau's threats to resign, the president on April 14 announced to Congress and that evening to the public (in his first fireside chat since the previous October) a major new spending program and a request that the Federal Reserve Board reduce reserve requirements. Roosevelt's announcement, which relied heavily on the memos Hopkins and his aides had presented to him at Warm Springs, assured Americans that "dictatorships do not grow out of strong and successful governments, but out of weak and helpless ones." He pointed out that federal expenditures "acted as a trigger to set off private activity." The cost of the new spending program would be minimal, he argued, compared to the enormous loss in national income caused by the recession.

By mid-summer 1938 the economic decline had been halted and recovery was back on track. Although the causes of the "Roosevelt recession" and the subsequent recovery are still debated among economists, there can be no doubt that the recession crisis marked a major turning point in New Deal ideology. The rise of dictatorships in Europe and Asia made adherence to American liberal values a necessary concomitant of a recovery program. A compensatory monetary and fiscal policy fit the bill perfectly, avoiding direct intervention in economic decision-making at the grassroots level and employing only long-accepted macroeconomic instruments of fiscal and economic policy. Though the level of public investment needed to bring about full recovery was well beyond what Roosevelt and his advisors imagined, and would not be implemented until the war, a new credo for American liberalism had been formulated.

See Also: FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM;
MORGENTHAU, HENRY T., JR.

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DEAN L. MAY

RECIPROCAL TRADE AGREEMENTS

Spurred by the wave of isolationism and protectionism that swept America in the aftermath of World War I, the United States initiated a series of tariffs in the 1920s that by the end of the decade had brought U.S. import duties to their highest point in American history. The great symbol of this movement towards ever increasing protectionism was the Hawley-Smoot tariff, which was passed in 1930 over the objections of many economists who argued at the time that higher U.S. tariffs would do nothing to alleviate the crisis of the Great Depression, but would in fact impede progress toward a general economic recovery. One individual who spoke out vociferously against high tariff policies was Cordell Hull, who both as a congressman and a senator had consistently opposed the high tariff rates imposed by the Republican congresses during these years.

Given this record, it would come as no surprise that one of Hull's highest priorities after his appointment as U.S. secretary of state in 1933 was to embark upon a program of trade liberalization. In principle, Roosevelt shared Hull's belief in internationalism, and almost immediately after assuming office, Hull instructed his advisors to draw up legislation aimed at granting the president the authority to negotiate trade agreements. It was Hull's hope that this legislation would be passed in time for him to use it as a bargaining chip at the 1933 London Economic Conference, where he intended to negotiate a multilateral reduction in tariff rates. But there

were others within the Roosevelt administration who rejected Hull's ideas, including such influential New Dealers as Raymond Moley and George Peek, both of whom argued strongly in favor of protectionism and the need to raise domestic price levels prior to the initiation of any effort to lower trade barriers. Much to Hull's disappointment, Roosevelt came down on the side of the protectionists in the early months of the New Deal and refused to allow Hull to submit his legislation to Congress. This in turn negated any possibility that the secretary would be able to negotiate multilateral tariff reductions at the London Conference, and Hull returned from England in the summer of 1933 a deeply frustrated man.

Convinced by his bitter experience in London that a multilateral approach to freer trade was no longer feasible, Hull now sought legislation that would establish a system of bilateral agreements through which the United States would seek reciprocal reductions in the duties imposed on specific commodities with other interested governments. These reductions would then be generalized by the application of the most-favored-nation principle, with the result that the reduction accorded to a commodity from one country would then be accorded to the same commodity when imported from other countries.

Hull called his new legislation the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. Well aware of the lingering resistance to tariff reduction that remained in Congress, Hull insisted that the power to make these agreements must rest with the president alone, without the necessity of submitting them to the Senate for approval. The amount of reduction authorized was based on the 1930 Hawley-Smoot tariff. Under the act, the president would be granted the power to decrease or increase existing rates by as much as 50 percent in return for reciprocal trade concessions granted by the other country.

By the spring of 1934, Roosevelt was more inclined to look with favor on trade liberalization and on March 2 the president announced his support for Hull's legislation. In urging its passage Roosevelt stressed that the powers it granted the executive were necessary because other countries (most notably Great Britain) were using reciprocal agree-

ments to expand their trade at the expense of the United States. To back up his claim, Roosevelt cited the tremendous drop in U.S. exports, which in 1932 alone had fallen to a mere 52 percent of the 1929 volume. Roosevelt also indicated that he regarded the legislation as part of his emergency economic program particularly because a "full and permanent domestic recovery" would not be possible without the revival of international trade.

After the addition of two amendments, the first of which called for hearings of interested parties before a trade agreement could be negotiated, and a second that limited the term of the legislation to three years, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act was signed into law on June 12, 1934. Following the passage of the act (and a brief bureaucratic struggle in which George Peek lost out to Hull over who would take the lead on trade policy within the administration), Roosevelt and Hull established the needed governmental apparatus to run the program, including the Committee for Reciprocity Information, which would hear the public representations required by the Senate amendment, and the Committee on Trade Agreements, which was formed to administer the act. Representatives from the departments of State, Commerce, and Agriculture, as well as representatives from the National Recovery Administration, the Tariff Commission, and the newly created Office of the Special Advisor on Foreign Trade, were included on both these committees. Assistant Secretary of State Francis Sayre became head of the Committee on Trade Agreements, while at Hull's urging, Roosevelt appointed Henry Grady as the secretary's special advisor on trade. Following the establishment of the machinery to run the program, the Committee on Trade Agreements soon began to survey the foreign trade field to determine which countries offered the best prospects for negotiations. Under its aegis, a number of country subcommittees were formed to study the trade patterns with a specific nation to ascertain which exports or imports might receive lower duties and the effects that such reductions might have in the domestic market.

Under Hull's guidance, the United States managed to negotiate twenty-two reciprocal trade agreements by the end of 1940. Included in these

were agreements with Cuba, Brazil, Belgium, Sweden, Columbia, Canada, the Netherlands, France, Costa Rica, and the United Kingdom. Of these, the two most consequential were the agreements with Canada, signed in 1936, and the United Kingdom, signed in 1938. The latter two were important not only because of the significant volume of trade involved, but also because they were regarded as indicative of growing solidarity among the Atlantic powers in the troubled years leading up to World War II. Hull, like many of his contemporaries, regarded economic nationalism as one of the root causes of war and remained convinced that one way to reduce the likelihood of conflict was to reduce trade barriers. Unfortunately, Hull's efforts at liberalizing world trade had little impact on the dictators, but his belief in the necessity for freer trade gained credence during the war with the result that the United States emerged from the conflict firmly committed to an internationalist foreign economic policy.

See Also: HAWLEY-SMOOT TARIFF; HULL, CORDELL.

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DAVID B. WOOLNER

RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION (RFC)

In searching for the causes of the Great Depression, historians regularly cite protective tariffs and their impact on foreign trade, gross agricultural overproduction, speculative mania on Wall Street, and inequitable distributions of national income, but the most significant factor may well have been the instability in the money markets during the 1920s. Intense competition, inadequate capital reserves, real-estate speculation, and inadequately secured loans (especially to farmers) eroded bank assets and brought about the failure of more than five thousand banks between 1920 and 1930. In addition, banks and insurance companies had long invested in railroad bonds, but early in the 1930s, many railroads began defaulting on interest payments. Deeply in debt, burdened by heavy fixed costs, and suffering declines in freight revenues because of competition from long-haul trucks, dozens of major railroads faced bankruptcy. Their plight pulled thousands of banks toward the same fate. Another 1,357 American banks went belly up in 1930. International problems then finished the job. In May 1931 Austria's largest bank declared bankruptcy, and four months later the Bank of England abandoned the gold standard, sending American money markets into a state of panic.

To prevent a complete financial meltdown on Wall Street—and Main Street—that would doom his reelection chances, President Herbert Hoover acted, turning first to the private sector. Working with a number of prominent bankers, he established the National Credit Corporation (NCC), hoping to accumulate up to \$500 million for loans to troubled banks. In October and November 1931, however, the NCC loaned out a paltry \$10 million, hardly enough to rescue the banking system. Reluctantly, Hoover turned to the federal government. Modeling his plan on the War Finance Corporation of World War I, in January 1931 Hoover proposed and Congress established the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), endowing it with an initial capital of \$500 million and the ability to borrow another \$1.5 billion to make loans to banks, mutual savings banks, insurance companies, credit unions,

railroads, and savings, building, and loan associations. Determined to avoid political controversy, Hoover gave the RFC a bipartisan board that included Charles G. Dawes, a prominent Chicago banker and former Republican vice president of the United States, and Jesse Jones, a wealthy Houston banker and a power broker in the Texas Democratic Party.

The RFC went to work immediately, but it soon generated bitter political controversy. When the Central Republic Bank of Chicago (of which Charles Dawes had only recently been president) hurtled toward bankruptcy in the spring of 1932, the RFC sprang for a loan of \$90 million. The money staved off bankruptcy and prevented a regional financial crisis, but it smacked of corruption, and Democratic politicians pounced on it. The fact that the Hoover administration was so stingy in providing work relief for the unemployed only exacerbated the controversy. While poor people in Chicago starved, so the critique went, Charles Dawes and his minions filled their pockets with federal money. A \$19 million loan to the Missouri Pacific railroad precipitated almost as much controversy. Long known for its dishonesty and financial slights-of-hand, the Missouri Pacific enjoyed a particularly stained financial reputation, but the Hoover administration insisted that had the Missouri Pacific defaulted, hundreds of banks and insurance companies would have been drawn into its whirlpool of bankruptcy.

To blunt the controversy, Hoover joined hands with Republican moderates and Democratic liberals in Congress to expand RFC authority. In July 1932, the Emergency Relief and Construction Act authorized the RFC to make up to \$300 million in loans to state and local governments to assist them in providing relief to the unemployed, and \$1.5 billion in loans to state and local governments to put people to work building such self-liquidating public works as toll roads, bridges, and sewage and water systems. The act also gave the RFC power to extend loans to financial institutions to assist farmers in storing and marketing agricultural goods. But the effort proved to be too little, too late. The \$300 million in relief was only the proverbial drop in the bucket compared to total need, and the public

works construction projects took too long to get underway. President Hoover's political fortunes continued to sink.

Although the RFC made nearly \$2 billion in bank loans in 1932, instability continued to plague the money markets, with hundreds of banks failing every month, more and more railroads going into default, and commercial loans drying up. In the winter of 1932 to 1933, the RFC's shortcomings came into bold relief. The governors of Idaho, Nevada, Iowa, Louisiana, and Oregon all had to declare statewide banking holidays to stop panic-stricken depositors from making runs on banks, and in March 1933 newly-inaugurated President Franklin D. Roosevelt declared a nationwide bank holiday. The nation's financial system had collapsed, even with \$2 billion in RFC loans.

Despite its shortcomings, the RFC was about to undergo a geometric expansion in its power and scope. During the famous First Hundred Days of the Roosevelt administration, the RFC became the heart and soul of the New Deal. Congress established the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to take over and expand the RFC's program of relief loans to state and local governments. The new Public Works Administration assumed responsibility for the RFC public works construction program. The Commodity Credit Corporation took over the RFC loan program to assist farmers in storing and marketing crops. The Emergency Banking Act of 1933, which Congress passed at the outset of the nationwide bank holiday, authorized the RFC to make direct loans to private businesses and to purchase preferred stock in private banks. Within a few years, the RFC owned \$1.3 billion in stock and exercised voting rights in 6,200 private commercial banks. Because the money came in the form of investment capital, not loans that had to be repaid in six months, the RFC stock purchases proved to be a godsend. With the RFC, the Banking Act of 1933, and establishment of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the money markets began to settle down. Bank failures plummeted, and commercial loans, the life blood of an economy, slowly began to increase.

Finally, because the RFC enjoyed a constant flow of capital through loan repayments, it became

a source of money almost external to Congress, which President Roosevelt and other New Dealers frequently exploited. By 1937, Jesse Jones headed an RFC empire that included direct control or profound financial influence over the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Public Works Administration, the Works Progress Administration, the Commodity Credit Corporation, the RFC Mortgage Company, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Federal Security Administration, the Federal Housing Administration, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Resettlement Administration, the Federal Farm Mortgage Association, the Farm Credit Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Electric Farm and Home Authority, the Disaster Loan Agency, the Export-Import Bank, and the Federal National Mortgage Association. In 1939, Congress established the Federal Loan Agency to supervise the federal government's vast financial establishment, and President Roosevelt named Jesse Jones to head the new agency. By that time, the RFC and its subsidiaries had made loans in excess of \$8 billion, prompting some journalists to refer to the agency as the "Fourth Branch of Government."

Two years later the entrance of the United States into World War II brought extraordinary new powers to the RFC. The economy needed to make, as soon as possible, the transition from Depression to wartime production, and Jesse Jones and the RFC assumed a central role in that effort. A host of new government corporations—all included under the financial umbrella of the RFC—mushroomed to transform the economy; they included the Defense Plant Corporation, the Defense Supplies Corporation, the Metals Reserve Company, the Defense Homes Corporation, the Petroleum Reserves Corporation, the Rubber Reserve Company, the United States Commercial Company, the War Assets Corporation, and the Smaller War Plants Corporation. By the end of World War II, the RFC's total loan volume, to fight the war and the Depression, exceeded \$50 billion, making it by far the largest and most powerful federal agency in American history. After the war, however, during the reconversion effort, the RFC lost political traction. In 1953, Congress passed the RFC Liquidation Act, transferring the RFC's loan-making power to the new Small

Business Administration. Four years later, in 1957, Congress dissolved the RFC.

Because of the New Deal's profound impact on American public policy, historians and politicians have spent seventy years debating its meaning and its merits, arguing about whether it was essentially liberal or conservative or radical. But it seems clear that the RFC—by far the most influential of New Deal agencies—was an institution designed to save capitalism from the ravages of the Great Depression. Through the RFC, Roosevelt and the New Deal handed over \$10 billion to tens of thousands of private businesses, keeping them afloat when they would otherwise have gone under and deadening the voices of those who saw in socialism a solution to the country's economic mess.

See Also: BANKING PANICS (1930–1933); JONES, JESSE.

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JAMES S. OLSON

REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA (RPAA)

A loose circle of friends, mainly from the New York City area, and never more than twenty-five members, the Regional Planning Association of America (RPAA) shared a commitment to regionalism—the need to balance the healthy and indigenous cultural values of the hinterland with those of the metropolis, to substitute socialized for speculative land values, and to decentralize congested urban popula-

tions into architecturally planned cooperative communities similar to those built during World War I by the United States Housing Corporation and the Emergency Fleet Corporation.

The RPAA was founded in 1923 when, at the urging of the American Institute of Architecture *Journal* editor Charles H. Whitaker, Lewis Mumford had architect Clarence Stein convene at his Dakota apartment in Manhattan a small group of architects, foresters, and economists—many of them alumni of the war housing experiment—to discuss the waste of haphazard urban growth and the prospects for a new regional basis for civilization. By 1925 this mildly socialistic assemblage met variously at Whitaker's Twelve Opossum farm in New Jersey, Stein's Dakota apartment, or the Hudson Guild Farm in Netcong, New Jersey. The group consisted not only of Whitaker, Stein, and Mumford, but also of forester Benton MacKaye, economist Stuart Chase, architects Henry Wright, Russell Van Nest Black, Fred Ackerman, Robert D. Kohn, and Fred Bigger, social scientist Robert Bruere, and housers Edith Elmer Wood and Catherine Bauer.

RPAA members were deeply influenced by the ideas of not only Patrick Geddes, Thorstein Veblen, and Henry George, but also Ebenezer Howard, Raymond Unwin, Barry Parker, and the British Garden City Movement. The greenbelted British garden cities of Letchworth and Welwyn Town, a train ride from London, inspired Wright's and Stein's garden communities in Sunnyside, New York, and Radburn, New Jersey. These communities featured superblock design, interior courts, schools, playgrounds, and other communal facilities.

Although neither Sunnyside nor Radburn achieved working-class affordability, the Great Depression and the New Deal convinced RPAA members that federal intervention would realize a true regional solution to the conundrum of affordable housing. Franklin D. Roosevelt had endorsed regionalism in his speeches, and by 1933 RPAA members Kohn, Ackerman, Stein, and MacKaye all served on New Deal agencies philosophically harmonious with association ideals. These agencies included the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Resettlement Administration, the National Resources Planning Board, and the Public Works Administra-

tion's Housing Division (headed by Kohn). Architecturally, much of the public housing built by the Housing Division met RPAA standards; however, the housing built under the 1937 United States Housing Act fell somewhat short of the mark. In 1935 both Stein and Fred Bigger worked on the design and construction of Greenbelt, Maryland, one of the new towns built by Rexford Tugwell's Suburban Division of the Resettlement Administration. Greenbelt largely recapitulated the agenda of the RPAA. However, by 1933 the RPAA had all but vanished. Stein and Mumford parted disagreeably, Whitaker fell ill, and Bauer shifted to housing activism. However, the association's legacy was indisputable.

See Also: BAUER, CATHERINE; MUMFORD, LEWIS; PLANNING.

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JOHN F. BAUMAN

RELIGION

POLITICS AND PLURALISM

The period between the stock market crash of 1929 and the beginning of World War II was an important time for the development of a religiously pluralistic United States. The nomination of Al Smith as the Democratic Party candidate in 1928 drew attention to the fact that Catholics living in East Coast cities now held considerable political power and that rural Protestants no longer automatically de-



During the Depression, urban mission churches, such as this one photographed in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1937, offered spiritual relief, as well as food and temporary shelter, to the needy. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

terminated presidential candidates. During the 1930s Catholics made up two-thirds of the union membership, and in 1932 Father James Cox led what was then the largest protest march on Washington in American history to draw attention to the needs of suffering workers. Catholic votes would be critical in solidifying Democratic political power, so Catholics gained a presence in Franklin D. Roosevelt's new administration. Of the 196 federal judges that the president appointed, fifty-one were Catholic. During the preceding three administrations only eight Catholics had been appointed to the 214 judicial openings. The president appointed Catholics James A. Farley as postmaster general and Thomas J. Walsh as attorney general. Roosevelt's social initiatives resonated with the pro-labor papal encyclicals of *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). Two priests committed to Catholic vi-

sions of economic justice, John A. Ryan and Francis J. Haas, sat on New Deal committees. In 1931 Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin founded the *Catholic Worker* newspaper, and by 1942 thirty-two Houses of Hospitality attended to the nation's impoverished.

Spurred on by the economic crisis, Roosevelt looked beyond the Protestant elite to establish an alternative to Herbert Hoover's conservatism. While governor of New York, Roosevelt had been impressed by the reform orientation of many progressive Jews, and he invited some of them to Washington; Louis Brandeis, Felix Frankfurter, Bernard Baruch, Henry Morgenthau, Jr., Samuel Rosenman, Alexander Sachs, J. David Stern, Nathan Straus, and Benjamin Cohen became the president's friends and advisors. Between four and five thousand young Jews who were recently trained in



This Pentecostal church in Olivehurst, California (photographed in 1940 by Dorothea Lange), served migrant agricultural workers, who brought their religious institutions with them from the Midwest and the South. The preacher was an Arkansas native. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

law, economics, and social work, and who were experiencing difficulty finding employment in the anti-Semitic environment of the period, found welcoming positions in the government.

In contrast to Catholics and Jews, mainline Protestant clergy showed little support for Roosevelt. By 1936 when a *Literary Digest* poll asked “Do you NOW approve the acts and policies of the Roosevelt New Deal to date?” over 70 percent responded “no.” Liberal and moderate Protestants—Congregationalists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Episcopalians—supported any candidate who ran against Roosevelt. Seventy-

eight percent of all Congregationalists, for example, voted for Alfred M. Landon, the Republican candidate for president, in 1936. On the other hand, Baptists and smaller fundamentalist, holiness, and Pentecostal groups consistently voted for Roosevelt. The numbers of these conservative Protestants were rapidly growing throughout the country. Between 1926 and 1940 Southern Baptists grew by 1.5 million, membership in the Assemblies of God increased four fold, and the Church of the Nazarene grew from 63,558 congregants to 165,532. Conservative Protestants voted with the majority of Americans, supporting the president even though he

oversaw the dismantling of prohibition in 1933. While Protestant clergy attacked the New Deal for either being too socialist or not socialist enough, the working class and the poor directly benefited from Roosevelt's programs.

GROWTH OF CONSERVATIVE PROTESTANTISM

During the Depression, the number of conservative Protestants increased as a result of their vigorous evangelization efforts and the growth of their educational and parachurch organizations. By 1930 there were approximately fifty nondenominational Bible schools in major cities that not only trained lay workers, Sunday school leaders, and foreign missionaries, but also supplied pastors and printed materials. Evangelicals increasingly sent their children to their own institutions of higher education; the enrollment in seventy of these colleges doubled between 1929 and 1940. A network of Bible conferences offered a mix of piety and recreation during the summer months. Foreign missionary activity was also critical to the evangelical worldview. The *Sunday School Times* listed forty-nine mission agencies in 1931; the number had increased to seventy-six by 1941. When displaced farmers from Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Missouri settled in southern California and Arizona and parts of Washington and Oregon, they brought their evangelical commitments with them. The religious landscape of the nation became permanently altered when southern Protestantism moved into the West because of the Dust Bowl.

A few conservative Protestants preached extremist visions of political and economic systems. Gerald B. Winrod founded the Defenders of the Christian Faith, and in 1938 entered the Republican primary for the United States Senate seat from Kansas. His anti-Jewish, anti-Catholic, and anti-black vitriol combined premillennial fundamentalism with political populism. Gerald L. K. Smith was a Disciples of Christ minister who joined with the governor of Louisiana, Huey Long, to promote his "Share-Our-Wealth" program. William D. Pelley, the son of a Methodist preacher, hoped to establish a Christian (evangelical Protestant) state where Jews would be disfranchised and confined to the equivalent of an American ghetto. Unlike Winrod

and Smith, who stayed close to their fundamentalist roots, Pelley's message also included theosophy, astrology, and spiritualism.

DIVERSIFICATION AND MAINSTREAM DECLINE

African Americans who moved from the South during the Depression also brought their Christian commitments to urban centers. Olivet Baptist church in Chicago was America's largest Protestant congregation. Another Chicago church, Pilgrim Baptist, was one of the nation's ten largest churches by 1930 and managed to liquidate its \$150,000 debt during the Depression. New religions emerged in the cities alongside the traditional black denominations. In New York, Father Divine held massive communion feasts and taught his followers the principles of positive thinking. Some African Americans chose to join communities that linked themselves to Islam, but congregational rivalries caused disunity and fragmentation among black Muslims. Others developed communities that used Hebrew scriptures and Jewish rituals. Migration out of the South brought African Americans in contact with Catholics and their parochial school system. In the segregated diocese of Chicago, all black parish schools flourished and contributed to the growing number of African-American converts. White priests at Corpus Christi Church baptized twenty-one adult African Americans in 1920, 131 in 1935, and 322 in 1938. During the Depression, African Americans diversified their religion rather than escaping from it.

While some religious groups flourished during the Depression, liberal and moderate Protestants noted a decline in the critical elements of their religious culture. Between 1916 and 1926 congregations had expanded their physical plants, broadened their services, and increased their staffs. As a result, they experienced a sharp rise in operational costs and debt. With the onset of the Depression, church members withdrew much of their financial support, leaving ministers unable to meet expenses. Funding for foreign and domestic missionary programs also dropped, and it was difficult to find volunteers to venture overseas. Theological disputes drew some congregants into more conservative denominations. Other men and women found that

their humanistic impulses could be satisfied outside of the church in the growing fields of social work, education, and government service. From the perspective of ministers and theologians, many of those who remained within their denominations were at best disillusioned and at worst mired in a form of sanctified commercialism.

A similar pattern occurred in American Judaism. In the 1920s and 1930s the Jewish population in the United States grew by 40 percent and the number of synagogues increased from 1,910 in 1917 to 3,748 in 1937. Congregations in areas with large Jewish populations, such as New York City, expanded, but financial support dropped when the crash hit. In order to survive, synagogues raised their membership fees, which caused more Jews to break away from communal worship. Rabbis complained of the spiritual lethargy and intermarriages of their people. On the other hand, “mushroom synagogues” arose in New York City to cater to unaffiliated Jews. Jews in smaller communities had an easier time weathering economic decline because they could more efficiently adapt to the changing economic climate. Zionist organizations increased their membership. While anti-Semitism made Jews feel more sharply that they were outsiders, the reforming spirit of the New Deal brought socialist and labor union Jews closer to the political mainstream.

Native Americans found it easier to participate in their rituals after John Collier was made Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1933. His “Indian New Deal” included directives that insisted there be no interference with Native American religious life or ceremonial expression. Collier restricted religious instructions—typically conducted by Christian missionaries—in the newly established Indian day schools. He ended compulsory Christian services and supported voluntary instruction in native religions. During his administration, the Native American Church, along with its peyote rituals, was approved to function on the reservations. Although Collier and the Indian New Deal were controversial, there is no question that they helped shift the power on the reservation away from Christian groups and toward traditional ceremonial expression.

MEDIA AND DEVOTIONAL PIETY

The variety of faith communities in the United States and the diversity within those groups made for a complicated religious environment. However, decisions made by the broadcasting industry with the support of older Protestant denominations sought to present America as having only three religious faiths, which were all orderly and controllable. By 1925 there were at least sixty-three church-owned radio broadcasting stations across the country. Economic problems, however, forced many of them to sell. Rather than eliminate religion from the airwaves, the major commercial broadcasting networks NBC and ABC decided to provide free time to representatives of Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish communities. In consultation with liberal Protestants, the networks agreed that religious broadcasting should be nondenominational, should avoid controversial or doctrinal matters, and should stress ecumenical ideals.

In 1934 the Federal Council of Churches assumed the responsibility for network Protestant broadcasting. The *National Radio Pulpit* on NBC presented sermons given by Harry Emerson Fosdick, Ralph Sockman, and David H. C. Read. NBC also broadcast the *Message of Israel* and the *Catholic Hour*. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen began his media career on the *Catholic Hour*, attracting a listening audience of seven million and receiving six thousand letters per day.

Groups whose religious messages did not conform to the network’s standards could purchase air-time or struggle to maintain their own broadcasts. In 1926 fundamentalist Bob Shuler installed a radio station in the tower of his church and sent his message out across Los Angeles. His sensationalist exposés of political corruption provoked the Federal Radio Commission to terminate his right to broadcast in 1931. Father Charles E. Coughlin, with the approval of his local bishop, also bought radio time to promote his notions of Catholic piety and economic reform. Less controversial was the preaching of Walter A. Maier during the *Lutheran Hour*. Belonging to the conservative Missouri Synod, Maier preached in English rather than German, and in 1938 listeners sent over 125,000 letters responding to his programming. Other ministers presented

music, healing, and testimonials on the radio. Elder Lucy Smith, the founder of the All Nations Pentecostal Church and an important African-American healer in Chicago, broadcast her interracial healing services throughout the 1930s. Many tuned in merely to hear her gospel choir sing. Aimee Semple McPherson continued to have a radio presence during the 1930s and broke with the sermon model of preaching by designing dramatic reenactments of biblical and moral tales. She encouraged her listeners to kneel next to their radios to pray with her and to place their hands on the receiver in order to heal their bodies and souls.

Protestants and Catholics looked to the miraculous to heal themselves and their families during the difficult times. Pentecostal women sent letters to religious magazines where they testified to both their suffering and God's goodness. Others laid the devotional magazines themselves on the afflicted parts of their bodies. Both black and white Pentecostals used handkerchiefs anointed with oil to achieve healing. Catholics flocked to novenas to the saints and the Virgin Mother. In 1938, 70,000 people attended a series of communal prayers offered to Our Lady of Sorrows in Chicago, and devotion to Saint Jude, the patron saint of desperate causes, spread throughout the country. Religious orders of priests and nuns offered to enroll people in devotional societies for their donations, sending the members medals and holy cards. Even Father Coughlin offered masses to be said for those who joined his Radio League of the Little Flower. Replicas of the apparition of the Virgin Mary at Lourdes were built next to churches so that Catholics could imaginatively connect with the healing power of the shrine. The Vatican had encouraged lay piety since the nineteenth century, and during the 1930s increased fervor enabled many churches to not only survive but to make their Catholic world in public space. While people have always used religion to transform suffering into sacrifice and thus give meaning to their lives, during the Depression this need was intensified.

See Also: CHARITY; FATHER DIVINE.

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COLLEEN MCDANNELL

"REMEMBER MY FORGOTTEN MAN"

The film *Gold Diggers of 1933*, directed by Mervyn LeRoy and choreographed by Busby Berkeley, was a hugely successful and accordingly oft-imitated pioneer in the genre of musicals. Its generally upbeat story caught the mood of returning hope and "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself" positive thinking that accompanied Franklin Roosevelt's assumption of the presidency and launching of the New Deal the year the film was made. But its long

and memorable closing number, “Remember My Forgotten Man,” did something highly unusual for a Hollywood musical of the thirties: It addressed the Depression directly.

Berkeley’s number reminds viewers of the sacrifices that veterans made for the nation in World War I and suggests that they have been forgotten now, as they suffer the harsh realities of the Depression. Marching soldiers from the Great War morph into hungry men plodding along on a breadline as Joan Blondell sings: “Remember my forgotten man/You put a rifle in his hand/. . ./But look at him today.”

Such an attempt at social commentary in a Hollywood backstage musical would be noteworthy in itself, but the real significance of the song is what it says about gender relations and the longings of men during the Depression. Al Dublin’s lyrics (the music was composed by Harry Warren) have a woman recalling that she “was happy then,” when her man was employed and “the sweat fell from his brow.” The reason for her happiness? “He used to take care of me.” Such male care of and provision for “their women,” Dublin’s lyrics affirm, is the natural state of affairs: “Cause ever since the world began/A woman’s got to have a man.”

The Great Depression had overturned “normalcy” not only by denying men jobs, this song asserted, but by denying them their proper role of providing for and ruling over women. “Won’t you bring him back again?” Blondell plaintively sang of the sort of man who was said to have taken care of women before the Depression.

See Also: BERKELEY, BUSBY; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; *GOLD DIGGERS OF 1933*; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; MUSIC; VALUES, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. McELVAINE

REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1939

The Reorganization Act of 1939 restructured the executive branch in the wake of the New Deal. From March 1936, Louis Brownlow, director of the Public Administration Clearing House (PACH) at the University of Chicago and head of the Public Administration Committee of the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) led the President’s Committee on Administrative Management, known as the Brownlow Committee. Political scientist Charles E. Merriam and public administration expert Luther Gulick assisted Brownlow in recommending ways to streamline federal agencies. They used policy ideas developed by the Brookings Institution, the PACH, the SSRC, and the New Deal planning agency (the National Resources Planning Board) to model public institutions along the lines of private firms. In January 1937 they sent recommendations to President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

When Roosevelt introduced reorganization bills in Congress, he met a storm of opposition. Conservative Republicans and southern Democrats let liberal Democrats lead the fight to amend the reorganization bills. The Reorganization Act of 1939 included a series of compromises that watered down the original bills. Even so, the act encompassed the most far-reaching changes in the executive branch to that point in U.S. history. The president could hire six assistants, propose reorganization plans subject to congressional veto, and make economy in government a priority. On April 25, 1939, President Roosevelt submitted Reorganization Plan No. 1, which moved the Bureau of the Budget and the National Resources Planning Board into a newly created Executive Office of the President. Reorganization Plan No. 2, introduced on May 9, 1939, transferred other agencies within existing departments to allay fears of radical restructuring.

The Reorganization Act of 1939 remade the executive branch by making government operations more efficient in terms of structure, process, and cost. Investigations under presidents Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, and Bill Clinton would continue the ongoing attempt to streamline executive branch organization.

See Also: NATIONAL RESOURCES PLANNING BOARD (NRPB); NEW DEAL, THIRD.

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PATRICK D. REAGAN

REPORT ON THE ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE SOUTH

In the spring of 1938, Franklin D. Roosevelt commissioned a report on the economic conditions of the South as part of his effort to defeat leading southern opponents of his reform agenda. A small group of southern policymakers who worked for the Roosevelt administration, most notably Clark Foreman, Clifford J. Durr, and Arthur Goldschmidt, compiled the report. They drew on the work of the region's leading social scientists and prepared the final report in consultation with an advisory commission of prominent southern educators, businessmen, and elected officials. The report, which covered fifteen topics, contrasted the rich natural resources of the South with its chronic underdevelopment and poverty. Citing the report, Roosevelt declared that the South was "the nation's number one economic problem," and he underscored the critical importance of federal aid to advancing economic development in the South and the economic recovery of the nation.

While Roosevelt's efforts to "purge" southern conservatives failed, the report, along with the president's aggressive participation in the 1938 primary elections in the South, succeeded in focusing

national attention on the economic and political significance of the region. The report was widely noted and excerpted in the nation's major newspapers, and was reprinted in full in the *New York Times*. Most importantly, the report helped to mobilize southern supporters of the New Deal at a time when conservative southerners were emerging as its most vocal opponents in Congress. In response to the report, white and black southerners representing a broad cross section of southern life met in Birmingham, Alabama, in November 1938 to voice their support for the Roosevelt administration, and to establish the Southern Conference for Human Welfare.

See Also: SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW).

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PATRICIA SULLIVAN

REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Republican Party entered the 1930s as the heir to a vitalist reform tradition that underscored its historic role as the modernizing "national party." By 1940 this role was in complete eclipse and the party could no longer lay claim to the mantle of "the party of ideas" and the political embodiment of the national destiny. Nevertheless its role in the Great Depression was far more important than once recognized. It was apparent by 1938 that center-right congressional coalitions had a renewed vitality that lent force to a New Deal opposition that had begun to surface in 1935.

The party's assumption of the minority role in American politics had no parallel in its history.

There had been no Democratic landslide under normal conditions since the election of 1852, prior to the formation of the Republican Party. The election of Warren Harding to the presidency in 1920 had brought about a decisive restoration of Republican dominance. Simultaneously, the conservative old guard of the Republican Party, after almost a decade of diminished influence, reassumed its role as the dominant faction in Republican councils. By 1920, adverse reaction to American participation in the League of Nations had drawn most insurgent western Republicans back into the party's fold, finally providing an opportunity to heal the split between conservative eastern Republicans and the western members of the party. Still, as the Depression dawned, the core of Republican old guard strength and control of the party's decision-making apparatus remained in the eastern United States, while the party's western members continued to articulate the discontent of a region visited by chronic agricultural depression. The western insurgents were too few to effectively challenge the conservative national leadership on most issues while the Republicans were the dominant national party during the 1920s. By the 1930s, however, they would take on new importance as the Roosevelt administration attempted to court them in the early days of the New Deal.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY AND THE ASSOCIATIONAL STATE, 1920–1932

The division between old guard eastern conservatives and the party's western progressives was the party's most visible problem but perhaps not its most important. Throughout the 1920s tension remained in Republican ranks over basic issues of political economy and business-government relations. Some of the party's industrial base was more in sympathy with efforts at business-government "coordination" than the party's executive or congressional leadership. The industrial mobilization policies of the World War I had proven remarkably palatable to major American corporations. While the period occasioned the final abandonment of laissez-faire precepts and formally raised the federal government to the role of director of war-related industry, the very diversity and specialized expertise central to the operation of modern industrial

processes gave industrial leaders a systematic advantage in dealing with often hastily constructed government agencies. The successful prosecution of the war effort left an indelible imprint on the minds of industrial managers. The war experience seemed to indicate what could be achieved through industrial self-government when the national economy was largely freed from the restraint of antitrust prosecution and directed toward mutually agreeable ends by the coordinating efforts of a benign government.

It is hardly surprising, then, that the wartime program of industrial self-government would evolve into the "associational" activities of the 1920s. Associationalism involved the deliberate cultivation and encouragement of voluntary institutions—particularly trade associations, professional groups, company unions, and farm cooperatives—to encourage cooperation within particular trades or industries. Throughout the 1920s, Republican leaders strove to implement their vision of an associative state. Indeed, the period after 1925 saw the rapid emergence of powerful trade organizations in a wide variety of basic industries, such as rubber, steel, and mining.

The onset of the Depression, however, would demonstrate the clear limits of voluntary associationalism during a period of privation and scarcity. As industrial profits declined, the Republican precedent of encouraging effective coordination among industrial groupings through governmental sponsorship would enable such interests to formulate demands for forms of governmental assistance that most elements of the Republican Party had never envisioned. Unwittingly, Republican associationalism had introduced business groupings to a form of cooperative planning that, under the impact of economic crisis, would carry many of them away from the GOP as the political realignment of the 1930s began.

THE REPUBLICAN ELECTORAL COALITION AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

The American economy suffered its most severe and enduring contraction during the period that began in October 1929. By 1931 it was apparent that voluntary efforts to maintain wage, em-

ployment, and price levels had been unsuccessful and that the Depression could no longer be viewed as normal in either duration or effect. Rising evidence of market failure and the continued existence of anti-statist impulses were reflected in a series of calls for planned production under the auspices of trade associations, which would be granted immunity from antitrust laws. This would permit industry's use of production quotas, pricing agreements, and entry controls, along with the legalization of formulas for the establishment of "reasonable prices" by corporate groupings. As these business groupings began to urge that they be given new power to plan and rationalize their own operations with government assistance, President Herbert Hoover continued to champion his lifelong belief in voluntary arrangements and refused to endorse the proposals for cartelization now suggested by both the Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers.

These divergent attitudes reflected a widening schism within conservative groupings that would hinder the Republican Party's desperate campaign efforts in the 1932 and its later attempts to oppose the recovery proposals of the early New Deal. Arrayed against the tradition of classical economics and the enduring pull of partisan loyalty was the notion of a cooperative effort to manage economic affairs in a fashion that recalled the unity of the wartime experience. The very lack of precision surrounding such notions of planning allowed interest groups that were traditionally hostile to government direction to view such efforts as little more than an exercise in self-direction. While Hoover would continue to command an absolute majority of support within the business community, in part due to his support of the protective tariff, the ever-growing clamor for positive intervention in economic affairs threatened permanent disruption of the Republican electoral coalition as the 1932 campaign approached. Paradoxically, Hoover's efforts to stimulate industrial cooperation through the development of trade associations in the 1920s had now placed him in the position of opposing the policy recommendations of many of the very groups he had helped foster.

THE REPUBLICAN ELECTORAL DISASTER OF 1932 AND ITS AFTERMATH

On November 8, 1932, Roosevelt carried forty-two states with 472 electoral votes, while Hoover carried six states with fifty-nine electoral votes. The only states outside New England that Hoover carried were Pennsylvania and Delaware. While the western United States clearly did not determine the electoral outcome, the capture of all of its electoral votes by Roosevelt broke down the northeastern-western alliance that had enabled Republicans to dominate presidential elections since 1896. Moreover, the turnover in Congress was considerably more dramatic and conclusive than had been predicted only days before. The Republicans lost 103 House seats, where the balance now stood at 313 Democrats to 117 Republicans. Most of these seats were lost in the Midwestern region of the country. In the Senate, Republican control was decisively repudiated, as the party lost twelve seats, ten in the midwestern and western states. Even amidst severe economic depression, the electoral results were shocking to individual Republicans grown accustomed to persistent electoral success.

By 1934, the pattern of early New Deal legislation was becoming more clearly discernable. One distinguishing feature was its effort to induce economic recovery through the use of the largest existing institutional structures capable of having an immediate effect. The early New Deal coalition sought the inclusion of all groups and classes, while attempting to effect a kind of political truce that recalled the unity and cohesion of wartime planning efforts. The crisis politics of the administration also sought the abatement of partisan political conflict in the name of a broader national unity.

By early 1934, the administration's recovery policies had substantially strengthened the cooperative farm bureaus and industrial trade associations conceived in the 1920s. These traditionally Republican constituencies had been quick to seize the opportunities provided by the pragmatic recovery approach of the early New Deal. During the first six months of the National Recovery Administration (NRA), for example, American industry developed codes of fair competition that covered the vast percentage of American industry and trade. While the

creation of the NRA had reflected a variety of reform impulses, organized business was in the best position to seize the initiative in the code-drafting process.

The practical effect of the administration's incorporation of potential political opposition was felt throughout the Republican electoral coalition as 1934 dawned. Widespread approval by farmers of governmental limitations on agricultural production and the substantial business support accorded to the NRA code-drafting process further constricted the Republican Party's base of popular political support.

THE 1934 CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

During early 1934 it was clear that the national committee's conservative leadership desired a congressional campaign that focused on the alleged excesses of the New Deal. This reflected the old guard view that much support of the New Deal was predicated on the "emergency" conditions that had existed during the 1933 to 1934 period. By this analysis, the general success of conservative appeals to the electorate remained self-evident despite the party's recent reversals, and efforts to "stagger to the left" could only result in the abrogation of both political principle and success at the polling booths. Even a partial restoration of prosperity and business confidence would diminish support for the Roosevelt administration; accordingly, substantial modification of electoral appeals was both unnecessary and unwise. The adoption of a policy of "holding fast" in the face of insurgence had been successful as recently as the election of 1920, and the old guard felt that such tactics would ultimately foster similar results. While entertaining no hope of "rolling back" the entire New Deal following the 1934 congressional elections, the old guard felt that the abatement of emergency conditions would result in Republican congressional gains. To the Republican's dismay, the Democrats, in defiance of both off-year tradition and contemporary expectations, again gained seats in Congress. The GOP's already diminished senatorial contingent fell from thirty-five to twenty-five.

There seemed to be few, if any, positive portents for the Republican Party as 1935 dawned. The

all-class coalition of the early New Deal had inaugurated political movement that had been almost entirely away from the Republican electoral coalition. By the middle of that year, however, it was apparent that the administration's effort to maintain an all-class coalition of interests was beginning to break down. Despite the initial success of American industry in structuring the NRA to further trade association objectives, its fragile unity had broken down by early 1935. Once the sense of panic characteristic of 1932 and 1933 passed, it gradually became clearer to American industry that the price exacted for exemption from the antitrust laws was higher than had been anticipated. The administration's sympathy toward efforts to raise wage rates and encourage industrial unionism, as well as its ability to license business through the NRA code-making process, limited the previous prerogatives of industrial managers. It was becoming apparent to business leaders that the administration of the NRA apparatus involved input from groups, such as organized labor, that stressed political agendas beyond trade association control. Ultimately, individual business enterprise had submitted only to a process that it felt it could control; when the rise of other political forces made this difficult, enthusiasm rapidly waned. Thus, the pattern of government support so eagerly courted by industrial leaders after 1930 was being abruptly reconsidered as the NRA experience unfolded.

THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN OF 1936

Throughout 1935, Republican strategists were preoccupied with efforts to regain the western states that had deserted the party's presidential candidate in 1932. It was felt that such efforts required the selection of a presidential candidate from a western state who would also be acceptable to the party's eastern wing. Republican pre-convention maneuvering was shaped by the rapprochement that had been achieved between eastern conservatives and the representatives of the Republican governor of Kansas, Alfred Landon.

It rapidly became apparent that Landon was the only available candidate who was acceptable to eastern conservatives and who also offered the prospect of regaining the party's lost western base.

A former Bull Mooser who had since maintained a record of party regularity, Landon could not be immediately identified as a candidate from either the conservative or progressive wing of the party. From its inception, the Landon movement progressed with the benign tolerance of eastern party leaders and scored an easy first ballot victory at the Republican convention of 1936. Thus, while the original Landon effort has been correctly identified as reflecting the influence of younger, more liberal elements within the party, its easy march to the nomination had been the result of deliberate abstention on the part of the party's eastern conservative leaders. As the Landon forces attempted to lay the basis for an effective nationwide campaign, however, it would become apparent that the remarkable first ballot victory and the acceptance of a platform with a liberal tinge had only masked the fundamental division over political strategy.

Roosevelt's overwhelming victory in 1936 is an excellent example of historical event that, by upstaging the uncertainties that preceded it, appears after the fact to have been inevitable. Little seemed inevitable in mid-1936, however. Despite the removal of the threat posed by a possible Huey Long candidacy, political conditions continued to be subject to a wide variety of interpretations. Nor was the situation at all clarified by the public opinion polls then in operation. In July 1936 the Gallup poll accorded President Roosevelt the support of only 51.8 percent of the electorate. This represented a drop of four points since Gallup's June poll. When electoral sentiment was analyzed by the Gallup organization on a state-by-state basis, thirteen states, with a total of ninety-nine electoral votes, were said to be "safely Republican." Even more significant was the fact that the Gallup organization credited Landon with leads in eleven additional states, representing a total of 173 electoral votes. If these analyses of "trends" were accurate, the Republicans would amass 272 electoral votes and win the election. The now renowned 1936 *Literary Digest* poll, whose 1932 counterpart had come within a percentage point of forecasting the actual popular vote that year, continued throughout the campaign to predict a massive Landon victory. Confusion over the direction of political trends was also frequently reflected in much serious journalistic commentary.

Although the *New York Times* announced editorial support for Roosevelt, its electoral analysis continued to forecast a close, hard-fought election. Massive Republican congressional gains were predicted in the *New York Times* throughout the year.

THE 1936 ELECTION RESULTS

Republican leaders, who had anticipated at least the restoration of the party as a competitive force, were suddenly instead faced with a devastating electoral repudiation. The Landon-Knox ticket had succeeded in carrying only the states of Maine and Vermont and had garnered over 45 percent of the vote in only four states. Overall, the Republican presidential ticket had won but 36.5 percent of the popular vote. The election results were also devastating to the party's already drastically reduced congressional contingent. Republicans found their numbers in the House reduced from 104 to eighty-nine and in the Senate from twenty-five to sixteen.

In one day, patterns of electoral analysis that had guided Republican political strategists since the election of 1896 had been abruptly overturned. The Democratic electoral coalition had been decisively established as the majority party within the electorate. Subsequently, Republicans would continue to travel a road of reevaluation and reassessment, while awaiting a turn of political fortune that might enable the party to bid for majority status.

The Republican Party's efforts at electoral adjustment were aided by an intellectual transformation occurring within the business community. By 1935 much of American heavy industry had experienced a strong negative reaction to the increased role of government in macroeconomic management. This had dramatically affected the ability of the Republican Party to alter electoral appeals. But with the introduction after 1936 of Keynesian principles of economic management, important segments of the business community came to gradually support an activist fiscal and monetary policy. The gradual adoption of these attitudes by a number of business elites presaged a substantial modification of the polarized political debates over political economy characteristic of the early 1930s and the 1936 election.

After 1936, then, new efforts to reestablish a government-business alliance were undertaken.

These patterns of positive response again suggest the impact of attitudinal changes by political elites on the formulation of mass political appeals. In 1939, *Fortune's* "Round Table" surveys of executive opinion found that stagnation and chronic unemployment were now regarded as the greatest dangers facing the economy.

THE 1938 ELECTIONS

For the first time since 1928 the Republican Party gained seats in the congressional elections of 1938. The party, apparently moribund in 1937, scored remarkable gains throughout the nation the following year. In senatorial races the GOP won eleven of twenty-seven contests for a net gain of eight seats. The minority contingent in the Senate increased from fifteen to twenty-three, and six of the eight new Republican senators displaced reliable liberal supporters of the administration. The Republicans also registered substantial gains in the House of Representatives, where they almost doubled their strength, increasing their numbers from 89 to 169. Many of the defeated Democrats had come from the industrial sections of the East and Midwest, and many were recently elected congressmen who had been swept into office by the 1932, 1934, and 1936 Democratic landslides. The Republican restoration greatly enhanced the prospects for cooperation with conservative Democrats, thus establishing a pattern of political deadlock that would subsequently become the norm in American political life.

Despite its decent to minority status after 1932, the Republican Party had retained its historical connection to political power while invoking symbolic identification with national values and belief systems that were meaningful to millions of voters. The abrupt succession of Republican electoral defeats had concealed the extent to which the party still reflected general attitudes of a somewhat wider nature. While the fear evoked by economic crisis had produced a call for government assistance, even from conservative groups, the abatement of this sense of emergency by 1937 demonstrated the persistence of previous ideological patterns. Even the disastrous dislocation of the 1930s did not dispel decades of support for the idea of limited gov-

ernment activity. The notions of individualism, self-help, and the general legitimacy of entrepreneurial activity remained important components of the American belief system.

Given the persistence of these belief patterns, any voter reaction against the administration after 1936 had the potential of resulting in GOP electoral gains. The rise of a candidly urban liberalism after 1936 had finally enabled Republicans to minimize their own internal divisions and to develop cohesive party responses to efforts to expand the New Deal. Simultaneously, a downward trend in the business cycle, increased divisiveness within the enlarged Democratic Party, and a general unease with the continued exercise of larger-than-life efforts by Roosevelt presented the Republicans with opportunities not of their own making. Thus, the events of 1937 to 1938 had done more than reawaken submerged feelings of congressional independence; they had given renewed intensity to expressions of partisanship on the part of the minority party. After the success achieved in the 1938 elections, the Republican congressional delegation remained cohesive, providing some three-quarters of the anti-administration votes on most major controversial measures by 1939. Revived Republican partisanship thus became the indispensable component of the modern conservative congressional coalition. The party's return to competitive status also suggested clear limitations to the reform impulse that flourished in the Congress and the nation from 1932 through 1937.

By the election of 1940 an important transformation of the ideological wings of the Republican Party was underway. Essentially the GOP had to come to terms with the new centers of urban power established by the New Deal. As a result, the urbanized northeastern wing of the party would come to be represented by a Dewey-Rockefeller liberal wing that stood in contrast to the old guard representation of the 1930 period. Changes in the western Republican contingent came to be symbolized by the rise of Robert Taft, who stood in vivid contrast to the Republican insurgents of the pre-New Deal period. Thus, the modern postwar Republican Party can be said to be a result of the New Deal's electoral success.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1930;
ELECTION OF 1932; ELECTION OF 1934;
ELECTION OF 1936; ELECTION OF 1938;
ELECTION OF 1940; POLITICAL REALIGNMENT.

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CLYDE P. WEED

RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA)

President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the Resettlement Administration (RA) by executive order

on May 1, 1935. The new organization consolidated programs relating to land use planning and rural relief from several federal departments. To head the RA the president appointed brains truster and undersecretary of agriculture Rexford G. Tugwell, who recruited Will W. Alexander of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation as assistant administrator. The way the RA was assembled, its mix of activities, and the objectives of its leaders would make it the New Deal's comprehensive rural anti-poverty program.

The RA was formed as the New Deal was reordering several agricultural and relief programs. After the firing of liberal lawyers from the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) in February 1935, Tugwell was ready to leave the Department of Agriculture (USDA). Heading the RA, he could oversee an independent agency with jurisdiction over his chief interest, land classification and planning. Accordingly, all such functions of the USDA, AAA, and the National Resources Planning Board were assigned to the RA, which was charged with retiring sub-marginal lands from agriculture and resettling farmers from those lands. Meanwhile, as the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) was being discontinued in favor of the new Works Progress Administration, its rural rehabilitation division was attached to the RA. Since 1934 that program had aided chronically impoverished farmers, tenants, and laborers, and by the spring of 1935 it had about 210,000 clients, mostly in the South. This assignment of rehabilitation, largely determined by Alexander's agreement to take charge of it, expanded the RA and set its course as an anti-poverty agency. The RA also received miscellaneous programs, including subsistence homesteads from the Department of the Interior, suburban "greenbelts" around four cities, and cooperative farm communities started by the FERA.

The centerpiece of the RA's anti-poverty work was its standard rehabilitation loan. Estimates of borrowers served by the mid-1940s range from 695,000 to 825,000. The loans, usually a few hundred dollars per year, underwrote farm operations, while additional credit might assist home improvements or the purchase of tools or livestock. To safeguard loans, credit was conditioned on supervision;



A tenant farmer in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, in 1935 shows off the mule he obtained with help from the Resettlement Administration. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the RA's field staff advised clients on farming methods and annual budgets, and required them to plant gardens and preserve their produce. Clients' progress was measured by increased family income and net worth, and improved farming ability.

Much smaller than rehabilitation lending was the RA's resettlement program, comprising about 150 projects by 1937. Some of the most prominent of these were in the lower Mississippi Valley, including eight plantation projects leasing government-owned land to resettled farmers under varying plans of cooperation. As Donald Holley has shown, RA projects rarely deviated from a pattern of individually operated acreages, had difficulty establishing a cooperative outlook among participants, and often experienced large cost overruns. They also drew heavy fire from congressional conservatives who condemned them as socialistic. In its 1944 appropriations Congress ordered all reset-

tlement work disbanded, along with fifty-two client associations for leasing privately held land.

From its beginning the RA had sought authority to help tenants buy farms. Even before joining the RA, Alexander had helped develop the Bankhead bill of 1935, an ambitious plan for government acquisition of land for resale to supervised tenants. Although the bill failed in Congress, RA leaders hoped to revive and implement it. But the Bankhead-Jones Act that was passed in July 1937 was a severely limited measure that ultimately provided only 44,300 loans in eight years. Nevertheless, the lending program was assigned to the RA, which was renamed the Farm Security Administration (FSA).

Administered by Alexander from 1936 to 1940 and Calvin B. Baldwin from 1940 to 1943, the RA-FSA expanded its array of anti-poverty programs. It promoted improved land tenure for tenants and



This housing project under construction in Greenhills, Ohio, in 1937 was one of numerous Resettlement Administration initiatives.

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encouraged clients to form cooperatives for purchasing supplies, machinery, or breeding stock. It organized innovative small group medical plans covering almost 110,000 families by 1942. But the agency's wide-ranging programs were not sufficient to reach all poor farmers. Indeed, despite repeated efforts to assist the most impoverished, the FSA moved increasingly toward selecting better credit risks as new borrowers.

The RA-FSA was never popular with congressional conservatives and they attacked it repeatedly. As Sidney Baldwin has pointed out, the agency never had an adequate statutory foundation. The Bankhead-Jones Act authorized only farm purchase lending, land retirement work, and rehabilitation loans using diverted relief money; otherwise FSA programs depended on the continued willingness

of Congress to fund them. That willingness declined markedly as the New Deal waned and war priorities took precedence. After inflicting devastating budget cuts in 1943, Congress ended the FSA in 1946, continuing some farm purchase lending under a new Farmers Home Administration.

See Also: BANKHEAD-JONES FARM TENANT ACT OF 1937; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA).

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PAUL E. MERTZ

REUTHER, WALTER

Best known as president of the United Auto Workers (UAW) union from 1946 until his death in a plane crash in 1970, Walter Philip Reuther (September 1, 1907–May 9, 1970) struggled during the Great Depression to find a focus for his considerable skill and energy before eventually immersing himself in the cause of organizing Detroit automobile workers. Born in Wheeling, West Virginia, Reuther left a tool and die apprenticeship in his hometown at age nineteen to seek work in Detroit. Despite his age, Reuther was highly skilled and gained a position of responsibility at Ford's Highland Park Plant. Reuther attended high school after work, and, with his younger brother Victor, took classes at Detroit City College (which became Wayne State University). Displaying his activist inclination and the influence of his Socialist father, Reuther fought to defend free speech rights at the college, opposed segregation at a pool near campus, and campaigned for supported Socialist Norman Thomas in the 1932 presidential campaign.

The Great Depression made employment insecure even for skilled workers like Reuther. With an uncertain future in Detroit, and lured by the prospect of a viable workers' state in the Soviet Union, Walter and Victor left Detroit in January 1933 for what would become an amazing journey of over two and a half years through Europe and Asia. The Reuthers arrived in Germany during the Nazi takeover, then bicycled around Europe for nine

months waiting for their visas to enter the Soviet Union. Observing the rise of fascism only strengthened Walter Reuther's tendency to see the best in the alternative Soviet model. In the Soviet Union, the Reuthers worked on a massive industrialization project in Gorky and were moved by the cooperation they observed between management, union leaders, and the state, as well as by the spirit of Soviet workers. The Reuthers did not observe the most brutal aspects of Soviet industrialization—although they eventually saw enough to cause concern—and Walter's praise for the Soviet system provided fodder for both American opponents of unionization and, in the 1930s, conservative union rivals. Reuther's relationship with Communists and communism remains a topic of historical debate. Communists were vitally important to the rise of industrial unionism, primarily as organizers, and many UAW Communists had been close to Reuther. But Reuther's outspoken opposition to Communists in the UAW in the early Cold War era, whether principled or opportunistic, undoubtedly helped him become president of the union.

Upon returning to Detroit in 1935, Reuther joined a UAW local—without actually working in a plant—and was elected to the UAW executive board. In early 1936, Reuther married May Wolf, who was equally dedicated to organizing auto-workers. Later that year, Reuther helped organize a sit-down strike at Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Company. The strike resulted in few tangible gains, but much favorable publicity, especially after the more successful sit-down strike at General Motors (GM) in Flint, Michigan, which began shortly after the settlement at Kelsey-Hayes. Reuther received national attention in May 1937 when he and three other UAW officials were savagely beaten by Ford security personnel in the famous "Battle of the Overpass." Photographers documented the attack, but it nevertheless took four more years for Reuther and the UAW to overcome Ford's resistance to unionization.

After supporting Norman Thomas for president in 1936, but seeing merit in Franklin Roosevelt's pro-worker rhetoric, Reuther ran unsuccessfully for the Detroit city council in 1937. None of the four labor candidates was elected, and Reuther finished

third among them. Even in the late 1930s, Reuther was but one of many labor notables in Detroit, and he might today remain a somewhat obscure figure if not for his high-profile postwar career.

From 1937 to 1939, Reuther contended with the UAW's factional infighting and the severe recession that almost eliminated both automobile production and the union. Only 6 percent of the UAW's GM employees paid union dues in 1939. In May 1939 Reuther, as the new director of the UAW's GM department, helped the union regain strength by organizing a strike of skilled tradesmen, without whose labor the company could not produce any cars for the 1940 model year. GM was forced, once again, to recognize the UAW, just in time for the production boom that accompanied World War II. Reuther's fame grew proportionately throughout the next thirty years.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); LABOR'S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE; ORGANIZED LABOR; UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS (UAW).

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DANIEL CLARK

RFC. *See* RECONSTRUCTION FINANCE CORPORATION.

RICHBERG, DONALD

Donald Randall Richberg (July 10, 1881–November 27, 1960) was a labor attorney prominent in drafting the National Industrial Recovery Act and administering the National Recovery Administration (NRA). Richberg was raised in comfortable circumstances in Chicago, receiving his B.A. from the University of Chicago and his LL. B. from Harvard Law School. He embraced progressivism early in his career, fighting against utility monopolies and for the 1912 Progressive Party candidacy of Theodore Roosevelt.

Richberg came to national prominence in the field of labor law. He did not advocate direct government intervention in collective bargaining, but believed that unions needed legal protection if they were to effectively protect their members' interests. He was particularly concerned with the use of injunctions to undermine strikes. Richberg worked closely with railway unions to remedy this problem, helping to draft the 1926 Railway Labor Act and the more broadly cast Norris-La Guardia Anti-Injunction Act in 1932.

Franklin D. Roosevelt's first years in office marked the height of Richberg's national influence. He helped to write section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, which appeared to secure the right of workers' to organize. Richberg subsequently became general counsel of the NRA and served on a number of New Deal agencies, most notably as executive director of the National Emergency Council. Richberg took over as head of the NRA in its last months and unsuccessfully defended its constitutionality before the U.S. Supreme Court.

During his service in the First New Deal Richberg steadily moved away from his early support of organized labor. He made a key decision that undermined the usefulness of section 7a and increasingly became identified with business opinion on industrial relations. Richberg left government service for private law practice after the NRA was struck down.

After leaving office Richberg continued his drift toward conservatism. He soon became a vocal opponent of the Wagner Act, believing that it allowed

the government to intervene too much on the side of labor, and a critic of the power wielded by unions in politics and the economy. At the end of World War II, he played an important role in the 1947 passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, which sought to place limits on the power of organized labor. Richberg completed his journey away from the progressive ideals of his youth by becoming a vocal opponent of the government bureaucracies and social welfare programs advocated by liberals in the 1940s and 1950s.

See Also: NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA); NORRIS-LA GUARDIA ACT.

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ANDREW A. WORKMAN

RIVERA, DIEGO

The artist Diego Rivera (December 13, 1886–November 24, 1957) is best known for the murals he completed in Mexico and in the United States during the 1920s and early 1930s. Rivera, along with the Mexican artists Jose Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros, was immensely popular among North American intellectuals and artists during the 1930s. His murals in large part provided the inspiration for the public art projects sponsored by New Deal agencies during the 1930s. Rivera served as a model of a socially committed artist whose work reflected the struggles of everyday people.

Born in Guanajuato, Mexico, and raised in Mexico City, Rivera started drawing at an early age. At age ten, he enrolled in the San Carlos Academy of Fine Arts, where he completed his studies in



Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo in 1940. AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

1905. Upon graduation, Rivera spent several years in Spain and in Paris, where he encountered many of the modern masters, including Pablo Picasso. Influenced by Picasso, Rivera painted hundreds of cubist works between 1913 and 1917. Returning to Mexico in 1921, Rivera began work on several government-commissioned murals, including one at the Ministry of Education that encompassed three floors and spanned 17,000 square feet. Having been exposed to Marxism while in Europe, Rivera belonged to the Mexican Communist Party from 1922 to 1929, when he was expelled for his relationship with the Mexican government.

In 1930, Rivera traveled to the United States, where he prepared for major exhibitions of his work in San Francisco and in New York City. Rivera also painted murals at the San Francisco Stock Exchange, the California School of Fine Arts, and at the Detroit Institute of Arts. In the Detroit mural, Rivera explored the power of modern industrial technology and capitalism. In 1933, Rivera received

a commission to paint a mural in the new Rockefeller Center in New York City. He was dismissed from the project when he insisted upon including the figure of Vladimir Lenin in the mural. He completed one more mural at the New Workers School before returning to Mexico in December 1933.

Rivera completed only one mural during the rest of the 1930s; instead, he focused on smaller works, such as landscapes. He was instrumental in arranging with the Mexican government Leon Trotsky's asylum. In 1937, Trotsky and his wife arrived in Mexico and stayed as guests of Rivera and his wife Frida Kahlo in Kahlo's family home in Coyoacán. For political and personal reasons, Trotsky and Rivera ended their affiliation in 1939. In 1940, Rivera returned to San Francisco to work in the Art-in-Action pavilion at the Golden Gate International Exposition, where visitors watched him as he painted the mural "Pan American Unity."

See Also: ART; COMMUNIST PARTY; POST OFFICE MURALS.

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LARISSA M. SMITH

ROAD TO PLENTY, THE

The Road to Plenty by William Trufant Foster and Waddill Catchings was a widely read book that challenged the assumption of classical economics that production and consumption were inherently in balance. It anticipated the ideas of John Maynard Keynes and the strategy of counter-cyclical government spending. Neither Foster nor Catchings were professional economists. Foster had been president of Reed College in Portland, Oregon, and Catchings was a manufacturer who became a partner in Goldman Sachs, an investment banking firm.

In *The Road to Plenty*, their fourth and most influential book, Foster and Catchings popularized

and developed the ideas of the English economist John A. Hobson. They argued that consumption regulated production and that underconsumption could occur due to savings ("wasteful thrift"), artificially high prices, low wages, and other conditions that constrained purchasing power. The authors believed that the key to full employment and improved standards of living was public spending. The book became especially relevant after the onset of the Depression because it argued that the way to deal with unemployment was to stimulate consumption rather than production. Couched in terms of an instructional conversation, *The Road to Plenty* proposed the creation of a federal board that would gather data on economic conditions and make recommendations for public works to stimulate consumption during economic downturns. Foster and Catchings contended that reliance on fiscal policy would restrict the need for state intervention and would present no threat to American values and existing institutions. The book informed the congressional debate about public works expenditures during the early phase of the Depression, and it influenced Marriner S. Eccles, who became chairman of the Federal Reserve Board in 1934. However, it was not until the recession of 1937 to 1938 that the ideas of Foster and Catchings elicited significant support from New Dealers.

See Also: ECONOMY, AMERICAN; KEYNES, JOHN MAYNARD.

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STUART KIDD

ROBESON, PAUL

Paul Leroy Robeson (April 9, 1898-January 23, 1976), a world-famous singer, actor, and political activist, was born in Princeton, New Jersey. The son

of a runaway slave who became a Presbyterian minister, Robeson received a scholarship to Rutgers College in 1915. Only the third black student to be admitted, he starred in four sports, was twice named an all-America football end, and became valedictorian of his class and a member of Phi Beta Kappa, the national college honor society. To fulfill his class prophecy to be "the leader of the colored race in America," Robeson earned a law degree from Columbia University in 1923, supporting himself by playing professional football on the weekends.

At the urging of his wife, Eslanda Cardozo Goode, a fellow Columbia Law School student whom Robeson had married in 1921, he turned from the law to the stage. Beginning with the Provincetown Players in 1924, he eventually gained international acclaim for his performances in the title roles of Shakespeare's *Othello* and Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, and as Crown in DuBose Heyward's *Porgy*. Robeson also won praise for his moving interpretations of black spirituals and the folk music of many countries. Possessed of a magnificent bass voice, Robeson became known especially for his rendition of "Ol' Man River" in Jerome Kern's *Show Boat*. Despite his fame, Robeson could not escape the indignities of racism in the United States, and he was frequently denied service at hotels and restaurants, even in the North.

From 1928 to 1939 Robeson lived and worked primarily in London. There he became acquainted with leaders of the British Labor Party and with pan-Africanists such as Jomo Kenyatta and C. L. R. James. He came to see the connection between the struggles of the working class and those of oppressed colonial peoples, and he studied Marxist texts and the major ideas of communism. Increasingly, Robeson viewed his art as serving the fight for economic and racial justice.

In 1934 Robeson made the first of a series of visits to the Soviet Union. For the first time in his life, he would later claim of his time in Moscow, "I walk in full human dignity," entirely free from racial prejudice. This, and the Soviet Union's support of anti-fascist and anti-colonialist struggles, led to his close ties with American Communists, although he never formally joined the party. Having returned to



Paul Robeson, photographed by Gordon Parks in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the United States in 1939, Robeson became a leading spokesperson for a variety of left-wing causes, especially equal rights for African Americans. The first major artist to refuse to perform before segregated audiences, he urged Congress to end of the color bar in major league baseball. Robeson also helped lead voter registration campaigns in the Deep South and the efforts to enlist black workers in the Congress of Industrial Organizations union-organizing drives in the 1940s.

Reacting to President Harry Truman's refusal in 1946 to sponsor legislation making lynching a federal crime, Robeson shocked many Americans by asserting that black Americans would exercise their right of self-defense. Then, attending a peace conference in Paris in 1949, Robeson expressed a widely publicized prediction that African Americans would not fight in a war against the Soviet Union.

Refusing on constitutional grounds to answer any questions from congressional committees concerning his Communist Party membership or affiliation, Robeson felt the full weight of McCarthy-era repression come crushingly down upon him. Branding him “one of the most dangerous men in the world,” the State Department revoked his passport, and would not restore it until 1958. The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency hounded and harassed him until his death, and the entertainment industry blacklisted him, preventing Robeson from appearing in television, radio, and the concert stage until 1957. Most African-American organizations no longer wanted any association with him, and when his autobiography was published in 1958 most newspapers and magazines in the United States did not review, or even mention, the book.

The once eloquent and powerful performer and radical, depressed at the loss of audiences and friends, suffered a series of mental breakdowns and tried twice to commit suicide. Largely forgotten in the 1960s and 1970s, Robeson died after suffering a stroke in 1976.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; CIVIL RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES; DU BOIS, W. E. B.; RANDOLPH, A. PHILIP.

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HARVARD SITKOFF

ROBINSON, EDWARD G.

Edward G. Robinson (December 12, 1893–January 26, 1973), actor noted for tough guy roles, was born

Emmanuel Goldenberg in Bucharest, Romania. He came to the United States in 1902 with his family and was educated in New York City’s public schools. After winning a scholarship in 1911 to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, he changed his name to Edward G. (for Goldenberg) Robinson. Between 1913 and 1930, with time out for a World War I navy stint, he appeared in over thirty plays, making a stab at the movies in 1923. He made some films at the end of the 1920s before moving to California and quickly becoming a star character actor.

His breakthrough role as an ambitious aggressive gangster in the 1931 film *Little Caesar*, released at the beginning of Hollywood’s gangster cycle, helped define a particular image of Robinson. As he later said, “some people have youth, some have beauty—I have menace.” Small of stature but blessed with a cutting voice, Robinson in his 1930s films (and well into the 1940s) was presented mainly as a guy who could “dish it out.”

The gangster genre attracted Depression audiences because the protagonists, however sour their end, overcame adversity through most of the film. The initial gangster cycle petered out under pressure from various sources. A gangster cycle later in the decade took a different tack, downplaying the characters’ heroic aspects. Robinson, whether or not on the right side of the law in his 1930s films, portrayed vigorously, convincingly, and with compassion a wide variety of characters: He played a gangster in *The Last Gangster* (1938), an Asian in *The Hatchet Man* (1932), a law enforcer in *Bullets or Ballots* (1936), and a self-made man in *Silver Dollar* (1932). He even spoofed his own image and the gangster genre in *A Slight Case of Larceny* (1938). Because of his passionate political convictions, he accepted a minor role as an FBI official in the controversial *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939), an early entry in Hollywood’s campaign against Hitler.

Star status notwithstanding, Robinson was blacklisted at the end of the 1940s. He strenuously campaigned to clear himself and his career revived in the mid-1950s but most of his subsequent roles were supporting ones. He did make a triumphal return to the stage and achieved a viable TV career. Robinson was awarded the Legion d’Honneur in 1952 and received posthumously a special Oscar for “lifetime achievement.”

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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DANIEL J. LEAB

ROBINSON, JOSEPH

Joseph Taylor ("Joe T") Robinson (1872–1937) was the Democratic leader of the Senate from 1922 to 1937 (the majority leader from 1933 to 1937) and in 1928 was the Democratic candidate for vice president on the unsuccessful ticket headed by Al Smith.

Born August 26, 1872, in rural Lonoke County, Arkansas, Robinson, the ninth child of farmer and doctor James Madison Robinson and Matilda Swaim Robinson, attended the local elementary and secondary schools, one semester at the University of Arkansas and a summer law program at the University of Virginia. He became a successful lawyer after only a few months of study, partnering with local Democratic Party leader Tom Trimble.

In 1896 Robinson began a long, successful political career. Serving as a Democratic presidential elector, he gave up his position to form a fusion ticket for William Jennings Bryan with the Populist Party; in 1900 he received the same position, presidential elector. Two years later he won a seat in the U.S. Congress, where he supported progressive legislation during his five terms. In 1912 he won the governorship of Arkansas, but before he was inaugurated, Arkansas Senator Jeff Davis died suddenly, throwing the state's politics into turmoil. Days later, the legislature elected Robinson to fill the Senate vacancy.

In the Senate Robinson became a national figure. His staunch defense of President Woodrow Wilson and the Versailles peace treaty led Democrats to choose him to be chair of the 1920 party convention, a position he held again in 1928 and 1936. Just three years later he became minority

leader of the Senate, leading Arkansans to back him in his failed bid for president in 1924. In 1928 Al Smith chose Robinson for the Democratic vice-presidential slot because of his fierce stand against religious bigotry. And in 1932 he delivered enough Democratic votes to pass Herbert Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation; Hoover then named Robinson's friend, Harvey Couch, to the board.

After the 1932 election, Robinson became majority leader; in that capacity he guided much of the New Deal legislation through the Senate. In one instance, on March 8, 1933, the day before Franklin Delano Roosevelt introduced the Emergency Banking Act, Robinson shocked presidential advisers when he promised that the "bill will be passed tomorrow" (Weller, Jr., 1998, p. 137). Less than eight hours after its introduction, the measure passed the Senate. Robinson had only two major failures during the New Deal. In the first, he lost the battle for U.S. membership in the World Court, 52 to 36, seven votes short of the necessary two-thirds needed for victory. The Supreme Court "packing" plan was an even greater disappointment. Roosevelt promised Robinson that when the court-packing bill passed, he would appoint him to the Supreme Court. After bitter wrangling in the Senate, Robinson believed that he had enough votes to pass the bill in July 1937. But in the sweltering summer heat of Washington, Robinson pushed himself beyond his limits in fighting for the measure. On July 14, 1937, Robinson's death from a heart attack also killed the court-packing plan.

See Also: NEW DEAL; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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CECIL E. WELLER, JR.



Joseph Robinson (right) with Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt in Washington, D.C., in March 1933. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

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ROGERS, WILL

William Penn Adair Rogers (November 4, 1879–August 15, 1935) was known worldwide as a humorist, philosopher, writer, actor, and stage performer. Will Rogers was at the height of his popularity in 1935 when he died tragically in an airplane crash in Alaska.

Born in Indian Territory near present-day Oologah, Oklahoma, Rogers was the only son of well-to-do parents who were both part Cherokee. He attended schools in Indian Territory and Missouri, but never graduated from high school. After a brief time in Texas, he returned home, managed

the family ranch, and competed in roping contests. After traveling around the world, part of the time performing as a roper and rider, Rogers took his act to the Saint Louis World's Fair in 1904. Later that year, he appeared for the first time in vaudeville, launching a stage career that would include several seasons with the *Ziegfeld Follies*. An occasional contributor to newspapers by 1922, he started a syndicated weekly column that year and a daily column four years later, both eventually reaching millions of readers. He also starred in films—both silents and talkies—and on radio.

By 1929 Rogers had become one of the most visible, quoted, and recognizable figures in the country. He had taken advantage of almost every

available media form and had succeeded at most. His commentary, although often pointed, rarely attacked. As a humorist he was both jokester and philosopher.

The Depression of the 1930s caused Rogers to turn more serious. He had long before giped at the excesses he perceived in American society; therefore his initial reaction in the early months following the stock market crash reflected a hope for a return to normality. As the Depression deepened, however, Rogers criticized the refusal of the federal government to provide direct relief and in January 1931 he even proposed large-scale public works funded by increased taxation of the wealthy.

At the same time Rogers became directly involved in relief efforts. In early 1931 he voluntarily undertook a benefit tour of several agriculturally depressed states and raised significant funds for Red Cross relief programs. Rogers, a millionaire, donated to other organized appeals and to personal situations, and he urged the public to respond similarly.

Not surprisingly, he welcomed the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt and the promise of decisive action. He chose to interpret in the president's moves in the early days of his administration a return of confidence. Despite continued hardship in the country, Rogers's writings and public remarks took on a lighter, more positive tone from the beginning of Roosevelt's presidency in March 1933. From then until his death Rogers conveyed an optimistic message, even in his films, that good times would return, a point of view that critics on the left considered unrealistic. As evidenced by his rising popularity, however, the public seemed to agree with Rogers or, at least, to find comfort in his humor.

Rogers died with aviator Wiley Post in a plane crash at Point Barrow, Alaska, on August 15, 1935. He was survived by his wife, Betty, and three children.

See Also: HUMOR.

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Will Rogers (left) with Eleanor Roosevelt in Los Angeles in June 1933. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

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Young Eleanor Roosevelt in 1887. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

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STEVEN K. GRAGERT

ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR

Eleanor Roosevelt (October 11, 1884–November 7, 1962), niece of President Theodore Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, first lady of New York State (1924–1932), and first lady of the United States (1933–1945), left the American people a great legacy. Considered by many to be the first lady of the world and a harbinger of human rights for all, she always said, governments exist for only one reason: to make life better for all people. But, she quickly added, you can never depend on governments to do anything about that: you have to organize, door to door, block by block, community by community, to make your wants and needs known.

EARLY LIFE AND REFORM EFFORTS

Activist, organizer, journalist, and devoted public citizen, Eleanor Roosevelt struggled to create and embolden communities of democratic might; to fight poverty, discrimination, homelessness, ignorance, and war. Born into a family of wealth, privilege, and power, she was the lonely orphaned daughter of an alcoholic who died at the age of thirty-four, when Eleanor was ten years old. Her father Elliott, Theodore Roosevelt's brother, was her hero, but he was embattled all his life. Her mother Anna, bitter and weary, died at the age of twenty-nine, when Eleanor was eight. After the deaths of her parents, Eleanor spent her life trying to make things better for people in want, in need, in trouble—people just like her own mother and father. Raised mostly by her grandmother, Eleanor was away at Allenswood School in England when her uncle Theodore became president. Headmistress Marie Souvestre appreciated and encouraged her leadership qualities and many skills. Eleanor flourished and returned to New York society with bold convictions: She believed personal involvement could improve conditions; individual action mattered; democracy was essential; politics was not an isolated individualist adventure. She never went anywhere without her gang.

Eleanor was eighteen when she joined her girlhood chums (Mary Harriman, Jean Reid, Gwendolyn Burden, and others) and helped build the Junior League for the Promotion of Settlement Movements. In 1903, she volunteered at the University Settlement on Rivington Street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. She also joined the National Consumers' League and the Women's Trade Union League. Every day Eleanor sought to alleviate suffering, and she met and was inspired by her uncle's primary women advisers, Lillian Wald, Florence Kelley, and Jane Addams. Eleanor became ardent about public affairs, and she pursued a life of responsibility. To the end of her life, she believed that research and understanding, respect for people, and a politics of real concern would end mandated poverty, as well as racial and ethnic violence. From an early age, Eleanor was committed to a square deal and a new deal, for the United States and for the world.

Also in 1903, Eleanor became engaged to Franklin Delano Roosevelt, her fifth cousin once removed, then a student at Harvard University. She encouraged his career, while she sought to maintain her own activities. After their marriage on March 17, 1905, she had six children (one died in infancy) in ten years. She served as her husband's best advocate and volunteered her time mostly through the women's progressive movement. During World War I, Eleanor became aware of her own executive abilities, and after 1920 she plunged into a new level of activity, with new allies—most notably, Esther Lape and Elizabeth Read—with whom she rallied to get the United States into the World Court.

NEW DEAL LEADER

Eleanor Roosevelt's campaign for the World Court occupied many of her days between 1924 and 1935, when U.S. participation in the court failed to win approval in the Senate by six votes. With fascism on the rise and war looming, her public efforts during the 1930s were divided between the peace movement and the crying needs of the Great Depression. During her husband's presidency, she was notable as the most traveled public spirit behind the New Deal. Eleanor's work as leader, columnist, and broadcaster ensured specific victories concerning jobs, housing, and education. She put youth, race, and women's issues on the national agenda. In 1933, she protested the sex discrimination of her favorite New Deal agency, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), and successfully demanded "She She She" camps as well as CCC camps. At the suggestion of her great friend Lorena Hickok, Eleanor held press conferences for women journalists only, and she lobbied for women's right to work with dignity and for equal wages. As early as 1934, she spoke out against lynching and school segregation. With new allies, including the great black educator Mary McLeod Bethune and Walter White, president of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, as well as several white radicals, notably Aubrey Williams, Virginia Foster Durr, and Lucy Randolph Mason, Eleanor Roosevelt championed an end to discrimination in New Deal agencies and programs, elimination of the poll tax, and racial justice. She helped create the



Eleanor Roosevelt in June 1911 in Hyde Park, New York, with her children (left to right) James, Elliott, and Anna. FRANKLIN

DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Southern Conference on Human Welfare (1938–1948), and championed unionism for all workers, including farm workers. She also became associated with the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, and in 1936, when her *My Day* column was launched, she joined the Newspaper Guild, an affiliate of the Committee for Industrial Organization (later the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO).

Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt did not have a traditional, correct, or conventionally happy marriage, but it was one of Washington's most notably successful marriages. Together, they did more than either could have done alone. The first lady served her husband's interests and was his primary ambassador to neighborhood people, and to poor and hardworking and hidden communities in the mountains and deltas of the United States. Eleanor brought people who could not vote and, until the



Eleanor Roosevelt (right) and Nancy Cook nail a National Recovery Administration poster on a door at Roosevelt's Val-Kill home in 1933. AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

New Deal, did not count, into the mainstream of American life.

Eleanor Roosevelt remains the only first lady to use her pen to disagree with her husband. In 1938 she wrote an entire book, *This Troubled World*, to illustrate alternatives to her husband's undistinguished international policies. Regarding housing and the creation of model communities, she made vital decisions and helped engineer policy. A particularly successful adventure was the building of Arthurdale in Preston County, West Virginia. On model communities and an end to suffering and homelessness, she worked closely with Will Alexander, head of the Resettlement Administration,

which presided over the fifty-seven New Deal communities. She also relied on her longtime friends and allies Clarence Pickett, head of the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), and Senator Robert Wagner, architect of America's affordable housing efforts.

UNITED NATIONS DELEGATE

By 1939 the domestic New Deal was eclipsed by the needs of World War II. During the war, Eleanor continued her work for democracy, racial justice, and women's rights, and she traveled the globe on behalf of her husband's diplomatic needs. Franklin Roosevelt died before the war ended, on April 12,



Eleanor Roosevelt visits a WPA construction site in Des Moines, Iowa, in June 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

1945, and the first lady announced to a group of journalists who sought to interview her: "The story is over." But for Eleanor Roosevelt a new story was about to begin. President Harry S. Truman appointed her to attend the United Nations' first general assembly in London in December 1945.

That declaration gave Eleanor an opportunity to fight for her vision of the future from an official position of leadership for over six years. She considered her appointment a great victory for women and a great opportunity. She wanted the United States to take the lead in a campaign for planetary decency and peace; to extend the best of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal vision to the needs of the world. Her colleagues on the U.S. team included adversaries who initially resented her presence and generally opposed her views. But Eleanor took her

own advice: "If you have to compromise, be sure to compromise UP!" With hard work, a relentless schedule, and good advice from allies and State Department officials who kept her well briefed, Eleanor Roosevelt became an earnest, informed diplomat who usually achieved her goals against political conservatives within her own delegation and the disparate visions of a world that had shifted from world war to Cold War.

Eleanor's greatest victories involved Committee Three, the social, humanitarian, and cultural committee, where she was especially concerned about the plight of refugees and which quickly expanded to include all issues relating to human rights, fundamental freedoms, social progress, and world development. Eleanor's vigor at the first meetings impressed even U.S. delegate John Foster



Eleanor Roosevelt votes in Hyde Park, New York, in November 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Dulles, who had been appalled, he told her, by her appointment, but now acknowledged that her “work had been fine.” Eleanor wrote in her diary: “So—against odds, the women move forward. . . .”

Eleanor left London optimistic. After all the disagreements were aired, “we still are a group of 51 nations working together.” She was particularly pleased that the United Nations would be located in the United States because she felt that Americans had seen so little of the costs of war, the dislocation and human disasters, and she believed they needed to realize “that peace requires as much attention as war.” Furthermore, public support for the United Nations was imperative because Eleanor felt that

the federation was “the last and best hope for our civilization.”

As chair of the Human Rights Commission from 1946 to 1952, Eleanor Roosevelt’s most significant diplomacy involved the passage of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. Consisting of a preamble and thirty articles, the declaration was to serve as “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations,” and a yardstick to measure decency and human dignity, fundamental freedoms, and economic and social rights. At first, Truman instructed Eleanor to limit the principles to civil and political rights, and to ignore the Soviet-initiated social and economic rights. She refused and offered to resign: “You can not talk civil rights to people who are

hungry.” Moreover, Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal had promised freedom from want as well as freedom from fear. Truman acquiesced, and Eleanor agreed to divide the declaration and negotiate two enabling covenants.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was a compromise; every word was an agony of disagreement. The vote was forty-eight in favor, two absent, and eight abstentions, including Russia and its allies, Saudi Arabia, and South Africa. Eleanor Roosevelt understood that the declaration was a “first step,” and she believed the United States would shortly ratify the binding covenants. But Roosevelt submitted her resignation in 1952 when Dwight David Eisenhower was elected president, and John Foster Dulles, who became Eisenhower’s secretary of state, wanted nothing binding. In April 1953, Dulles told the Senate that the U.S. State Department no longer cared even to ratify the civil and political covenant. The matter did not come up again until President Jimmy Carter signed the covenant in 1977. Finally, at the Cold War’s end in 1992, President George H. W. Bush called upon the Senate to ratify the covenant, which it did by acclamation. While most of the 191 member nations of the United Nations have ratified both covenants, the United States has still not brought up for discussion the Economic and Social covenant. With her work undone, Eleanor left the United Nations and joined the American Association for the United Nations, later called the United Nations Association, an activist lobby group she had founded in 1943 to bring United Nations issues to the public. From 1953 until her death, she traveled the United States and the world with messages of peace and human rights.

Eleanor Roosevelt was convinced that on the day the atomic bomb was dropped a new world situation had been created: “a world in which we had to learn to live in friendship with our neighbors of every race and creed and color, or face the fact that we might be wiped off the face of the earth.” In *Tomorrow Is Now*, her last book, published posthumously in 1963, she wrote of America’s responsibilities for the future, and its difficulties. She concluded that the United States needed to resur-rect with conviction and daring the good American

word *liberal*, “which derives from the word *free*. . . . We must cherish and honor the word *free* or it will cease to apply to us.”

By the beginning of the twenty-first century the domestic New Deal, from housing to jobs to Social Security, has been largely deboned. Every issue of Eleanor Roosevelt’s struggle for decency and dignity for all Americans is once again on the national agenda. Internationally, peace and human rights are on the global agenda with ever more urgency and heartbreak. For hope, the American people have Eleanor Roosevelt’s legacy of activist democracy—a timeless source of inspiration and faith in the global community.

See Also: RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA); ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; SOUTHERN CONFERENCE ON HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW); SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS’ UNION (STFU); WORLD COURT.

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BLANCHE WIESEN COOK

ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was born on January 30, 1882, in Hyde Park, New York. He was the only child of James and Sara (Delano) Roosevelt. Franklin had a half brother, James Roosevelt, Jr., nicknamed Rosy, whose mother was the first wife of James Roosevelt, Sr. Sara Delano was 26 years old when she married the 52-year-old widower. Of Dutch ancestry, James Roosevelt, Sr., was a wealthy landowner in Hyde Park, a small town along the Hudson River north of New York City. Roosevelt was a Harvard-educated lawyer who served as vice president of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad. He had been a Whig, but after the collapse of the Whig Party due to the slavery issue, he became a Democrat.

James Roosevelt's loyalty to the Democratic Party was weakened by his economic conservatism and his family ties to Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican and his distant cousin from Long Island. In the presidential election of 1896, James Roosevelt was a so-called Gold Democrat who voted for the victorious Republican presidential nominee, William McKinley. Roosevelt was repelled by William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic presidential nominee. He perceived Bryan as a rabble rouser and economic radical who threatened the gold standard. Roosevelt again voted for McKinley in 1900 when the president chose Theodore Roosevelt as his running mate. James Roosevelt died one month after the 1900 presidential election.

EARLY LIFE AND CAREER

As a boy tutored at home in Hyde Park and then as a prep school student at the Groton School in Massachusetts, Franklin Roosevelt demonstrated little interest in reading or learning about history and politics. He first expressed an interest in politics while eagerly following the career of Theodore Roosevelt as his cousin rapidly progressed from combat heroism in the Spanish-American War to the presidency. Nonetheless, Franklin Roosevelt's famous surname did not gain popularity and status for him among his classmates and teachers at the Groton School and Harvard University. Widely regarded by his peers and teachers as amiable yet superficial, Roosevelt did not distinguish himself in academics, athletics, student government, or social clubs.

Eleanor Roosevelt. Franklin Roosevelt's wife, (Anna) Eleanor Roosevelt, was another major influence in the development of his social conscience and political career. She was his distant cousin and the favorite niece of Theodore Roosevelt. She and Franklin were married in 1905. Her uncle, while president, gave away the bride. After completing one year of studies at Columbia University's law school, Franklin Roosevelt worked for a Wall Street law firm. He was often assigned minor clerical duties and soon became bored and frustrated with the practice of law.

During their courtship, Eleanor Roosevelt had volunteered in settlement houses in New York City. She showed her future husband the wretched living conditions of immigrants and their children. More so than Franklin, Eleanor earnestly and zealously identified with the ideals of the Progressive movement and its efforts to abolish child labor, improve public health and education, reduce poverty, and grant suffrage to women.

New York politics. As Roosevelt pondered his political future, it was still not clear if he would enter politics as a progressive Republican or a progressive Democrat. According to biographer Geoffrey C. Ward, Franklin Roosevelt decided to enter politics as a Democrat because Theodore Roosevelt had several sons who were expected to enter politics as Republicans. Also, since Franklin Roosevelt's home

tion of political skills and values or the successive crises of the Great Depression and World War II. Even with the end of World War II and the beginning of rapid economic growth, many Americans expected the president to behave in a Rooseveltian style as an articulate media figure who could influence public opinion and motivate Congress to pass legislation that improved their quality of life in such diverse policy areas as health care, education, inflation control, employment, economic development, and the public infrastructure. Roosevelt's wartime example as commander-in-chief and chief diplomat provided both a role model and high expectations for future presidents to be respected, powerful world leaders adept at forming American-led international coalitions through United Nations' decisions, treaties, and collective security organizations for the purposes of deterring or repelling anti-democratic aggression and spreading the American values of human rights, democratic government, and capitalism.

Much of the unattained policy agenda of New Deal liberalism and Roosevelt's presidency, such as health care for the poor and elderly, urban renewal, federal aid at all levels of education, civil rights protection for blacks and other minorities, and environmental and consumer protection, became the major domestic policy goals of Roosevelt's Democratic, and to some extent, his Republican, successors in the presidency, as well as most Democrats and some Republicans in Congress. Likewise, opponents and critics of Roosevelt's policies and his conduct as president devoted much time and effort after his death to stop the further advance of New Deal-based liberalism in domestic policy and to counter what they regarded as the "imperial presidency" that began with Franklin D. Roosevelt.

See Also: DEMOCRATIC PARTY; NEW DEAL; NEW DEAL, SECOND; NEW DEAL, THIRD; ROOSEVELT, ELEANOR.

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SEAN J. SAVAGE

ROSENMAN, SAMUEL I. *See* BRAIN(S) TRUST.

ROTHSTEIN, ARTHUR

Arthur Rothstein (July 17, 1915–November 11, 1985), a Farm Security Administration (FSA) photographer from 1935 to 1940, was born in New York City. Rothstein became interested in photography while in high school, and he pursued the medium as an undergraduate at Columbia University in New York City, where he was a student of Roy Stryker. In the summer of 1935 Stryker hired Rothstein to work in the Historical Section of the Resettlement Administration (RA). Rothstein continued with the agency after it became the Farm Security Administration in 1937. He left in 1940 to take a position with *Look*. During World War II, Rothstein worked for the Office of War Information, the Signal Corps, and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration. With the end of the war, he returned to *Look*, remaining with the magazine until it ceased publication in 1971. The next year he went to work for *Parade*, where he held a position until his death.

The first photographer hired at the RA and the youngest member of Stryker's staff, Rothstein's initial duties were to set up the agency's lab. Lacking professional photographic experience, he was soon inspired by images taken by Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange, and he quickly gained confidence and technical expertise. Rothstein was sent on his first field assignment in October 1935, when he photographed rural farmers in the Blue Ridge Mountain region of Virginia. His two most famous series were executed the following spring. While in Cimarron County, Oklahoma, in April 1936 he shot



Arthur Rothstein on assignment for the Farm Security Administration in Pennsylvania in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Fleeing a Dust Storm, an emblematic Dust Bowl image of a farmer and his two sons scurrying for cover in a bleak landscape.

More controversial was the work he did in May in the Badlands of Pennington County, South Dakota, when he used a sun-bleached steer's skull he had found in the parched riverbed as a moveable prop in several pictures. His purpose had been to create an image that would graphically convey to viewers the severity of the drought conditions. But anti-New Deal critics thought that in altering the scene, he had compromised his vantage as an objective documentary photographer in order to distort actual conditions for the political ends of the Washington politicians who employed him. Those opposed to Roosevelt's programs made charges of photographic fakery that generated a firestorm of criticism for the agency and administration.

In practice, many of the leading FSA photographers manipulated their scenes by posing their subjects, moving and removing objects, and using artificial light sources, or in the case of Pare Lorentz's film, *The Plow that Broke the Plains* (1936), even hiring actors. Lorentz, a skilled filmmaker and director, exerted a strong influence on Rothstein. As artists, both carefully thought out their work, and apparent spontaneity could be staged. Nevertheless, Rothstein regarded his images less as works of art than as instruments of social change.

Rothstein traveled widely for the FSA, passing through nearly every state and producing more than nine thousand images for the agency. These remain in the FSA/OWI collection of the Library of Congress. His career as a photojournalist spanned fifty years, and in addition to his studio work, he taught at the Columbia School of Journalism

(1961–1971) and published a series of books on photojournalism and documentary photography.

See Also: FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); PHOTOGRAPHY; RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA).

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BETSY FAHLMAN

ROUTE 66

Two of the myths most associated with the United States and the American way of life are westward expansion (the eternal frontier) and the open highway. Both these myths helped to turn Route 66 into a legend.

By 1910, there were around 180,000 registered automobiles in the United States. The decade from 1910 to 1920 saw that number increase to around seventeen million. The rising automobile culture in the United States was clear to see, and automobiles need good roads. The idea of Route 66 can be traced back to two entrepreneurs, Cyrus Avery and John Woodruff, who sometime in the early 1900s conceived the idea of a single continuous road linking Chicago and Los Angeles.

Congress enacted a bill in 1916 to create public highways. More comprehensive legislation that

was passed in 1925 approved the construction of a road from Chicago to Los Angeles and designated it U.S. Highway 66. The new highway was to run approximately 2,400 miles and was to follow a meandering course in order to connect as many rural communities as possible. It was to be a modern all-weather road. The lanes were to be noticeably wider and the road less curvy than was standard at the time.

Even before paving was fully completed, Route 66 was widely used, mainly by truckers, who were taking advantage of the road's shortening of the distance between the Midwest and the West Coast, and by farmers, who were seeking a broader market for their goods and took advantage of how the road connected many disparate rural communities.

The onset of the Great Depression changed many things for Route 66. Before then its construction had mainly been a state responsibility, but during the Great Depression the massive public works projects of the New Deal included work on Route 66. Paving of the Route was completed in 1938, and the economic impact of the project was huge. In addition, the Route's use changed during the Depression. John Steinbeck's harrowing 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath* dramatized the real life predicaments of the approximately 210,000 people who traveled along Route 66 to escape the despair of the Dust Bowl. Most did not reach California, and most of those who did eventually returned, but Steinbeck's novel was based on fact, and his christening of Route 66 as the "mother road" continues to resonate. The escape from the Dust Bowl dovetailed nicely with America's emerging love affair with the open road and with the nation's frontier mythology.

As the Depression waned, Americans retained their romantic views of Route 66. The road spawned popular songs and a television series, and came to be associated more with pleasure and adventure than with escape. A kind of automobile culture sprang up along the Route, including motels, diners, and automobile repair shops.

As the Interstate Highway system was developed, Route 66 slowly fell into disuse. Eventually, it lost its designation, and its component stretches of highway were taken over by the various states it

passed through. The road nevertheless retains a strong place in the American popular imagination.

See Also: DUST BOWL; GRAPES OF WRATH, THE; MIGRATION; OKIES.

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STEVEN KOZAK

RPAA. *See* REGIONAL PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA.

RUML, BEARDSLEY

Beardsley Ruml (November 5, 1894–April 18, 1960) was an important New Deal economic advisor on taxation issues. He was born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, to a physician and a hospital superintendent, both Czech immigrants. Ruml graduated from Dartmouth College in New Hampshire in 1915 and received a Ph.D. in applied psychology from the University of Chicago in 1917 for work on mental testing. Ruml, along with other leading psychologists, participated in government mental testing for soldiers during World War I.

At an early age, Ruml demonstrated his supreme skills at mediating between the world of ideas and the nation's practical problems. Throughout the 1920s, Ruml served as the first and only director of the newly created Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Fund. In that capacity, he was in touch with and offered substantial funding to other leading liberal social scientists. From 1931 to 1934, Ruml served as dean of the division of social sciences at the University of Chicago, an important

center of social reform. In 1934, he accepted a job as treasurer of R. H. Macy and Company, the famous New York department store noted for offering the lowest prices possible. An acquaintance remarked that Ruml was trading ideas for notions, but as it turned out, he used his position in corporate America to play a formative role in crafting a liberal business response to the New Deal. He remained at Macy's for fifteen years, becoming chairman of the board in 1945. Dependent on consumer spending, that firm supported New Deal measures intended to increase mass income. On behalf of Macy's and other large retailers, Ruml drafted a report in support of federal unemployment insurance and social security pensions.

Within the New Deal, Ruml served as a leading voice favoring the use of deficit spending to bring about recovery. In 1937, President Roosevelt appointed him director of the New York Federal Reserve and he served as chairman from 1941 until 1946. Ruml joined Laughlin Currie, Aubrey Williams, and Harold Ickes in recommending the resumption of government spending in 1938 to end the "Roosevelt Recession." Ruml's major contribution came with his crafting of the idea of pay-as-you-go taxation during World War II as a way both to greatly expand the amount of revenue the government collected and to ease payment burdens, especially for those in military service, by spreading payments throughout the year. The Roosevelt administration implemented that withholding system in 1943 with the introduction of a mass tax that dramatically increased the number of taxpayers. To sell this mass tax, Ruml successfully advocated forgiving much of the previous year's taxes. As a member of the Committee of Economic Development in the postwar period, Ruml remained an advocate for the use of moderate Keynesian fiscal policies to stabilize the postwar economy.

See Also: FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; TAXATION.

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MEG JACOBS

RUMSEY, MARY HARRIMAN

Mary Harriman Rumsey (November 17, 1881–December 18, 1934) was a reformer who believed in cooperation rather than competition as a vehicle for social and economic enterprise. Active in many civic, social, and philanthropic organizations, she co-founded the Junior League, a voluntary social service organization for debutantes, and during the Great Depression she served as chair of the Consumers' Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration (NRA).

Born into a wealthy New York family (her father was railroad tycoon E. H. Harriman and her siblings included U.S. statesman W. Averell Harriman), Rumsey was expected to live a conventional privileged life. Instead, inspired by the work of settlement house reformers such as Jane Addams and the efforts of the College Settlement Association, Rumsey, her friend Nathalie Henderson Swan, and several other debutantes founded the Junior League for the Promotion of Settlement Movements in New York (later the Junior League) in 1901. Among the group's early members was Eleanor Roosevelt. Rumsey chaired the League until 1905, the year she graduated from Barnard College.

After her father's death in 1909, Rumsey helped manage the Harriman estate and promoted agricultural and livestock cooperatives. In 1910 she married sculptor Charles Cary Rumsey. The marriage, which resulted in three children, lasted until her husband's death in an auto accident in 1922.

In 1928 Rumsey and her brother, Averell, abandoned their family's Republican politics to support the Democratic presidential candidate Al Smith. The siblings also supported Franklin Roosevelt in 1932, although of the two, Mary Rumsey was closer to the Roosevelts and initially more involved with the New Deal. After Roosevelt's election, Rumsey

became chair of the Consumers' Advisory Board of the NRA, which lobbied for consumers' interests when the agency's industrial fair practices codes were established. Rumsey also lobbied on behalf of consumers with the National Emergency Council, a coordinating group for New Deal agencies.

Although she lacked bureaucratic experience, Rumsey was influential because of her skill at working with academics and her strong ties with other New Dealers, and she was often mentioned as a possible candidate for a cabinet level position as secretary of consumer affairs. Her most significant achievement, however, may have been convincing Averell to take an administrative post with the NRA, thus beginning his long career in politics and public service.

An avid sportswoman, cattle breeder, and art patron, Rumsey's career ended abruptly when she died in 1934 from injuries suffered when she fell from a horse while fox hunting in Virginia. Her Washington funeral drew many prominent New Dealers, including her old friend, Eleanor Roosevelt.

See Also: NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA).

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MARY JO BINKER

RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION (REA)

By the end of World War I people recognized electricity as an important factor in the quality of life. Large and small cities and many towns were elec-



REA workers string transmission line in the Tennessee Valley region during the 1930s. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY



An REA employee checks transformers at the REA cooperative headquarters in Hayti, Missouri, in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

trified at both the industrial and consumer level. Factories, homes, and recreational buildings had electric lights, appliances, indoor bathrooms, and other modern conveniences that depended on the availability of electricity. During the next decade the use of electricity would grow to such an extent that the 1920s came to be known as the "Electrical Age." American culture, the quality of health and education, and industrial productivity improved in urban areas because of the application of electrical energy. One exception, however, to this general development existed in the United States: Rural America did not have electrical service. In 1920 approximately half of the country's population lived on farms and unincorporated areas, which meant that

they did not enjoy the benefits of radio, lighting, refrigeration, and modern sanitation, all of which operated on electricity. By 1935 the situation had only improved slightly, with 10 percent of the rural inhabitants of the United States having electrical service in their homes and on their farms. The movement for public power, or the generation and sale of electrical energy by government means, emerged as a national issue during the period between the two world wars partly because of the national outcry for rural electrification.

During the 1920s the privately owned electrical companies recognized the importance of serving the countryside and created the Committee on the Relation of Electricity to Agriculture (CREA). This

organization, an arm of the electrical industry, undertook research and educational programs to promote the use of electricity in country homes. Only limited progress occurred: The CREA touted its program at Red Wing, Minnesota, as an example of its efforts, but a more significant attempt came through the Alabama Power Company in Birmingham. A few power companies around the nation made a small effort to build distribution lines along rural highways and roads but made little progress in getting service to the inhabitants there, as demonstrated by the overwhelming lack of rural service in the United States by the mid 1930s. Cost was the drawback; farmers could not afford the rates to use enough electricity to warrant the construction of lines to them. An endless cycle of high costs and low usage for farmers and no profits for the power companies prevented a breakthrough. In 1935 President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated that he discovered the lack of electricity in rural America in 1923 when he first visited Warm Springs, Georgia, to bathe and swim in the soothing waters there to alleviate the pain of his polio. The demand for government action grew, so that by the early 1930s some states, such as North Carolina and South Carolina, attempted to start public rural electric programs on their own. For lack of funding and the inability to overcome the complex technical and distribution barriers of extending service to rural inhabitants, the few state efforts at the time made no progress either. Only a strong and well-organized and funded program could meet the challenge, and by the early 1930s public power proponents and the rural citizens of the United States looked to the federal government for help.

One of the commitments of Roosevelt's presidency was the development of public power, and the creation of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) in December 1933 was the first example of such action. Soon after commencing operations, the TVA organized a farmer-owned rural electric cooperative to serve the area around Tupelo, Mississippi, on an experimental basis. There had always been doubts about the ability of farmers to organize and operate an electric cooperative, so through this experiment public power advocates in the Roosevelt administration sought an answer. To their delight, the cooperative progressed and suc-

ceeded well, greatly encouraging Morris L. Cooke, Roosevelt's chief advisor on public power, to push for the creation of a special agency dedicated solely to rural electrification. Using funds available from the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act, the president in 1935 created by executive order the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) and named Cooke as the administrator. Cooke had to develop a means by which REA funds could be used to build the electrical network for distributing electricity through rural areas. After some experimentation, he accepted the cooperative as the best method, partly because of the efforts of the American Farm Bureau Federation. Progress was too slow, however, to suit farmers and rural homeowners, and in 1936 Senator George Norris and Representative Sam Rayburn introduced legislation to make the REA a permanent agency with statutory authority. The legislation gave preference to public agencies in obtaining funds, but it did not exclude private power companies from using the funds.

After the Act passed in 1936, the REA got underway with a construction program relying mostly on farmer-owned cooperatives along the line of the TVA experiment in Mississippi. Rural families waited eagerly for the lines to reach their homes, and as electricity became available, they first bought small appliances such as irons and radios. Refrigerators and indoor bathrooms with running water typically came later, and many of the recipients of REA service regarded the agency as one of the New Deal's greatest achievements.

For the first time, the privately owned power companies showed an interest in the rural market. Some of them began "skimming the cream," meaning they built distribution lines into the most lucrative areas of local markets, thereby leaving the REA with the high-risk customers. Bitter court fights broke out between the REA and local power companies, and the differences were not entirely resolved until after World War II. During the war, however, REA construction slowed considerably, but in 1944 Congress passed the Pace Act that set the REA rate of interest on loans to cooperatives at two percent. With this advantage and the postwar boom in the United States, the REA began a massive construction program. So popular was the REA

that Congress during some years after the war appropriated more funds than the agency requested. By 1955 the portion of farms and rural homes in the United States with electricity reached 90 percent. Rural electrification had been achieved.

Electrical service brought profound, and often unrecognized, changes in country living. Health vastly improved with indoor bathrooms. A sharp decline occurred in infant mortality and deaths of children under two years of age from infectious diseases dropped. In the South hookworm became a relic of the past with the disappearance of the outdoor "privy." The quality of diets and subsequent health benefits improved with the availability of refrigeration for storage of food. Country schools enjoyed modern lighting and heat, and teachers noted an improvement in the atmosphere of their rooms and performance of the students. Home life became more attractive as families joined their urban cousins in listening to their favorite radio shows, and women enjoyed the conveniences of electrical appliances and running water in their kitchens. The REA must be considered the instrument that brought rural America out of the preindustrial age.

See Also: PUBLIC POWER; TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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D. CLAYTON BROWN

RURAL LIFE

Rural Americans experienced much hardship and suffering during the Depression, but rural life also

underwent changes. Farm prices had started dropping in the mid 1920s and only fell further when the crash of 1929 occurred. Low prices brought many foreclosures, insufficient tax revenues for schools, and depressed business in small towns. Like nearly all Americans, rural inhabitants had to make sacrifices and forego plans for the future. The plight of country folk went beyond low incomes, however, because their lifestyles had not kept pace with the more modern standard of living in the cities. Rural homes and farms generally had no running water, indoor bathrooms, electric lights, radios, or telephones. Small landowners, commonly known as "dirt farmers," and those farmers at the bottom of the social ladder, tenants and sharecroppers, lived under some of the most staggering conditions of poverty in the United States. In the most extreme cases, particularly in the Cotton Belt, it was not uncommon to find malnourished children and adults living in small houses or shacks with dirt floors and no window screens or coverings. By contrast, large and mid-level landowners often had nice homes with attractive features. A great deal of variation was evident in rural life, with large landowners and small business owners at the top of the social ladder, while a large number of small farmers and tenants lived in miserable conditions at the bottom.

Rural life during the Depression continued to differ from urban living. Farm families shared the common experience of working together for their livelihood. They shared the tasks, for example, of producing foodstuffs from gardens and orchards, or of tending livestock and poultry. Children had daily chores that gave them a place in the family hierarchy and made them participants in the family struggle for a livelihood. Boys cut firewood for the stove, drew water for the kitchen, and worked alongside their fathers in the fields. Girls helped their mothers in preparing meals, canning fruits and vegetables, tending gardens, and caring for younger siblings. Rural families were more self-sustaining and their lives required team effort compared with urban families, which often, though not always, depended on a sole breadwinner.

Rural education also lagged behind the national norm. The one-room schoolhouse could still be found, but consolidation of schools had moved for-



Although many rural American families abandoned their farms after recurrent crop failures during the 1930s, some, like this family in Bonner county, Idaho, in 1939, continued farming with the help of Farm Security Administration loans. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ward so that most of the schools for rural children were located in towns. These schools had fewer teachers and a narrower curriculum than their urban counterparts; many had no or ill-equipped laboratories for teaching science. Libraries in rural schools were nearly always smaller, with less reference material and fewer learning resources. Teachers not uncommonly taught more than one grade in the same room.

Transportation also varied. Automobiles and small trucks were common, but wagons drawn by horses and mules appeared often on roads. Unpaved roads, which turned into muddy quagmires during heavy rains, linked farms and homes with towns. Paved or graveled roads had become more numerous, however, since World War I, so that travel conditions were steadily, if slowly, getting better. Automobiles and roads ended much of the isolation of country life and stimulated the cultural growth of millions of rural inhabitants.

The Depression forced the United States to recognize that small family farms, particularly those engaged in self-sufficient operations, were becoming extinct. Small farmers in the past had managed to maintain homes and raise families with the use of home gardens, small flocks of poultry, and small herds of livestock. Home canning and butchering were common. For cash, farm families produced cotton, tobacco, some grains, and fruits and vegetables, but their cash flow was minimal. With the rising industrialization of the United States, agriculture became more commercialized, and to keep up with the rising standard of living in the United States, farmers needed cash for mechanized equipment, fuel and energy, home furnishings, clothing, the new improvements in medical care, and other features of modern life. No longer would small plots of land yield enough income for the farm family to remain a viable participant in American culture.

The Dust Bowl of the Depression expedited the decline of the small, self-sufficient farm in the southern plains. Forced to leave the land by this catastrophic event, farmers took their families to new lands, particularly the West Coast, or they moved into cities. In their wake they left dilapidated homes and barns, withering small towns, and fur-



Children in rural Alabama attend school in 1935. FRANKLIN

DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

ther erosion of rural life. The infamous drought brought new respect for soil conservation and preventive measures for wind erosion, but the intensive small plot farming of the stricken area never returned. The steady decline of the family farm combined with the hardship of the Depression to produce a sense of unease and concern among rural inhabitants. So many of the values of rural life were falling by the wayside as the new order of industrialization took over. In 1920 the federal census had demonstrated that for the first time a majority of Americans lived in urban areas (defined as 2,500 or more inhabitants). Since then, young people had continued to flock to cities, abandoning the farm life prized by their ancestors. Concern had grown throughout the United States because the nation had always been predominantly rural and agricultural. Now, with the small family farm struggling to survive, small town residents and farmers worried about the future. Just as there was no parity of agricultural prices during the Depression, rural Americans were losing their social and cultural parity with urban America.

Despite these stressful conditions, rural Americans retained their sense of dignity and pride, a feeling of self-worth, and a strong work ethic. Their willingness to sacrifice and deny their own fulfillment were admirable qualities synonymous with the agrarian ideal. In this respect rural life was the

embodiment of the American spirit. To watch their way of life change, however, to yield their individualism to the emerging commercialism, meant that rural people had to endure the pain that accompanied this significant period of America's transition to a highly industrialized country.

Toward the end of the Depression in 1941, the economy of the United States showed improvement, but not full recovery. Agricultural prices increased slightly, but were still below parity levels. Rural life began to show stirrings of improvement, however, owing to the impact of federal programs designed and operated to alleviate the substandard conditions on farms. The most effective agency was the Rural Electrification Administration (REA), which went into operation in 1935. It constructed electric transmission lines and enabled rural residents to have access to electrical service. At the end of the Depression in 1941, approximately 30 percent of rural homes and farms had electricity, and rural homeowners responded by installing lights and purchasing small appliances, such as radios and irons. Running water and indoor bathrooms quickly followed. Farmwives began using such kitchen conveniences as refrigerators and electric ranges. General health improved as indicated by drops in infant mortality, disease and illness rates among children, hookworm, and pellagra. Country schools with electric lighting offered a comfortable environment more conducive to learning. Merchants in small towns also took advantage of electrical service by modernizing their shops and making the premises more attractive. Electrification, which remained incomplete at the end of the Depression, brought a sense of renewal to rural life.

Beginning in 1933 the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) brought some relief to the producers of staple crops: cotton, wheat, corn, rice, tobacco, hogs, and dairy products. But the government price support program, which expanded in 1938 with a new AAA, could not lift farming out of the Depression. Price supports remained, however, and federal assistance became a regular feature of American agriculture.

The Farm Security Administration (FSA) also sought to better rural life. It went into operation in 1937, absorbing the Resettlement Administration.

The FSA had a broad program of rural rehabilitation aimed at small landowners, tenants, and sharecroppers. This agency also operated rural health cooperatives. But the FSA affected only a portion of residents. Migration into cities, which resumed in about 1940 after stalling during the Depression, reduced the surplus population on farms and helped resolve the plight of rural America.

When the United States entered World War II, which ended the Depression, rural life had changed, perhaps more than was apparent. Through its various support programs the federal government had become a new business partner in agriculture and had an impact on nearly every facet of farming. The result was much needed improvement in soil conservation, flood control, and reforestation, but price support was the most important change. Living conditions also improved because of the REA and the limited contribution of the FSA. Coupled with the advances underway in mechanization, particularly the growing use of tractors, rural life continued to modernize and farming became more commercial. More than anything, migration alleviated the plight of people living on small self-sufficient farms or working as tenants and sharecroppers. Such fundamental changes set rural life onto a course of change that lasted through the next generation. It was only appropriate that the U.S. Department of Agriculture entitled its 1940 yearbook, *Farmers in a Changing World*.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; AGRICULTURE ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); CITIES AND SUBURBS; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); RURAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION (REA).

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D. CLAYTON BROWN

RYAN, FATHER JOHN A.

John Augustine Ryan (May 25, 1869–September 16, 1945) was a Roman Catholic priest and a writer, educator, and social reformer. Reared in Minnesota, Ryan entered Saint Thomas Seminary in 1887 to study for the priesthood for the diocese of Saint Paul. Ordained in 1898, he was awarded his Ph.D. in sacred theology from Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., in 1906. In his dissertation, *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects*, Ryan argued that an employer was obligated to pay “a living wage,” one sufficient to support a worker and his family in decent and comfortable surroundings. This concept, based on Catholic social teachings, was central to his socioeconomic worldview.

Ryan taught at Saint Thomas Seminary before returning to Catholic University, where, in 1916, he published *Distributive Justice: The Right and Wrong of Our Present Distribution of Wealth*, which elaborated on the obligations of workers and employers in an industrial society. Ryan’s ideas concerning economic and social policy in post-World War I America became the basis for the Bishops’ Program of Social Reconstruction in 1919. This program called for a legal minimum wage; labor laws to protect women and children; social insurance against old age, sickness, and unemployment; and labor’s right to unionize. From 1920 until 1944, Ryan served as director of the social action department of the United States Bishops’ National Catholic Welfare Council, a position that allowed him to present Catholic social teachings to a national audience.

Catholic periodical publications such as *Commonweal*, *Catholic World*, *Catholic Charities Review*, and *Ecclesiastical Review* also provided Ryan with a forum for promoting social justice.

During the Great Depression, Ryan advocated government intervention to relieve economic hardship. Highly critical of Herbert Hoover’s cautious policies, Ryan found in Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal—in particular the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 and the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938—a near embodiment of Catholic social teachings. As a Roosevelt supporter, Ryan earned the nickname “Right Reverend New Dealer” from the Reverend Charles Coughlin, a critic of Roosevelt. During the Roosevelt years, Ryan served as chairman of the advisory council of the United States Employment Service, as a member of the President’s Committee on Farm Tenancy, and as a member of the industrial appeals board of the National Recovery Administration. In general, Ryan played a greater role in presenting New Deal policies to his fellow Catholics than in influencing the formation of government policy.

See Also: NEW DEAL; RELIGION.

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BENTLEY ANDERSON



SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE (1934)

What began as an isolated longshoremen's dispute developed in the spring and summer of 1934 into one of the most sweeping and violent industrial conflicts of the Great Depression. Over the course of eighty-two days, San Francisco's waterfront workers protested their mistreatment by ship owners. Employers organized as well, resulting in a bloody confrontation and a stalemate that brought a polarized San Francisco to standstill.

The roots of the general strike lay in the harsh working lives of San Francisco's longshoremen. Each morning, under what was called the "shape-up," workers lined up at the docks as private contractors chose whom they would employ that day, forcing men to beg for work and pay kickbacks to hiring agents. Represented only by an employer-controlled company union, longshoremen had few alternatives. With the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933, and its promise of greater cooperation with unions, however, longshoremen started to organize. Workers formed Local 38-79 of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA), a conservative union affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and issued a set of demands: recognition, a six-hour workday, a thirty-hour workweek, and a pay in-

crease. A radical faction of longshoremen led by Australian-born Harry Bridges raised the stakes further by demanding that the shape-up be replaced by a union hiring hall. When ILA officials negotiated an agreement that left out the hiring hall, rank-and-file members of Local 38-79 suspended their president.

Unable to win their broader demands, longshoremen throughout the Pacific Coast region went on strike on May 9, 1934. Workers rallied together in unprecedented solidarity, virtually closing down all West Coast ports. Responding to their members' pleas, the Teamsters and the seamen's unions supported the longshoremen by refusing to service the ports. Despite pressure from union and public officials, San Francisco's longshoremen, now led by Bridges, held firm. Responding in kind, business leaders coordinated their efforts to undermine the strike through the Industrial Association of San Francisco, an alliance of industrial, banking, shipping, railroad, and utility firms that was formed in 1921. The Association, with the help of a public relations firm, launched a campaign alleging that the strike was a Communist plot. Historians have since rejected that claim, though some strike leaders, including Bridges, were either members of or sympathetic to the Communist Party.

The violence between strikers, scabs, and police escalated on July 5, which would be remembered as

“Bloody Thursday.” At midday, police and vigilantes fired on strikers who had retreated for a lunch break, killing two. By the day’s end, another seventy strikers had been seriously injured. Over the next two weeks, California’s governor mobilized the National Guard to restore order while the National Longshoremen’s Board, appointed by President Franklin Roosevelt, struggled unsuccessfully to restart negotiations between strikers and employers. On July 16, sixty-three unions of the San Francisco Labor Council commenced a general strike that involved 130,000 workers, shut down the city, and took over basic services, such as the distribution of food. The Industrial Association of San Francisco, the mayor, and a consortium of the city’s newspapers reacted with a hyperbolic campaign that depicted the general strike as a Communist insurrection. Although the campaign did not achieve its objective—a military crackdown by Roosevelt—the accusation of treason scared the more cautious labor leaders, who terminated the general strike after only three days. On July 30 the ILA membership overwhelmingly agreed to end their strike and to accept binding arbitration by the National Longshoremen’s Board. The Board granted the ILA a collective bargaining agreement, a hiring hall virtually controlled by the union, and a significant pay increase.

The longshoremen and general strikes demonstrated the power and quickness with which ordinary workers could act if pushed too far. The latent radicalism and solidarity of the rank-and-file served as both a warning to employers, who slowly became receptive to mediated settlements, and a promise to aggressive labor leaders, who soon left the conservative AFL and formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) to unionize workers across job categories. The strikes also demonstrated the impact of federal labor policy: The National Industrial Recovery Act and the federal labor board were vital to both the instigation and resolution of the conflict. Most of all, the general strike represented the fraying of social bonds that could only get worse if the economic crisis of the Depression continued.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); BRIDGES, HARRY; COLLECTIVE BARGAINING;

CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN’S ASSOCIATION (ILA); ORGANIZED LABOR; STRIKES.

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EDUARDO F. CANEDO

SANGER, MARGARET

In an effort to protect the health of women, Margaret Higgins Sanger (September 14, 1879–September 6, 1966) began the birth control movement in the United States. One of eleven children of a Roman Catholic Irish-American family in Corning, New York, Margaret Higgins blamed her mother’s early death on poverty and the rigors of bearing so many children. Determined to escape a similar fate, she enrolled in the White Plains Hospital School of Nursing in 1900. Margaret planned to become a registered nurse but her 1902 marriage to architect William Sanger ended her formal training. She bore two sons and one daughter who died at the age of four. The marriage proved troubled and the couple separated in 1914, finally divorcing in 1921 at a time when such actions were rare. Sanger would embark on a second marriage to wealthy oilman Noah Slee in 1922.

In an argument that she would repeat for the remainder of her life, Sanger maintained that women could not benefit from educational and political advances unless they also had the ability to control their own bodies. In 1914, she coined the term *birth control* in the pages of her magazine, *The Woman Rebel*. Days after opening the first U.S. birth

control clinic in Brooklyn in 1916, Sanger was arrested. The subsequent court case gave physicians the right to prescribe contraception to women when medically indicated. The decision provided Sanger with the legal basis for the 1923 establishment of the Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau (later renamed the Margaret Sanger Research Bureau), a contraceptive distribution system of doctor-staffed clinics.

In the 1920s, Sanger joined other intellectuals in supporting eugenics. She challenged conservatives who worried that whites from the better classes would commit race suicide by using contraception. Sanger argued that all women, rich and poor, would limit childbearing if given the option to control their bodies because of the economic and health benefits of smaller families. She voiced support for negative eugenics that would weed out the physically and mentally disabled by mandating contraception but disdained positive eugenics that would promote the growth of the elite class.

Sanger spent most of the Depression trying to secure government funding for birth control as a benevolent social policy and a public health measure. She wheedled money from the rich for her clinics and political efforts by focusing on the impact of the economy on women. One form letter described a woman who, after her husband lost his job, resorted to an illegal abortion rather than raise another hungry child. Along with appealing to the sympathies of the rich, Sanger played on the anxieties of conservative donors over the potential costs of supporting an increasingly dependent population.

In 1932, a packet of contraceptives sent to Sanger by a Japanese physician was confiscated by U.S. Customs. The resulting court case led to a victory in 1936 when the U.S. Court of Appeals in *United States v. One Package of Japanese Pessaries* ruled that physicians were exempted from the ban on the importation of birth control materials. This decision effectively legalized the distribution of birth control for medical use.

With this victory, Sanger began to scale down her efforts. Her lobbying group, the National Committee on Federal Legislation for Birth Control, disbanded in 1937. In its place, Sanger helped estab-

lish the Birth Control Federation of America. Deeming "birth control" too radical a concept, the organization changed its name to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America in 1942. Angry about the name change partly as a matter of sentiment but also because the term *family planning* seemed to lack the force and conviction of birth control, Sanger retired to Tucson, Arizona.

After World War II, Sanger resumed a public life. She sought to establish an international birth control movement to help foster economic development and social stability. In 1952, Sanger helped found the International Planned Parenthood Federation. Increasingly frail, she retired to Tucson for the last time in 1959.

See Also: GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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CARYN E. NEUMANN

SCHECHTER POULTRY CORP. V. U.S. *See* SUPREME COURT.

SCHW. *See* SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Scholars of science and technology increasingly recognize the mutual influence between science and technology. Scientific understanding is often a prerequisite for technological advance. Technology in turn provides important inputs to science, in-



New farming technologies, like this automatic hay-loader in use in Jasper county, Iowa, in 1939, were a boon to farmers, but they also eliminated jobs and displaced farm laborers. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

cluding, most obviously, scientific instruments, but also research questions about why certain technologies work or do not work. Sometimes the links between science and technology are temporally close: In the development of nylon, radios, and airplanes, for example, scientific and technological advances were mutually reinforcing. In other cases science answers technological questions that have been around for decades, or science sets the stage for new products and processes that are not yet imagined.

TECHNOLOGY AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION

While economic analyses of the causes of the Great Depression have focused on a handful of aggregate economic variables, such as the money supply, there has always been a minority tradition that has argued that technology was largely respon-

sible for the Great Depression. Two broad types of technological innovation can be distinguished. *Product innovation* involves the development of a new or improved product. *Process innovation* involves the development of lower-cost ways of producing an existing product. The line between these is generally clear, but it can be blurred, as when the same innovation both reduces the cost and increases the quality of a particular product.

The course of technological innovation during the interwar period was highly unusual. In terms of product innovation, the decade between 1925 and 1935 is by far the worst in the entire twentieth century. The electric refrigerator was the only major new product. In terms of process innovation, however, there was rapid growth in worker productivity, due primarily to key technological advances. Worker productivity in industry grew by at least 50

percent in the 1920s and another 25 percent in the 1930s.

The development of new products will generally encourage investment, consumption, and employment. Factories and machines will be constructed to build the new products, and workers hired for this purpose. Consumers in turn will be encouraged to spend a greater proportion of their income in order to obtain the new product—though they may decrease purchases of existing goods that serve similar purposes (as the advent of radio and talking movies during the 1920s served to destroy vaudeville and decrease attendance at live theatre in the 1930s). Process innovation means that fewer workers, buildings, and machines will be needed to produce the same quantity of goods, though some initial investment may be required. Lower prices for existing goods will generally result in lower levels of consumer expenditure. There are exceptions when decreased cost leads to a more than proportional increase in the number of goods purchased.

In the long run, a market economy should be able to adjust to the uneven time path of technological innovation. Many economic models suggest, however, that over a period of a few years product innovation will cause a decrease in unemployment, and process innovation will cause an increase. The unemployment experience of the 1930s was likely exacerbated by market saturation in some of the new consumer durables of the 1920s, notably automobiles, radios, and various appliances: Consumers who had recently bought one did not need another.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

To understand the technological experience of the Great Depression, it is useful to start with the second Industrial Revolution of the late nineteenth century. During the 1870s and 1880s, important innovations occurred in three broad areas: chemicals, internal combustion engines, and the generation, transmission, and use of electricity. With the singular exception of the zipper, all major twentieth century innovations, whether product or process, can be traced to one or more of these developments. All three of these strands of technological innovation

would generate new products in the early 1920s and late 1930s; they would also generate important process technologies that would have their major period of adoption during the interwar period. In each case the new products of the late 1930s were much more complex than those of the early 1920s; this may explain the paucity of new products in the decade after 1925.

The chemical industry developed continuous processing in place of the previous practice of producing one batch of chemicals at a time. This process technology was adopted by most factories producing a homogeneous output, whether paint or ketchup or oil, in the interwar period, and resulted in huge cost savings. In terms of new products, the major development of the early 1920s involved the semi-synthetic fiber rayon. The first fully synthetic fiber, nylon, would appear almost two decades later in 1939. Developments in plastics—including urea-formaldehyde, lucite, and vinyl—vitamins, and antihistamines are among other new products that would emerge in the late 1930s. The discovery of penicillin by Alexander Fleming in 1928 had a limited economic impact until methods for increasing the rate of natural production in mold were developed in 1940, and synthetic penicillin in 1944. These advances set the stage for the development of a range of antibiotics. Better photographic film and cameras would make the camera a mass market good in the 1930s as well.

While invented long before World War I, it was only with the development of the assembly line in Henry Ford's River Rouge plant in 1913 that the automobile became a potential mass market good. Sales would take off in the 1920s, and almost half of American families would own an automobile by 1929. The assembly line would be adapted to virtually every assembled good in the United States during the 1920s. While sales, and thus employment, in the automobile sector increased as a result, in other sectors the assembly line soon led to decreases in employment.

The automobile and truck generated cost savings in the distribution of goods. In particular, small local stores were replaced by larger and lower-cost enterprises. In agriculture, tractor use expanded throughout the interwar period, as costs decreased

and quality improved: There were 80,000 tractors in 1918; 920,000 in 1930; and 1,545,000 in 1940. As tractor use and power expanded, a host of farm implements were developed.

The airplane also predated World War I, but it would only become a mass produced good, capable of generating significant economic activity in production and use, in the mid-1930s. The Douglas DC-3 of 1936 was the biggest single advance, causing costs per passenger mile to drop to a quarter of their level in 1929.

The bulk of American industry would switch to electric power in the 1920s. By the end of the 1930s the victory of electricity was almost complete. This switch reflected both the drop in the cost of electricity (by 50 percent in the 1920s alone) due to improvements in generation and transmission, and the development of ever-better electric motors. Electrification allowed great improvements in factory layout because machines powered by their own small motor, rather than connected by belts to an external power source, could be situated as needed. Electrification also made it much easier to run machines at different speeds. Many processes previously performed by hand were mechanized because of electrification.

In the home, the early twentieth century witnessed the electrification of simple goods like light-bulbs, toasters, and kettles. In the interwar period, a second stage of innovation, involving complex electronics, became evident. The technology of radio transmission and reception advanced to the point that the first commercial radio station was established by Westinghouse Corporation in Philadelphia in 1920. By 1929 virtually every American household owned at least one. The next major innovation in wireless communication would be the television. After a host of improvements in the 1920s and 1930s, the first regular broadcasts in the United States began in 1939.

The electric refrigerator only became a mass consumer good in 1931 after a series of improvements over the previous decades. Sales expanded until 1937, at which point half of wired homes possessed a refrigerator. The success of the only major new product innovation of the early 1930s suggests that consumption, investment, and employment

would all have been higher if other new products had emerged.

While productivity advance continued in the 1930s, this required little investment. The major new process innovation of the 1930s was tungsten carbide cutting tools. These cutting tools could generally be fitted to existing machines, but allowed much greater speed and accuracy. There were also improvements in management techniques. The rolling mill for producing sheet metal was one process innovation that did require significant investment. This only became technically superior to labor-intensive methods in 1930; twenty-eight rolling mills were built during the 1930s.

INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH LABORATORIES

Developed by German chemical firms in the late nineteenth century, the industrial research laboratory was adopted in the United States first in electrical products but eventually across a wide range of industries. Although innovations still often came from isolated tinkerers before the interwar period, after that time most new technologies were developed, at least in part, in formal industrial research settings. These laboratories have played an important scientific role. The invention of nylon depended on research by DuPont for a better understanding of the chemical composition of polymers. The airplane depended on advances in aerodynamic theory (in this case financed largely by the military).

The earliest industrial research laboratories, however, shied away from the expense and risk associated with pursuing projects in basic science. They instead tended to focus on process innovation and minor product innovation. The profits earned by companies pioneering such products as television or nylon in the late 1930s would encourage many industrial research laboratories to pursue major product innovation in the postwar years. If this change had occurred earlier, the technological, and thus economic, experience of the Great Depression might have been quite different.

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH IN UNIVERSITIES

There were concerns during the 1930s that industrial research laboratories were not only absorb-

ing those who might otherwise have been independent inventors, but attracting some of the best scientists away from universities. Yet industrial research laboratories also had a positive impact on university research: They provided direct funding to some researchers and also funded graduate fellowships.

The major source of funding of scientific research in the 1930s, though, was philanthropic foundations. Of these foundations, those tied to the Rockefeller or Carnegie names, and particularly the Rockefeller Foundation, provided some 90 percent of the funding. These foundations had, earlier in the century, tried to develop research facilities independent of universities. As the century unfolded universities came to see research as a key part of their mission. While professors now had the time and incentive to perform research, they also needed direct funding of research expenses. The foundations in the 1920s had provided funding to certain departments at key universities. In the 1930s the foundations moved toward supporting the research of individual professors. Determined to maximize the return on their funding, they insisted on evidence of publications before funding was renewed. This likely encouraged scientific effort, but raised concerns about scientific independence. Funding decisions were based on individual contacts between professors and foundation officers. Total foundation expenditures on research stagnated during the Depression; medical research was emphasized at the expense of basic science, and thus, for example, theoretical physicists seeking funding for particle accelerators spoke to the biological understanding that might result from these.

Governments, especially in the areas of military, health, and agricultural research, provided some limited funding in the 1930s. During World War II, expenditure on research would triple, with governments funding the increase. Postwar government funding of university research would soon eclipse foundation funding; governments would rely on a more bureaucratic process of official grant applications, and review by other experts in the area. Due largely to foundation encouragement the United States had become the most important country in the world of science by 1930; movement

of refugee scientists to the United States would enhance this dominance over the next decade.

Science was not only primarily identified with universities by the 1930s, but also with distinct disciplines such as physics and chemistry. Nevertheless, both foundations and scientists appreciated the value of interdisciplinary interaction. Many of the major scientific discoveries of the Depression era reflect cross-disciplinary communication. While physics loomed large in these conversations, advances in, for example, quantum chemistry, did not just involve the application of quantum theory, but the convergence of quantum theory with theoretical and empirical trends within chemistry itself. Scientific advances during this period also reflected the development of a host of new scientific instruments, such as the particle accelerator, electron microscope, and ultracentrifuge.

The discovery of the neutron in 1932 allowed physicists for the first time to understand the stability of nuclear structure in terms of quantum theory. The positron was also discovered in 1932, and physicists began to enumerate the various forces that operate between different particles. By the end of the decade, scientists in both Germany and the United States had achieved nuclear fission.

Improved instruments for studying distant parts of the universe, in combination with the theory of general relativity, led to widespread consensus among astronomers in the 1930s that the universe was expanding, though there was little consensus on how the process might have begun. At the same time, advances in nuclear physics allowed a theoretical understanding of how stars could generate energy over billions of years.

By understanding the internal working of molecules chemists were better able to predict and control chemical reactions. Polymer science in particular advanced rapidly. Only in the early 1930s had chemists come to accept the existence of large complex polymer molecules. An understanding of the internal working of molecules was also useful in the study of living organisms: Major advances occurred in the analysis of proteins that would set the stage for the postwar discovery of DNA.

The 1930s was also the period of the “modern synthesis” in biology. Theoretical and empirical

discoveries in the area of genetics were shown to be consistent with “natural history.” That is, the short-term genetic changes observed in the laboratory could be understood as generating the longer-term changes posited by evolutionary theories.

See Also: FORD, HENRY; RADIO.

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RICK SZOSTAK

SCOTTSBORO CASE

On March 25, 1931, nine young African-American men ranging in age from thirteen to twenty-one

were arrested near Paint Rock, Alabama, for the alleged rape of two white women on a freight train, and were incarcerated in the town of Scottsboro. From these beginnings, the Scottsboro case would become the most celebrated legal battle of the 1930s and would focus the attention of the nation and the world on racial prejudice in America.

Dubbed the “Scottsboro Boys” by the media, Olen Montgomery, Clarence Norris, Haywood Patterson, Ozie Powell, Willie Roberson, Andy and Roy Wright, Charlie Weems, and Eugene Williams had all grown up in the rural South, and most were riding the rails in search of work. The nature of the defendants’ accused crime made it unlikely they would receive a just trial. The charge of raping white women had been traditionally used to justify the lynching of African Americans in the South, with white men being cast in the role of protectors of southern white women. The nine defendants themselves narrowly escaped a lynching at the hands of an angry mob on the day after their arrest.

Subjected to speedy trials with a limited defense, eight of the nine defendants were sentenced to death. After the case was reported in the North, a Communist-led legal organization, the International Labor Defense (ILD), began to work on appeals for the defendants. Beginning in the late 1920s, the Communist Party had taken an increased interest in African-American issues, particularly anti-lynching efforts, and its role in supporting the Scottsboro defendants provided the party credibility within the African-American community. The ILD was soon drawn into conflict with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which viewed the ILD’s Scottsboro campaign as little more than Communist propaganda aimed at gaining influence among African Americans. NAACP secretary Walter White later claimed that the ILD was looking to make martyrs of the defendants, and the two organizations battled for control of the defense over the next three years.

Along with securing legal counsel for the defendants, the ILD instigated a “mass action” campaign for the release of the defendants. Using extra-legal tactics to mobilize public opinion in favor of the defendants, the ILD’s strategy turned the



The nine men accused of rape in what became known as the Scottsboro case in an Alabama prison shortly after their arrest in 1931: (left to right) Clarence Norris, Olen Montgomery, Andy Wright, Willie Roberson, Ozie Powell, Eugene William, Charlie Weems, Roy Wright, and Haywood Patterson. BETTMANN/CORBIS

Scottsboro Case into a cause célèbre of the 1930s. Slogans such as “Save the Scottsboro Boys” and “They Shall Not Die!” were commonly found in Communist meetings and rallies in the 1930s, and Communists across the country signed petitions and held marches in support of the ILD’s legal efforts. Internationally, Communists, intellectuals, and human rights advocates in the Soviet Union, Europe, and Latin America attended demonstrations and petitioned American President Herbert Hoover to pardon the Scottsboro prisoners.

The African-American community also supported the ILD’s mass action efforts. African Americans were outraged by the verdicts in Scottsboro, which many viewed to be the result of Jim Crow

justice in the South and representative of racial prejudice found throughout the entire nation. African Americans became an increasing part of the ILD’s efforts, raising money for legal expenses and participating in demonstrations. African-American ministries and civic organizations allowed the ILD to hold rallies in their facilities, and even the NAACP was forced by community opinion to work with the ILD for a short time in 1933. Mothers of the Scottsboro defendants toured the country and went abroad, imploring crowds to support the ILD’s efforts on behalf of their sons. Black celebrities and white celebrities attended fundraisers for the ILD, and the case inspired artists, such as poet Langston Hughes and bluesman Leadbelly, to compose works about the defendants.

While the Scottsboro case made national headlines, the defense team was stymied in its legal attempts to achieve the defendants' freedom. The Supreme Court granted the defendants a new trial due to inadequate counsel, and the ILD retained the services of a noted defense attorney, Samuel Leibowitz, to take up the case. A new trial for Haywood Patterson began on March 27, 1933, in Decatur, Alabama. During the trial, Leibowitz attacked the credibility of the two accusers, Ruby Bates and Victoria Price, by pointing out inconsistencies in their stories and intimating that the women had questionable sexual pasts. Ruby Bates also recanted her charges and testified for the defense, but an all-white jury returned a death sentence. In a surprising turn, Alabama Circuit Court judge James E. Horton set aside the verdict, but Patterson would again be tried and convicted in December of 1933.

On September 30, 1934, two ILD officials were arrested for trying to bribe Victoria Price. This action led Leibowitz to break with the group, and he formed the American Scottsboro Committee (ASC) with the support of African-American clergymen and anti-Communist leaders. Though the defense groups feuded, the Supreme Court overturned the convictions of Norris and Patterson on April 1, 1935, because African Americans had been systematically excluded from the jury rolls in Alabama. With the Communist Party's move to a Popular Front program, the ILD was willing to cooperate with the ASC, NAACP, and the American Civil Liberties Union to create the Scottsboro Defense Committee (SDC) in December 1935. The ILD agreed to limit its mass action campaign in favor of a more traditional legal campaign, and the Scottsboro case slowly lost importance in the Communist Party's agenda. After more legal failures, in July 1937 the SDC agreed to a plea bargain agreement, which released four of the defendants. Patterson escaped from prison in 1948, while the four other prisoners waited for parole. The last defendant was released in 1950, nineteen years after his initial arrest.

Though the Scottsboro defendants had limited success in Alabama courts, the Supreme Court decisions were an important legal legacy of the defense efforts. Perhaps more importantly, the case inspired legions of activists, both white and African

American, to challenge entrenched racial prejudice in America, and provided inspiration for the civil rights activism and mass protest of the 1950s and 1960s.

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; INTERNATIONAL LABOR DEFENSE (ILD); NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); WHITE, WALTER;

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ROBERT FRANCIS SAXE

SCS. *See* SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE.

SEABURY, SAMUEL. *See* PROSTITUTION.

SEC. *See* PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT; SECURITIES REGULATION.

SECTION OF FINE ARTS. *See* POST OFFICE MURALS.

SECURITIES ACT. *See* SECURITIES REGULATION.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC). *See* PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT; SECURITIES REGULATION.

SECURITIES REGULATION

Appalled by the stock market crash of 1929 and the subsequent economic collapse, the federal government moved assertively during the 1930s to regulate both the issuance and sale of corporate securities. The federal government's traditional laissez-faire policy towards the stock markets had left the states to regulate stock sales through "blue sky" laws, which attempted to protect investors from unscrupulous stock sellers who promised everything, including the blue sky above. But the revelations of fraud and manipulation that followed the market crash revealed the inadequacy of state regulation. New Deal laws would separate commercial and securities banking; require full disclosure of financial information for all stock issues; limit margin purchases of stocks; and create an independent regulatory body, the Securities and Exchange Commission, to oversee stock exchange practices.

Of the fifty billion dollars in stock sold in the United States during the great bull market of the 1920s, the House Commerce Committee estimated that half had been undesirable or worthless. From 1932 to 1934 an intensive investigation by the Senate Banking Committee demonstrated how bankers and brokers had bilked investors and contributed to the financial catastrophe. Under examination by the committee's chief counsel, Ferdinand Pecora, prestigious financiers admitted that their banks' securities houses had unloaded dubious stocks onto unwary investors. The investigation exposed abuses ranging from speculative pools and insider deals to preferential distribution of stock. Generating months of headlines, the Pecora investigation swung public opinion behind efforts to reform and regulate the securities markets.

THE LEGISLATIVE BATTLES

Securities regulation became intertwined with banking reform. The Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 or-

dered complete separation of commercial banks from their securities houses and provided federal insurance for bank deposits. In the previous congressional session, the bill sponsored by the two southern Democrats, Virginia Senator Carter Glass and Alabama Representative Henry Steagall, would not have divided banking and securities functions as rigidly, but the populist Senator Huey Long (Democrat-Louisiana) had killed the bill by filibuster. Glass and Steagall reintroduced the measure during the New Deal's "first hundred days" and tightened its provisions in response to the Pecora investigation's dramatic exposure of the abusive relationship between banks and their investment firms. Public opinion helped propel the bill to enactment in June.

Simultaneously, a bill to regulate the issuance of stocks was making its way through Congress. Samuel Untermyer, who had served as chief counsel of the Pujo investigation of the "Money Trust" in 1912, produced a plan by which the U.S. Post Office would supervise stock and bond sales. Former Federal Trade Commission (FTC) chairman Huston Thompson countered with a bill to empower the FTC to revoke the registration of stocks from any company it found to be "in unsound condition or insolvent." Dissatisfied with both approaches, President Franklin D. Roosevelt enlisted Harvard law professor Felix Frankfurter to prepare yet another bill. Frankfurter recruited a trio of young lawyers, James M. Landis, Benjamin V. Cohen, and Thomas G. Corcoran, who became known as Frankfurter's "happy hotdogs." The Frankfurter group reflected Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis's opposition to concentrations of economic power in either government or private finance. They considered it unwise to permit the government to judge the soundness of corporations and wrote a bill that instead required companies to publish complete and accurate financial information about their stock to allow investors to judge the risks for themselves. To insure truthfulness, the bill set criminal penalties for fraudulent stock registration. The Senate passed Thompson's bill, while the House adopted the Landis-Cohen-Corcoran version, as sponsored by Representative Sam Rayburn (Democrat-Texas). In conference committee, the House bill prevailed and became the Federal Secur-

ities Act of 1933. President Roosevelt appointed James Landis to the Federal Trade Commission, which would administer the new law.

The Pecora investigation and the Roosevelt administration next focused on stock exchange operations. Stock exchanges had operated as private trading grounds for brokers who bought and sold stocks for clients. Richard Whitney, president of the New York Stock Exchange, resisted efforts to oversee his operations. "You gentlemen are making a great mistake," he told Senate investigators. "The Exchange is a perfect institution." Once again several groups vied with conflicting legislative drafts. A task force headed by John Dickinson and composed of Treasury and Commerce department officials and Wall Street attorneys proposed creation of a "Federal Stock Exchange Authority" that would include representation from the stock markets. The authority would regulate the exchanges but would not specifically prohibit such controversial market practices as pools and short selling. Opposed to the Dickinson group, Cohen and Corcoran worked with Pecora's staff to draft a tougher measure that would empower the Federal Reserve Board to set margin requirements for stock purchases, separate broker and trader functions, outlaw all pools and short selling, and require all stock-issuing corporations to file quarterly reports with the FTC. President Roosevelt, although publicly neutral, privately favored the Cohen-Corcoran version, known as the Fletcher-Rayburn bill for its sponsors Senator Duncan Fletcher (Democrat-Florida) and Representative Rayburn.

Richard Whitney personally led the lobbying campaign against the Fletcher-Rayburn bill, warning corporations that the federal government could use the legislation to "dominate and actually control" their businesses. John Dickinson testified that the bill's high margin requirements would encourage widespread stock selling that would have a deflationary effect. Seeking to prevent the Federal Reserve Board from becoming "mixed up with stock market gambling," Senator Carter Glass proposed giving authority to police the stock exchanges to a new Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Unlike Dickinson's proposal, Glass made no provision for the stock exchanges to have representation

on this independent regulatory commission. The final compromise, rather than specifically outlawing controversial trading practices, assigned the SEC to investigate them and set future policy. President Roosevelt signed the Securities Exchange Act into law on June 6, 1934.

SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION ENFORCEMENT

The SEC consisted of five commissioners appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate, no more than three of whom could be members of the same political party. Initially, the commissioners chose their chairman (a later revision would give this right to the president). Roosevelt appointed James Landis and Ferdinand Pecora to the SEC, but encouraged them to elect a prominent stock trader, Joseph P. Kennedy, as the first chairman, to help ease Wall Street's fears.

Weighing the magnitude of the vast securities trading business against its small staff and limited budget, the SEC set out to guide and supervise the exchanges rather than to prohibit specific abuses. It demanded that all exchanges, and all corporations that listed their stocks on them, register with the commission. By registering, exchanges agreed to enforce SEC rules and to punish or expel members who violated them. Of the twenty-five exchanges that registered, the SEC shut down four and persuaded others, such as the New York Produce Exchange, to abandon their securities operations. Those that closed included the Boston Curb Exchange, for having listed illegal stocks, and the New York Mining Exchange, known as the "penny stock market," for fleecing the poorest investors.

Joseph Kennedy's resignation from the SEC after a year made James Landis chairman. Like Kennedy, Landis pursued a conciliatory policy that emphasized exchange self-regulation. Landis particularly worried that strict federal regulations would endanger economic diversity by falling harder on the smaller exchanges and driving some brokers out of business. Liberal detractors accused him of fostering self-control *by* Wall Street rather than government control *of* Wall Street. Despite this conciliatory policy, critics on Wall Street blamed the SEC for the market collapse and reces-

sion that occurred in 1937. That year, William O. Douglas became SEC chairman and challenged the giant New York Stock Exchange to reorganize or risk having the SEC step in to run the exchange. The exchange's board of governors endorsed the SEC's recommended rules revision, which provided for public representatives on the board and a paid president and technical staff for the exchange. The SEC's public disclosure requirements also brought to light the financial misconduct of former exchange president Richard Whitney, who admitted insolvency, was suspended from trading, and was imprisoned for embezzlement. Whitney's disgrace symbolized the new financial order.

While the SEC could supervise operations that were centralized on the floor of a few stock exchanges, it faced a more daunting problem with the thousands of brokers scattered across the nation, buying and selling stocks for investors. In 1938, Senator Francis Maloney (D. Conn.) sponsored legislation to encourage formation of a private National Association of Securities Dealers to supervise over-the-counter brokers and dealers. The SEC was given authority to review the association's rules, but the association took on the burden of regulation.

New Deal legislation transformed the nation's stock exchanges from private clubs into semipublic institutions with a federal commission to monitor their activities, police against manipulative and deceptive stock selling, and set standards for accounting procedures, in the interest of protecting investors. The SEC became widely acclaimed as one of the most successful experiments in federal regulation. During the latter half of the twentieth century American stock sales and values soared as millions of citizens invested in stocks with some confidence of protection from fraud. Although the SEC withstood the later trend toward deregulation, this enormous shift of personal savings from bank accounts to securities caused banks to protest the Glass-Steagall Act as a "New Deal dinosaur." Banks lobbied successfully for its repeal in 1996, when Congress permitted banks and securities firms to once again enter each other's business, with appropriate regulatory oversight.

See Also: GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933; KENNEDY, JOSEPH P.; PECORA, FERDINAND.

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SELZNICK, DAVID O. *See* GONE WITH THE WIND.

SEX AND SEXUALITY. *See* GAYS AND LESBIANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; PROSTITUTION.

SHAHN, BEN

The artist Benjamin Shahn (September 12, 1898–March 14, 1969) was born in Lithuania in the Pale of Settlement, the territory where Russian Jews were legally authorized to take up residence. His father was a furniture maker and craftsman. To escape pogroms (the officially-sanctioned massacres of Jews) the family fled Russia in 1906 and settled in Brooklyn, New York. Much of Shahn's later artistic work retained elements of his Jewish background: windows for a temple in Buffalo, illustrations for a Passover prayer book, a series of watercolors on the Dreyfus affair, the frequent appearance of stylized Hebrew lettering in his painting.

At fifteen, Shahn left school to become apprenticed to a New York City lithographer. In his late



This mural by Ben Shahn, painted as a WPA project and photographed in 1938, adorned the community building in Hightstown, New Jersey. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

teens and early twenties, however, he pursued his education doggedly. He went to night school for his high school diploma and attended classes at the Art Students League, New York University, and City College. He also received significant formal and informal education from two extended trips to Europe and North Africa (1924–1925 and 1927–1929).

By the time Shahn returned from Europe and began sharing a New York studio with the distinguished photographer Walker Evans, he was deeply committed to enlisting his artistic talent on behalf of liberal and radical social causes, portraying the travails of the poor and working classes, protesting corruption and injustice. In addition to his Dreyfus series (1930), he produced in 1932 a famous series of twenty-three gouache works depicting the trial and 1927 execution of the anarchists Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, and another fifteen works in 1933 illustrating the case of Tom Mooney, the labor leader who was languishing in San Quentin prison after a questionable trial for a 1916 bombing in San Francisco. Shahn's artistic talent and political views brought him to the attention of the Mexican muralist Diego Rivera and the two worked together on the Rockefeller Center mural that was eventually destroyed after Rivera's refusal to remove a portrait of Vladimir I. Lenin. Two subsequent murals by Shahn (one on prohibition, the other on the history of imprisonment) were rejected by New York's Municipal Art Commission.

During the New Deal, Shahn worked on several government projects, principally under the auspices of the Farm Security Administration. His work consisted of murals and thousands of photographs. The murals adorned post offices in the Bronx (1939) and Jamaica, New York (1939), the community center of a resettlement community in New Jersey (1938), and the Social Security Building in Washington, D.C. (1942). Shahn's photographs movingly depicted the poverty of rural life in the South and Midwest. During World War II Shahn undertook projects for the Office of War Information and was also hired by the Congress of Industrial Organizations to produce pro-Roosevelt campaign posters for the 1944 election. His painting during the war, as might have been expected, was filled with condemnation of Nazism and sympathy for its victims.

After the war he continued in various mediums his artistic advocacy of social causes. Shahn also taught at Boston's Museum of Fine Arts and at Harvard University. By the time he died, his work had been widely exhibited, and Shahn had gained numerous honors and an international reputation as a leading social realist and a talented artist who used his considerable and multifaceted skills on behalf of the poor and oppressed.

See Also: ART; POST OFFICE MURALS.

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SHARECROPPERS

Sharecropping was the most impoverished level of the tenant farming that characterized cotton and tobacco production in the post-Civil War South. The almost 1.8 million tenant families reported by the 1930 census included about half the region's farmers. Tenants were classified according to their ability to farm and live independently and contribute supplies and equipment for making a crop. Relatively few were cash renters. Approximately 700,000 were share tenants, who might supply their own mules or equipment and who might receive from their landlords two-thirds or three-fourths of the year's profit. But sharecroppers, who lacked equipment, as well as cash or credit for self support, contributed only labor to production and usually received no more than a half share of the crop. In 1937 a special President's Committee on Farm Tenancy reported approximately 775,000 sharecroppers in the South, almost equally divided between whites and blacks.

SHARECROPPING AND SOUTHERN POVERTY

Cotton sharecroppers normally worked about twenty acres, with their tenure on farms at their



A sharecropper plows a sweet-potato field near Laurel, Mississippi, in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

landlords' discretion. To sustain themselves during the crop season, they received subsistence goods on credit. This "furnish" was provided, or arranged, by landlords at usurious interest rates. When landlords sold the crops and settled accounts, they subtracted all costs and interest from the sharecroppers' portions. Because landlords had liens on the crops and kept the books, such settlements left most sharecroppers still in debt, year by year. The system perpetuated intense poverty, along with poverty's related effects: dependence and lack of expectation, low farming skills, poor health, and illiteracy. Tenancy and sharecropping persisted in the South because of the region's dearth of cash and farm credit, its great surplus of unskilled rural workers, and the fact that cotton and tobacco remained hand labor crops before the mid-twentieth century.

SHARECROPPING AND THE AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION

As the agricultural depression bottomed out and rural living conditions became increasingly desperate in the early 1930s, sharecropping came under such economic stress that knowledgeable observers described the system as near collapse. Yet it still dominated newer plantation lands, such as those in eastern Arkansas. It was in that Delta region that sharecropping generated a political storm that embarrassed the New Deal, nearly wrecked the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), and focused national attention on landless farmers.

The objective of the AAA was to raise crop prices to certain target levels, known as *parity*, by eliminating surplus production. To accomplish this, the AAA offered landowners acreage reduction contracts. Under the first regular cotton contract,

covering 1934 and 1935, the secretary of agriculture “rented” about three-eighths of the nation’s cotton land from cooperating landowners. These farmers agreed to retire the rented acres from cotton, reserving them for food and feed crops. In return, they received a compensation (at 4.5 cents per pound) for the cotton they normally would have grown on those acres. Moreover, if acreage controls worked as planned, prices for a reduced crop would rise. Drafted by AAA officials closely connected to plantation interests, these favorable provisions gave landowners reliable profits for the first time in more than a decade. Critics charged that the contract was unfair on its face because it required landlords to give sharecroppers only about 11 percent of the benefit, far less than customary crop shares. Even more serious, any requirement to divide the AAA check would give landlords incentives to put sharecroppers off the land (switching to wage labor instead) in order to keep the whole payment for themselves. To prevent massive displacement of sharecroppers, the contract required landlords to retain their normal number of tenants, rent free, and with access to rented acres to grow their own food. But the AAA’s legal staff warned that anti-eviction provisions were both vague and unenforceable. Just as they predicted, as soon as the contract went into effect, the AAA was flooded with complaints of cheating and eviction of tenants, especially in eastern Arkansas.

The formation of the Southern Tenant Farmers’ Union in the summer of 1934 intensified sharecropper controversies. Centered in the Arkansas Delta and led by local Socialists, this biracial union protested evictions and contract abuses. In turn, it was subjected to violent repression by planters. Early in 1935 the AAA legal section, headed by Jerome Frank, resolved to take action against evictions. They held that retaining the normal number of tenants meant keeping the same individuals for the contract’s duration. But AAA administrators insisted the contract gave landlords latitude to remove any tenants. The conflict was irreconcilable. In February 1935 AAA administrator Chester Davis demanded that Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace repudiate the legal section’s interpretation and dismiss those responsible for it. Agonized by this dispute, but acutely aware of the AAA’s constituen-

cy and congressional backing, Wallace allowed Davis to fire Frank and most of his staff. This “AAA purge” confirmed that an agency founded on price parity was politically unable to assure sharecroppers security on the land. As the number of sharecroppers declined steadily through the 1930s, New Deal cotton policy was partly responsible.

THE RESETTLEMENT AND FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATIONS

The New Deal’s most positive efforts against rural poverty were those of the Resettlement Administration (RA), organized in May 1935 under Rexford Tugwell. This eclectic agency pieced together such programs as land classification, relocation of people from submarginal lands, experimental cooperative communities, and planned “greenbelt” suburbs. But its largest component was rural rehabilitation, a program started by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) in 1934. Hoping to stabilize poor farmers on the land, get them off relief, and improve their living standards, the FERA gave its clients a combination of credit and farming supervision. By the time it was transferred to the RA, the program had served more than 200,000 tenants, sharecroppers, and poor landowners, mostly in the South. To direct rehabilitation, Tugwell chose Will Alexander, a southern liberal who had led the Commission on Interracial Cooperation. Becoming head of the RA in November 1936, Alexander would make it one of the New Deal’s most racially inclusive agencies.

Even before he joined the RA, Alexander and other liberals had developed tenancy legislation. Introduced by Senator John H. Bankhead of Alabama, their ambitious bill proposed a billion-dollar bond issue to finance federal purchase and resale of foreclosed land to supervised tenants on easy terms. Expecting it would help the ablest tenants, Alexander envisioned farm purchase lending as a capstone for the RA’s array of programs. But after Senate approval in June 1935, the bill died in committee in the House. Not until July 1937 did Congress pass the Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenant Act, a token measure that ultimately provided only 44,300 loans by 1946. This modest credit program was added to the RA, then renamed the Farm Security Administration (FSA).

Under the leadership of Alexander (until 1940) and C. B. Baldwin (until 1943), the FSA grew into one of the New Deal's largest agencies, and the only one focused on chronic poverty. Many of its activities addressed the conditions of southern tenancy. Between 1935 and 1943 the RA/FSA served almost 400,000 rehabilitation clients in the region. It required these clients to keep farm and home budgets and grow food at home, and it promoted written leases between landlords and tenants. With uneven success the FSA organized some of its clients into innovative cooperatives for the purchase of feed and fertilizer, the marketing of produce, joint ownership of tractors or breeding stock, pre-paid health insurance, and veterinary services. Nearly all these antipoverty programs attracted conservative opposition from the start, but as the New Deal waned and war began, the FSA came under heavy fire in Congress. Beginning in 1943, crippling budget cuts curtailed its effectiveness.

The New Deal never had the resources or political support to reach the majority of the poor or to reform southern tenancy. For a time, the RA/FSA alleviated poverty and stabilized some poor farmers on the land. But acreage reduction, the revolution of cotton mechanization beginning in the mid-1930s and accelerating after World War II, and out-migration during and after the war all contributed to the decline of sharecropping. By the last third of the twentieth century sharecropping had become rare in a region where it had once dominated so many lives.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

ADMINISTRATION (AAA); BANKHEAD-JONES FARM TENANCY ACT OF 1937; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA); SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION (STFU).

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PAUL E. MERTZ

SHELTERBELT PROJECT

Established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt under executive order on July 21, 1934, the Shelterbelt Project provided for a tree barrier one hundred miles wide extending twelve hundred miles north to south from the Canadian border through the Texas panhandle. It was designed to reduce wind velocity, which had occasioned severe soil erosion across the Midwest and dust storms to the eastern seaboard. When the comptroller general in September objected that Congress had not authorized the project, which would require financing for years into the future, the immediate funding was limited to a million dollars allotted under legislative appropriation for relief in the drought-stricken states. The value of the project as a relief program was to be

one of its important accomplishments. Congress was reluctant to approve the work, and throughout its history the labor was carried out primarily through use of relief appropriations.

As originally conceived and as it was popularly viewed, the belt was to consist of north to south bands of woodland, each seven rods wide, one mile apart, over a zone one hundred miles wide and twelve hundred miles long. Newspapers and periodicals publicized these details with maps of a continuous zone. Although frequently characterized as a Plains project, it was, in fact, confined to the east of the fifteen-inch line of average annual precipitation. Average annual precipitation in the proposed zone varied from eighteen inches in the north to twenty-two inches in the south, where higher temperatures and higher rates of transpiration prevailed.

While enthusiasm for the proposal was reportedly widespread, there was also much skeptical criticism. Professional foresters realized that unsuitable terrain and soils would necessitate breaks in the belts. Some also deplored the expenditure for woodlands that might provide farm fence posts and woodlots but not commercial timber. Many commentators recalled the widespread failure that had characterized settlement under the Timber Culture Homestead Act of 1873. Others objected to diversion of prairie farmland, the so-called bread basket of the nation under normal weather. Not a few critics were merely opposed politically to President Roosevelt, who had been long identified with forest conservation.

The administration assigned direction of the project to the Lake States Forest Experiment Station of the Forest Service, which drew upon a wide range of research facilities and devoted the first year to thorough preparation. Analysts studied previous experiences under comparable conditions in Canada, Denmark, Russia, and Hungary, as well as at United States experiment stations in Montana, North Dakota, Kansas, and Nebraska. The Dryland Experiment Station at Mandan, North Dakota, somewhat west of the proposed shelterbelt, had been testing the use of windbreaks since 1914, and Canada had been planting trees in the Prairie Provinces since 1901. Surveys were made of the regional

terrain, the effect of varying soil conditions, the most suitable tree varieties, the availability of acclimated forest stock, spacing of trees, the structure of planting for most effective wind lift, the requisite cultivation and protection of young trees, and the effect of windbreaks on adjacent land area. The need for adapted seedlings was so great that thirteen nurseries were established and seven others temporarily leased.

Approximately 6.5 million trees were planted in 1935, two-thirds of which survived. The work thus far had been carried out under authority of the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924, which had provided for distribution of tree-planting stock to farmers under a cooperative program with states nationwide. After extended debate in the spring of 1936, the 74th Congress approved only \$70,579 for distribution of forest seeds and plants for shelterbelts and called for liquidation of the project. That year proved the driest of the prolonged drought period, yet the survival rate for the tree plantings remained over 50 percent. In May 1937 the 75th Congress adopted a Cooperative Farm Forestry Act that allotted up to \$2.5 million annually for the program, with the proviso that cooperators must make the land available without charge.

Renamed the Prairie States Forestry Project, the program was continued with little change. Farmers donated the land, prepared it for planting, and agreed to fence the strips against damage by livestock and to provide cultivation as needed during the first two to four years. The Forest Service supplied the trees, arranged for their planting, and provided expertise on site and species selection, planting methods, and subsequent care.

As late as 1942, the Works Projects Administration (WPA) still provided \$600,000 for tree planting, but wartime labor shortages led to termination of both the WPA and the Prairie States Forestry Project the following year. Over 190 million trees had been planted in nearly nineteen thousand miles of belts on thirty-three thousand farms. The survival rate had increased to 82 percent.

Surveying the results in 1944, forestry officials estimated that well-tended trees would survive for thirty to sixty years. In view of the benefits, they termed the Shelterbelt Project a success.

See Also: CONSERVATION MOVEMENT; DUST BOWL; WEST, THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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MARY W. M. HARGREAVES

SINCLAIR, UPTON

Upton Sinclair (September 20, 1878–November 25, 1968) was a novelist and socialist whose challenge to President Franklin Roosevelt's cautious approach to recovery helped propel a second phase of New Deal reform after 1934. Sinclair was born in Baltimore, Maryland, the scion of a father who suffered from alcoholism and a mother who had descended from an affluent southern family. At age ten Sinclair, already exhibiting a keen intellect and a precocious interest in writing, moved with his family to New York. As the family struggled financially, the young Sinclair began to write dime novels and short fiction for various pulp magazines to finance his studies at City College in Manhattan, which he had entered at fourteen. Thus began a career as a prolific writer; by the time of his death Sinclair had published nearly a hundred books.

Following the first of three marriages in 1900, Sinclair began developing his interest in fiction grounded in or suggested by proletarian themes

and social realism. In 1904 Sinclair was asked by the editor of the *Appeal to Reason*, the largest circulation socialist-populist newspaper in the country, to write a fictionalized series on the conditions facing immigrant workers in the packinghouses of Chicago. The result would become *The Jungle* (1906), undoubtedly the most significant and enduring product of Sinclair's body of work. President Theodore Roosevelt and a middle-class readership were thoroughly repulsed by the imagery of the contaminated meat that threatened to reach their tables. The result was the passage in 1906 of the federal Food and Drugs Act and the Meat Inspection Act.

In 1915 Sinclair moved to Pasadena, California, to enjoy a more temperate climate and indulge his affinity for tennis. In 1926 he rejoined the Socialist Party that he had left during World War I, and he became its candidate for governor with a less than impressive result. The Great Depression struck California with virulence and Sinclair, seeing no viable relief or recovery plan, penned a series of general propositions in August 1933 that he termed a "Plan to End Poverty in California" (EPIC). EPIC proposed to start up idle factories to benefit unemployed workers and make available untilled land to farmers, and then distribute goods and services through a system of statewide cooperatives. The EPIC plan would also provide \$50 a month to those in need over sixty years old and a similar payment to the blind, disabled, and widowed mothers with dependent children. A steeply graduated state income tax and higher inheritance and stock transfer taxes would finance the social insurance programs. The proposals quickly caught the imagination of many Californians, who formed hundreds of EPIC clubs. Realizing a propitious political opportunity, Sinclair switched to the Democratic Party and declared his candidacy for the governorship.

The 1934 gubernatorial campaign in California became one of the most revealing and memorable in American history. Pitting Sinclair against a colorless business conservative in incumbent Frank Merriam, the campaign produced all of the hallmarks of a modern electoral event. Opinion and voter polling, the use of professional media experts, negative and distorted advertisements, and the infusion of large sums of money were used to defeat the

left wing insurgency led by Sinclair. The troika of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, the Southern California Citrus Growers Association, and the *Los Angeles Times* organized the anti-Sinclair effort. The campaign culminated in an agreement by the Democratic establishment to swing the election to the Republican Merriam in exchange for bipartisan collaboration on a recovery program in the state. Although Sinclair continued to write, the EPIC campaign had clearly sapped his literary energies and for the remainder of the decade he involved himself largely in other interests, including the study of telepathy and an attempted collaboration with Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein.

In 1940 Sinclair resumed writing with the publication of the first volume of his Lanny Budd historical novels, which totaled eleven volumes between 1940 and 1953. The third in the series, *Dragon's Teeth* (1942), based upon the rise of Nazism, won a Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Sinclair left Pasadena in 1953 and moved to Buckeye, Arizona, where he died on November 25, 1968.

See Also: END POVERTY IN CALIFORNIA (EPIC); LITERATURE.

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WILLIAM J. BILLINGSLEY

SIT-DOWN STRIKES

The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 buoyed the hopes of American workers. For the first time, the federal government officially encouraged the

process of unionism and collective bargaining. By mid 1936, however, this optimism faded, as workers found themselves still vehemently fighting anti-union employers who refused to recognize the Act's constitutionality. In response, many workers adopted more aggressive and creative tactics to force their employers to the bargaining table. This new shop-floor militancy and ingenuity is best illustrated by the sit-down strike wave of 1936 to 1937, during which nearly 500,000 workers struck, not by erecting picket lines, but by laying down their tools and refusing to leave their employer's property.

The first wide-scale use of the sit-down strike occurred in January 1936 at Firestone's Akron, Ohio, tire plant. Worker-management relations in Akron had deteriorated through late 1935 and early 1936. The main points of contention concerned the lowering of piece rates, the length of the workday, and management's continued harassment of union members and activists. This frustration with management was further exacerbated by what many workers viewed as the American Federation of Labor's (AFL) conservative approach to labor relations. Tensions finally boiled over and in January 1936 a small group of militant workers peacefully occupied Firestone's main tire plant and brought production to a standstill.

The sit-down strike had many advantages over the traditional picket line. First, because workers physically held possession of company property, management was unlikely to do anything that might harm the expensive machinery. Second, occupying the factory made it much more difficult for the company to bring in replacement workers. Finally, and most importantly, this tactic permitted a militant minority of workers to force employers to the bargaining table. To succeed, strikers only needed enough workers to retain control of the plant. The success of a traditional strike, however, depended on near total participation. Though the Akron strike did not end with the signing of a formal contract, the workers did compel Firestone to bargain with their chosen representatives. Furthermore, the strike illuminated a growing militancy among American workers who were unwilling to wait for the government or the traditional labor movement to come to their rescue.



Employees of Woolworth's department store in New York City strike in 1937 for a forty-hour work week. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

Though the Akron rubber workers were among the first to successfully employ the sit-down strike, this tactic is most famously associated with the United Automobile Workers (UAW) efforts to organize General Motors (GM) during the winter of 1936 to 1937. Although autoworkers were relatively well paid, there was growing discontent over frequent seasonal layoffs, the speed-up of the assembly line, and the near dictatorial powers of foreman to hire, fire, and discriminate against union supporters. These grievances led to a series of strikes, conducted without official union approval, during the summer and early fall of 1936. Relations took a turn for the worse in December 1936, when GM turned down the request of Homer Martin, president of the UAW, to discuss worker grievances. In response, workers seized control of GM's Fisher

Body plant in Cleveland, Ohio, on December 28. Two days later workers at the company's Fisher Body No. 1 and No. 2 plants in Flint, Michigan, also sat down on the job and brought production to a complete halt. Within a few days, this core group of workers managed to idle nearly 120,000 of GM's 150,000 workers.

General Motors reacted by securing a court injunction requiring the sit-down strikers to vacate the company's plants. Confident the company would not rush the plant, the workers ignored the court order. The workers' hopes were further buoyed by the landslide reelection of President Franklin Roosevelt in November 1936. The same polling day witnessed the election of several pro-labor governors, including Frank Murphy of Michigan. While in the past employers could usually ex-



These employees of the Fisher body plant in Flint, Michigan, conducted a sit-down strike in early 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

pect the governor or president to enforce judicial rulings against workers, the elections of 1936 temporarily altered the political balance of power. Governor Murphy refused to enforce the injunction, and instead of using troops to break up the strike, he deployed them to protect the workers from local authorities who sided with GM.

Realizing that neither Roosevelt nor Murphy would enforce the injunctions, and watching its competitors gain in market share, GM management finally decided to enter into negotiations in early February. The two sides signed a formal agreement on February 11, 1936. Though the agreement did not result in a complete victory for the workers in that the UAW did not achieve exclusive representation rights, it nevertheless did com-

pel GM to recognize the UAW as the bargaining representative for its members. Most importantly, though, the workers had successfully defeated the nation's largest employer and illuminated the power of the sit-down strike.

The impact of the Flint sit-down strike reverberated well beyond the auto industry. Workers inspired by the Flint strikers flocked to the labor movement, especially the new industrial unions associated with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The most important post-Flint victory occurred on March 12, 1937, when, without a strike, U.S. Steel signed an agreement with John Lewis recognizing the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee as the bargaining representative for its members. Thus, by the spring of 1937, two of the

nation's largest, most anti-union corporations were organized. The sit-down strike, however, quickly disappeared as a primary weapon in labor's arsenal. Workers first abandoned the tactic because of growing public resentment over what was deemed to be the lawless nature of the labor movement and its lack of respect for property rights. Political support for these actions also ebbed as public resentment began to rise. Furthermore sit down strikes became less necessary when the Supreme Court upheld, in April 1937, the constitutionality of the National Labor Relations Act. Now workers had a legal means for achieving unionization and no longer needed to occupy their employer's property—which, in *NLRB v. Fansteel Metallurgical Corp* (1939), the Supreme Court ruled constituted an illegal occupation of private property.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR; STRIKES; STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC); UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS (UAW).

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DOUGLAS J. FEENEY

SLAVE NARRATIVES

As part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) work relief programs, the Federal Writers' Project (FWP) conducted interviews with former slaves that continue to have a major impact on the scholarly studies of slavery and on the portrayal of

slavery in the popular culture. A group of ex-slave interviews submitted to the national FWP office by the Florida project in March of 1937 led to the establishment of a nationally directed interview program with former slaves. John Lomax, the first FWP folklore editor, encouraged field workers "to get the Negro talking about the days of slavery." Several months later, Henry Alsberg, national FWP director, added several new questions to Lomax's instructions. Alsberg asked interviewers to also focus on life since 1865—what the former slaves hoped freedom would mean and what they actually experienced. He wanted to ensure that the interviews were more than nostalgic tales of contented plantation slaves—a tradition that helped justify the southern caste system.

With the support of Sterling Brown, national FWP Negro Affairs editor, and B. A. Botkin, Lomax's successor as national folklore editor, the Washington, D.C., office worked to obtain a black perspective to help inform the study of slavery, emancipation, and Reconstruction. They hoped not only to obtain a better understanding of the past, but also to contribute to reopening the issue of race relations since the Civil War. They envisioned making these interviews available to general readers. They also saw these interviews as a new form of literature, folklore, and history in which the narrators, the former slaves, became their own historians, offering their own interpretation of the past, what Botkin called "folk history." Although the relationship between the civil rights movement, black nationalism, and the social upheavals of the 1960s and the new social history and revitalization of slavery studies in the 1970s is frequently recognized, much less attention has been given to connections between the study of slavery and the cultural programs of the New Deal and the ideological dimensions of World War II for New Dealers.

PUBLIC AND SCHOLARLY RECEPTION OF THE FWP EX-SLAVE NARRATIVES

Although the FWP ended before any of the interviews with former slaves could be published, historians have long been aware of these materials. Under Botkin's direction, the interviews were evaluated, inventoried, and deposited in the Library of Congress. In 1945, Botkin edited *Lay My Burden*



Josephine Hill, a former slave, photographed in Alabama in 1938 as part of the WPA slave narratives project. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA FEDERAL WRITERS PROJECT SLAVE NARRATIVES COLLECTION

Down: A Folk History of Slavery, an easily available collection of FWP interviews. Nevertheless, historians showed little interest in this material before the 1960s. In part this was because some historians did not question the plantation tradition, but even the increasing number of historians who did question it were slow to use the FWP interviews. They privileged written documents as objective and reliable over oral and folklore materials, which they regarded as subjective and untrustworthy. They thought of memory as individual and as only a matter of accurate recall, rather than as contested, communal, and socially constructed. Thus, although *Lay My Burden Down* was widely reviewed in the nation's newspapers and hailed by many, historians virtually ignored it.

In the opinion of many of these reviewers, the combination of folklore and oral history made the former slave narratives a contribution to American literature, as well as to American history. Like the FWP officials, the reviewers did not privilege one genre over the other or see them as mutually exclusive. They recognized that the narratives of former slaves could introduce readers to voices they had seldom heard or listened to. They understood that those voices associated with the romantic plantation tradition that had dominated public discussion regarding slavery were now being answered. Liberal reviewers interpreted the memories and lore they found in the narratives as a valuable part of an ongoing struggle to combat racism and segregation in the contemporary United States, especially in light of the end of a war for freedom and democracy and the results of the genocidal racism of Nazi Germany. They were working to make the black experience part of a more widely shared national memory of American history as a struggle for freedom. Most reviewers in southern newspapers saw the narratives as an attack on the plantation tradition, as an attempt to question contemporary race relations, and they reacted by denouncing the narratives as unreliable and folklore as irrelevant. It would be another generation before academic historians began to use these materials, and then with little knowledge or interest in the FWP's goals.

Despite the growing challenge to the authority of scholarly versions of the plantation tradition in

the period since the end of World War II, influential studies using the FWP interviews with former slaves did not appear until the 1970s. Without a sense of the role oral tradition can play in a community, or of the usefulness of oral history interviews in studying the past, most historians dismissed the folklore in the FWP slave narratives as failing traditional tests of validity. Looking over the historiography of slavery in the period from World War II to 1970, historian Nathan Huggins argued that, given the problematic status historians assigned these FWP interviews, any historians who used them would have found the professional authority of their work compromised.

Only in the 1970s when scholars became interested in slave culture did they begin to carefully examine the FWP interviews and chart new directions in the history of American slavery. With the publication of *The American Slave: A Composite Autobiography* in 1972 (and subsequent supplemental volumes) under the editorship of George Rawick, these materials become easily accessible to historians. Historian David Brion Davis has called the publication of the entire FWP collection one of the major turning points in the post-World War II historiography of slavery. Along with this renewed interest there developed a scholarly literature on the validity and challenges of using this material. Initially this discussion focused on the representativeness and reliability of the interviews. In time the discussion broadened to include a debate over the role of oral tradition and folklore in these materials. Still, only a few historians have begun to treat the interviewees, interviewers, and FWP officials as historians contributing to the study of slavery, not merely the creators of a source for professional historians to mine.

SCHOLARLY AND PUBLIC USES OF THE EX-SLAVE NARRATIVES

Regarding the questions of representativeness and reliability, it must be noted that while the former slave narrative collection represented all types of slave occupations, the collection was not conducted on a scientifically random basis. Local fieldworkers chose interviewees on the basis of previous contact and geographical proximity. The slave experience in the upper South and the border states

is underrepresented. Very few of the ex-slaves who were interviewed were more than fifteen years old when the Civil War began. It has been estimated that only two percent of the former slave population in the United States at the time was interviewed.

Historians have pointed out that the vast majority of the interviewers were white and worked in their local communities in the South in the 1930s during an era when economic depression, disfranchisement, and violent racial intimidation were a pervasive part of everyday life. The interviews, and FWP correspondence, provide ample evidence that most of these fieldworkers accepted the plantation tradition as fact and a segregated racial order as just. Drawn from the relief rolls, few interviewers had any experience relevant to interviewing. They often failed to pursue important topics and asked leading questions designed to confirm their preconceptions. In addition, former slaves interviewed by the FWP were frequently living in an abject poverty that in many areas of the South was demonstrably worse than what they had known in slavery. They often assumed their interviewers were government employees who could help them materially. Too often the interviewers did nothing to dispel these misconceptions. The interviews indicate that some interviewers were the direct descendants of individuals who had owned the interviewees. Given these factors, it has been argued that the interviews are biased toward a paternalistic view of slavery.

Comparing the small number of interviews conducted by blacks with those done by whites, scholars have discovered that interviewees talked more openly with black interviewers than they did with whites about attitudes toward slavery, their former masters, punishments, family customs, and other topics. Furthermore, white women interviewers received more open responses than did white men. Material dealing with kinship relations and slave culture appears to have been less affected by the race of the interviewer than other topics. Finally, the written transcripts of these interviews provide ample evidence that they are rarely verbatim accounts and have been heavily edited by either the interviewers or FWP officials. White editors tended

to find interviews that contained accounts of cruel treatment as untrustworthy and in at least several instances deleted such material. Although few historians would advocate disregarding the interviews for the above reasons, they have pointed out that the interviews need to be used with an awareness of their strengths and limitations, as is always the case with historical sources.

FWP officials understood that in the interviews with former slaves, they were challenging not only traditional scholarly authority, but also the role of scholarship in democratic public discourse and the role of those interviewed in interpreting the past. As historians drawing on oral history and folklore theory continue to analyze these interviews, they are increasingly focusing on issues that FWP officials first raised, such as the collaborative effort that goes on between interviewer and interviewee in creating an oral history, the value of the subjective perspective of historical actors, and the role of oral tradition and folklore in creating individual and group memory.

Remembering Slavery: African Americans Talk about Their Personal Experiences of Slavery and Emancipation marked a return to many of the concerns of FWP officials, and not only provided an introduction to these interviews in the light of modern scholarship on slavery but also recognized that in the aftermath of slavery former slaves kept alive memories that contested the once dominant romanticized plantation tradition. Berlin and his colleagues' commitment to public history was manifest not only in their book, but also in their collaboration with the Smithsonian production of a radio documentary based on the transcribed interviews and on previously unavailable audio recordings of former slaves in the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

New caches of interviews with former slaves continue to be discovered and there is no end in sight because not all the interviews with former slaves were sent to the national office by the state FWP units and because interest in these materials shows no sign of declining. The number of published collections of FWP slave narratives organized by state or around specific topics continues to grow. Scholars continue to pose questions that these ma-

terials can help answer about the contested negotiations between slaves and masters about family, work, religion, the material culture of the plantation, growing up as a slave, disability among slaves, and slave expressive culture. Scholars have moved beyond using these materials to describe slave culture to examining these interviews as a way of understanding slaves as both the bearers of tradition and the creators of culture. These materials still await a thorough examination regarding what they can reveal about race relations in the 1930s. Scholars are learning that these interviews are important not only for what they reveal about slavery, but also for what they have to say about lives lived in slavery and freedom—a point FWP officials had made from the beginning.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP); RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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JERROLD HIRSCH

SMITH, ALFRED E.

Alfred Emanuel Smith (December 30, 1873–October 4, 1944), who was known as the "Happy Warrior," won four terms as Democratic governor of New York from 1918 to 1928, became the first Catholic candidate nominated for president by a major party, and then opposed Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal and reelection in 1936.

In a career shot through with irony, Al Smith became the leading Democratic politician of the Republican 1920s, only to turn against his party just as it gained power during the Great Depression. Smith grew up on Manhattan's Lower East Side, lacking a high school education, but instilled with the virtues of hard work, strict morality, and loyalty to Tammany Hall, Manhattan's invincible Democratic machine. In 1903, Tammany's nomination gained Smith election to the State Assembly where he became the Democratic leader. He became known as a champion of the poor and working class, especially after the Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire of 1911 and service on the investigating commission. In 1918, Smith won his first of four two-year terms as governor of New York state, losing only in the Warren G. Harding landslide of 1920.

Governor Smith earned a solid reputation as a progressive reformer concerned with both social

welfare and the efficiency of government. As his crowning achievement, Smith reorganized state government and overhauled its antiquated tax structure. Although the governor sought to restrain taxation and curb needless spending, he simultaneously expanded public projects and extended workmen's compensation and mothers' pensions.

After nearly capturing the Democratic presidential nomination in 1924, Smith succeeded in 1928, becoming the first Roman Catholic nominated by a major American party. Smith, who did not vigorously challenge Republican economics, lost in a near landslide to Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover, the legate of Coolidge-era prosperity. The election was marked by an outbreak of anti-Catholicism, both scholarly and scurrilous, and a sharp division in the voting choices of Catholics and Protestants. In 1932, Smith joined a coalition of conservative Democrats in a failed effort to deny the Democratic nomination to his successor as governor, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Smith hoped to vindicate his 1928 defeat, but Democrats were not about to reignite religious conflict in what appeared to be the first winning year for their party since 1916.

Although Smith reluctantly campaigned for the Democratic ticket in 1932, he increasingly found himself at odds with New Deal policies. Pressed forward by the businessmen who were now Smith's closest associates, he became the prized recruit of the American Liberty League, formed in 1934 as an outlet for conservative criticism of Roosevelt's liberal solutions to the challenges of hard times. Smith's career came full circle in January 1936 when he addressed a Liberty League audience of millionaire couples at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, D.C., replaying the same arguments that Republicans had used against him in 1928. Most inflammatory was his charge that Roosevelt had sold out to communism: "There can only be one capital, Washington or Moscow. There can only be the pure, fresh air of free America, or the foul breath of communistic Russia." Senator Joseph Robinson of Arkansas, Smith's running mate from 1928, lamented that his old friend was now "warring like one of the Janizaries of old against . . . the men and women with whom he fought shoulder to shoulder in the past." Smith supported Republican



Alfred E. Smith (right) with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1930.

FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

presidential candidates Alf Landon in 1936 and Wendell Willkie in 1940.

Smith's career illustrates the tensions within a progressivism that combined humanitarian impulse and commitment to efficient government with distrust of high taxes, redistributive spending, and government meddling in business. During the Great Depression, Franklin Roosevelt incorporated and moved beyond the progressivism of an earlier time: Al Smith did not.

See Also: AMERICAN LIBERTY LEAGUE; CONSERVATIVE COALITION; DEMOCRATIC PARTY; ELECTION OF 1928; ELECTION OF 1932; MOSKOWITZ, BELLE.

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ALLAN J. LICHTMAN

SMITH, GERALD L. K.

Gerald L. K. Smith (February 27, 1888–April 15, 1976), a minister, publisher, orator, anti-Semite, and anticommunist, a hater of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, was one of the most inflammatory speakers of the New Deal era.

Born in a Wisconsin village to a lower-middle-class family, Smith graduated from Viroqua High School in 1916, then completed a four-year B. A. program in biblical studies at Valparaiso University in two years, graduating in 1918. Nephritis, a kidney disease, kept him out of World War I. Smith started his career as a Disciples of Christ preacher in small villages in Wisconsin, where he converted hundreds and was an effective money raiser. He married Elna Sorenson, of Janesville.

Smith's career flourished and he moved to larger, richer churches in Illinois and Indiana. He accepted a call from the Kings Highway Christian Church in Shreveport, Louisiana, in 1929 because the warm climate offered the opportunity for Elna, who had contracted tuberculosis, to heal.

In Shreveport, Smith repeated his earlier successes and became an associate of U.S. Senator Huey P. Long. Smith quit his church, whose most influential and wealthy members opposed Long, then traveled the nation for Long promoting wealth-sharing. He might have been Long's campaign manager in his planned 1936 presidential Campaign, but Long was killed by an assassin in 1935 and Smith, after preaching Huey's eulogy, lost a power struggle among Long's successors, and left Louisiana. For the rest of his life his career would mix religion and politics.

In 1936 Smith teamed with Father Charles E. Coughlin and Dr. Francis E. Townsend to sponsor

the candidacy of North Dakota U.S. Representative William Lemke for president on the Union Party ticket. The party failed badly and its leaders split.

Smith increasingly demonized Jews, blacks, and communists, and was a leading figure on the far right through the Depression and long after. He moved his headquarters to New York in 1936, Cleveland in 1938, Detroit in 1939, St. Louis in 1947, Tulsa in 1948, and Los Angeles in 1953. His crusading included delivering speeches, publishing, seeking political office, and undertaking direct mail fundraising. Smith founded *The Cross and the Flag* in 1942, and published thousands of pamphlets. He became a near-millionaire from money sent to him through the mail by followers or left to him in bequests.

Smith used plot theories to blame Jews for World War I, the Bolshevik Revolution, the Great Depression, and World War II. He claimed FDR was a Jew yet Adolf Hitler was a good Christian.

See Also: COUGHLIN, CHARLES; LONG, HUEY P.; TOWNSEND PLAN; UNION PARTY.

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GLEN JEANSONNE

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

The December 21, 1937, release by Walt Disney of the animated feature film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (produced in 1937) was hailed by conservative newspaper columnist Westbrook Pegler as "the

happiest thing that has happened in this world since the armistice" that had ended World War I in 1918. Surely he was correct in seeing the big screen adaptation of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale as a pleasant diversion for many from the problems of the Depression, and specifically of the renewed economic collapse of 1937 to 1938. Yet this Disney cartoon held a significance far beyond its provision of an hour-and-a-half of escape from the harsh realities of the Great Depression.

Snow White was a milestone in filmmaking: the first feature-length animation in color. It was a huge commercial success that proved the economic possibilities for feature-length cartoons. The great Russian filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein rated *Snow White* as the greatest film ever made. But the deeper importance of the film lay in the powerful message it sent audiences about "proper" gender roles. In addition to its other meanings and interpretations, this film can readily be seen as a plea for a return to the "normalcy" in gender roles that had been so disrupted by the Depression—and as a foreshadowing of the rise of what Betty Freidan would term the "Feminine Mystique" in the post-World War II era.

The Depression severely undermined the traditional male role of provider. Many men who lost their jobs came to feel that they had lost their manhood. It was not unusual for women to hold jobs when their husbands did not. There was a palpable desire to restore male dominance and female dependence. *Snow White* embodied these fears and desires in two major ways. First, it portrayed a powerful woman as ultimately evil and a completely naïve woman who embodies the characteristics of the nineteenth-century vision of "true womanhood"—domesticity, submissiveness, purity, and piety—as the ideal female. Even more strikingly, *Snow White* reverses the actuality of many downcast, jobless, nearly helpless men who were dependent on women to make them feel alive in the 1930s. The film instead portrays a woman who falls into the complete helplessness of "sleeping death," from which she can only be revived by a man, who will carry her off so that they can live happily ever after. For many men in the Great Depression, this was indeed the state of affairs for which they were wishing.

See Also: DISNEY, WALT; GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

SNYC. *See* SOUTHERN NEGRO YOUTH CONGRESS.

SOCIALIST PARTY

The Socialist Party entered the Depression years with high hopes for revival, and exited in near collapse. The party's greatest weakness was internal disunity, but the ultimately debilitating conflicts reflected the dilemmas of a radical movement in the age of Franklin D. Roosevelt.

By the time of the stock market crash in 1929, the once-strong Socialist Party had reached internal collapse. Pockets of ethnic labor and local voting strength, notably German, Jewish, and Slovenian, had been greatly heartened by the emergence of Norman Thomas, a former minister, as perpetual candidate and replacement for the late figurehead Eugene V. Debs. But many younger radicals had defected to Communist circles, and the deep-set bureaucratic mentality of older, influential party figures sometimes proved as much of a liability as a benefit, offering a gloomy prospect for the near future.

Nonetheless, a fresh generation of socialists found themselves in the movement of the unemployed, leading the Workers Alliance and the

Young People's Socialist League, while older hands enjoyed a revival of municipal victories in heavily Germanic Milwaukee and Reading, Pennsylvania, and strong turnouts in scattered spots. The Student League for Industrial Democracy (SLID) prospered on some campuses amid the rise of antiwar sentiment. Presidential campaigner Thomas, winner of a straw poll among college students in 1932, expected to win millions of votes that year and actually received 800,000, a promising turnout.

Communist blunders contributed to a renewal of interest in the Socialists and to their hopes for a major revival, but those hopes were deeply disappointed within only a few years. Often sectarian and highly rhetorical during the early 1930s, Communists left open opportunities for organizing projects within existing unions and for the creation of a labor party. Novelist Upton Sinclair, who mobilized socialistic constituencies for his run for California governor—but within the Democratic Party—marked yet another promising way forward despite his defeat by a Republican candidate in 1934. For a moment it seemed that the Socialist Party membership of approximately thirty thousand might be multiplied by its influence within union locals, certain urban neighborhoods, and college or middle-class reform milieus.

Two key factors reversed these gains. The proclamation of a "Second New Deal" by the Roosevelt administration in 1935 killed the labor party initiative at the national level and drained off many important activists who were earlier involved in Socialist electoral campaigns. The announcement of a Popular Front by world Communist parties brought American Communists into the New Deal coalition just as the labor movement expanded rapidly into industrial unionism and cultural innovation flourished at every level. Communists benefited, absorbing the radicalized writers, artists, and musicians, as well as most militant unionists and African-American activists and intellectuals, while Socialists lost out decisively at almost every level.

The Socialist failure was presaged by their practical absence from three major strikes in 1934—in Minneapolis-St. Paul (led by followers of Leon Trotsky), in Toledo (led by members of the American Workers' Party under A. J. Muste), and in San

Francisco (led by Communists). The Trotskyists and "Musteites" actually merged with the Socialist Party in 1936, after joining with each other, but this project of creating an alternative to the Communists occurred too late. A walk-out of older-generation Socialist conservatives, who took along the Rand School, radio station WEVD, and the weekly *New Leader*, left the party badly weakened.

The merger of unemployed groups and student groups into entities more influenced by the Communists better indicated the New Deal's magnetic attraction. Radicalism had become reformism, and pacifist rejection of war had evolved into anti-fascist support of armed resistance to Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. The dramatic fall of Norman Thomas's presidential vote in 1936 to less than half his 1932 total suggested that little remained of the organization but a personal following of Thomas as "Mr. Socialism," America's voice of conscience.

This conclusion would, however, underestimate the ability of local Socialists to rebound within particular circumstances. Socialists held their own and gained new electoral ground in immigrant-heavy Milwaukee, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and Reading, Pennsylvania. Meanwhile, scattered sections of the party led autoworkers, coal miners, and various other groups. As the nation tilted increasingly toward war, a particularly pure strain of pacifism influenced liberal Christian pastors and the laity with a socialistic interpretation of approaching global trauma. Socialist support for the "Keep America out of War" Congress in 1938 marked a final high point.

This was the Indian summer of a movement that could not recover its momentum. Severe internal wrangling with the followers of Trotsky ended with the expulsion of the minority in 1938. The inevitability of war and the 1941 entry of the United States doomed pacifism to a moral outcry that was not supported in most of the ethnic milieus where Socialist sympathies had remained alive. Opposition to Communist ideology and tactics, once made from attacking compromises with the Roosevelt administration, now slipped toward the center, as influential Socialists, especially within the labor movement, poised to become cold warriors.

See Also: MUSTE, A. J.; THOMAS, NORMAN.

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PAUL BUHLE

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Social science was established as a distinct field of study during the 1930s. When the Great Depression began, the debate over the proper purpose of social studies took on added importance, and experts in the various disciplines concerned with social studies—history, political science, economics, sociology, geography, and anthropology—agreed that the new challenges facing society mandated new approaches to research and teaching. History, as the branch concerned with synthesizing the various aspects of social studies, would take the lead in developing the discipline of social science.

Higher education had become more diverse in the 1920s, a process that continued during the next several decades. In an effort to be more scientific, scholars engaging in social science research began collecting original data that could be measured and rigorously tested; the days of armchair theorizing had ended. New subfields of study also began to take shape in the 1920s and 1930s. Historians continued to discover new directions. Political scientists moved beyond political theory in favor of a more behavioral approach and the new study of public administration. Influenced by John Maynard Keynes and his *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* (1936), economists abandoned many of their standard models for qualitative examinations. An assault on classical economics, Keynes's theory struck a particular chord in the Depression by challenging the popular notion that unemployment was voluntary and could be blamed on the refusal of a worker to work. Sociologists embraced a micro-level approach to social data and a

more functional theoretical stance. Anthropology struggled to break free from its position as the field-work branch of sociology, aided by the foundational works of Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead. Boas continued to challenge the system of race classification, while his student Benedict showed that the plasticity of human nature is such that culture can mold humans into a variety of forms, and Mead argued that masculine and feminine are cultural constructions rather than absolute categories. Geography stands out from the other social sciences for its shift from physical geography to a new kind of professional and research field of the sciences. Like anthropology, geography received little recognition as an academic discipline until the years following World War II.

The new scientific approach of social scientists required funds to support the collection and examination of data. The almost total absence of federal or state funding for such research meant that academics had to seek funding from foundations. This era also witnessed the emergence of the university system of social science research. The Institute for Social and Religious Research in New York provided money for studies of small towns and the countryside, including Robert Lynd's works on Middletown. The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Foundation, headed by Beardsley Ruml, was another major source of funding for social science research.

One of the projects funded by the Spelman Rockefeller Foundation proved enormously significant by setting a pattern for social science education that would last for the remainder of the century. With this undertaking (1929–1934), the American Historical Association Commission on the Social Studies established guidelines for the teaching of social science in the public schools. The membership of the board, dominated by historian and political scientist Charles A. Beard, consisted of various social scientists, including historian George Counts, geographer Isaiah Bowman, economist Leon Marshall, political scientist Charles E. Merriam, and sociologist Jesse Steiner. Historian A. C. Krey chaired the commission.

The problems facing the world in the 1930s dictated the need for such a commission. In 1932,

George Counts had enumerated these worries in his influential *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* The book pointed to the failures of capitalism, the social costs of a government's laissez-faire approach to business, and the growing popularity of such right-wing extremists as Adolf Hitler. Like other social constructionists, Counts argued that the schools needed to mesh the needs of the individual with the needs of society. He believed that individualism had died and that schools should play a role in some sort of collectivist planning and control.

The American Historical Association commission reached conclusions that generally supported Counts's contentions. In reports and individual volumes issued throughout the mid-1930s, the commission tried to explain what social science should be. According to the commission, if educators continued to emphasize the traditional ideals and values of economic individualism, then American society would lose the ability to compete in the emerging world order. The commission argued that the main purpose of education must become that of building a well-rounded individual who could think critically and work with others to develop creative solutions. Accordingly, it suggested that the curriculum should include the history of the major peoples and cultures of the modern world; more attention to Latin America, Africa, and Asia to help promote international efforts to achieve peace; and the study of contemporary American life, including contradictions and tensions.

Several of the commission's many publications stand out. *A Charter for the Social Sciences* (1932) edited by Beard, articulated the philosophy of the liberal arts. Beard's *The Nature of the Social Sciences* (1934) analyzed the relationship of the social sciences to the natural sciences and promoted the scientific method of research. *Conclusions and Recommendations* (1934), written by the entire commission, argued that education should abandon methods of coercion and ignorance in order to shape the rising generation according to America's democratic ideals. Although educators relied on Beard's works to write textbooks and curriculum, the vagueness of the commission's conclusions meant that no specific guidelines grew out of its last volume.

See Also: HISTORY, INTERPRETATION, AND MEMORY OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS.

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SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

When President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law on August 14, 1935, he called it the "cornerstone" of a system of government-provided social protections that would take care of basic human needs while preventing the likelihood of crippling economic depression and mass poverty in the future. The several programs created by that historic legislation included Old Age Assistance (OAA) for the low-income elderly; Old Age Insurance (OAI) for retired workers; Unemployment Insurance (UI) for workers who lost their jobs; and Aid to Dependent Children (ADC) for single, principally widowed, women with children. Together, these programs would prove the mainstay of the social welfare system for decades to come. But only one of them, Old Age Insurance, would come to be associated with the favored term *social security*, a sign of its broader acceptance and growing popularity among the citizenry as the program that came closest to living up to President Roosevelt's ambitious aims.

OAI was initially created to protect individual workers in the paid labor force from the later loss of income due to old age or retirement. Later ex-

MORE SECURITY FOR THE AMERICAN FAMILY



**THE WIDOW OF A QUALIFIED
WORKER WILL RECEIVE MONTHLY
BENEFITS AT AGE 65. IN CERTAIN
CASES, AN AGED DEPENDENT
PARENT MAY GET BENEFITS.**

**FOR INFORMATION WRITE OR CALL AT THE NEAREST FIELD OFFICE OF THE
SOCIAL SECURITY BOARD**

The Social Security Act offered much-needed benefits to elderly Americans, as this Depression-era poster testified. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

panded to include survivors and those with disabilities (becoming Old Age, Survivors', and Disability Insurance, or OASDI), the program popularly known as Social Security has become the single largest public income support program in the United States. Over 90 percent of all workers in the paid labor force are now covered by the program. As of 2003, the program paid monthly benefits to more than forty-five million Americans, including retirees and their surviving spouses, the long-term disabled, and the spouses and minor children of covered workers who die before retirement age. It is widely credited as the most important factor in reducing elderly poverty rates, from an estimated 50 percent at the height of the Great Depression, to less than 10 percent as officially measured at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

There are several features that distinguish OASDI from most other social welfare or "safety net" programs, and that help to explain both its comparative popularity and its claim to the mantle of "social security." One is that it operates on the principle of social insurance: Individuals draw benefits from a common fund to which they have contributed during their working years as a form of protection against a life-course risk—in this case, the risk of devastating income loss due to retirement or disability. Although benefit formulae favor lower-income retirees, the system is otherwise "needs-blind" and pays benefits automatically upon retirement or disability. This reflects Social Security's preventive approach, and distinguishes it from "means-tested" social welfare programs, which provide benefits only after recipients become eligible by offering proof that they are sufficiently impoverished and continue to abide by various program rules.

Social Security's reliance on worker contributions is a second feature that distinguishes it from more traditionally defined "welfare" or public assistance programs, and that has historically helped garner a broad base of political support. Its funding comes from automatic payroll taxes levied on employees and employers, which are put into a specially designated Social Security trust fund. As critics have pointed out, this is a relatively regressive form of financing since it imposes the same tax rate

on all workers rather than taxing the affluent at a higher rate, and, since only income up to a certain level is subject to the tax, it actually takes a smaller percentage of the income of the most affluent than it does of low-income workers. And yet, much as the program's original architects predicted, this contributory element makes workers feel they have genuinely earned their benefits and have in interest in the program's success.

Third, unlike most other income support programs, Social Security is wholly administered by the federal government through the Social Security Administration, bringing a far greater degree of uniformity and efficiency in comparison to those administered at the state and local level. Of all government supported programs, it comes closest to embodying the idea of a social contract between the citizenry and national government.

Fourth, to a far greater degree than other programs, Social Security works as a family support system, offering protection against income loss to surviving spouses and children as well as to individual workers, while also relieving retirees from the prospect of financial dependence on their adult children in old age. Finally, Social Security's protection against post-retirement poverty is lasting, and not time-limited as most other income support programs are. Retired beneficiaries are guaranteed payments for the remainder of their lifetimes and, especially important, benefits are automatically adjusted each year to account for inflation.

Many of the features that have made Social Security a popular and effective program were strongly contested at the time of its creation and came about only through a process of political negotiation and programmatic reform. Indeed, in comparison to the more relief-oriented programs created by the Social Security Act, old-age insurance was highly controversial and remained so for much of its early history. Moreover, some of the very political compromises that made the initial passage of Social Security possible also created serious inequities within it that were only later addressed through hard-fought legislative reform.

PROGRESSIVE ERA ORIGINS

Although Social Security traces its legislative origins to 1935 and the Great Depression, the sys-

tem was built on ideas and models for old-age provision that had been advocated within U.S. and European social reform circles throughout the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century period known as the Progressive era. During a time marked by what one contemporary called a “reform spirit” and characterized by a great deal of cross-national “borrowing” in public policy, reformers sought new ways of coping with the growing inequities of an increasingly industrialized capitalist economy. Here, in the context of hotly contested debates over workers’ rights and protections, unemployment, child labor, and access to health care, ideas such as compulsory social insurance, state-funded pensions, and subsidized private retirement funds began to get serious consideration as a way of dealing with the growing problem of economic need in old age.

These early reformers approached the issue that came to be referred to as old-age “insecurity” with an analysis and assumptions that later proved very influential in Social Security’s design. Most significantly, they approached it as a problem of the growing industrial labor force, and with what they saw as the needs of the predominantly white, male breadwinner/wage earner in mind. As the economy became more industrialized, less agricultural, and less oriented to self-employment, they argued, workers relied more heavily on wages from outside employment as their chief source of income. This left older workers facing greater and greater insecurity as the prospect of retiring from, or being pushed out of, the paid labor force approached. At a time when union or employer-provided retirement benefits were virtually nonexistent, many of the elderly were being pushed to drain meager savings, to rely on their children, or to the humiliating recourse of poor relief or even institutionalization in an old-age home. In the eyes of reformers, this situation was inhumane and demeaning, especially at the end of a lifetime of productive work. In particular, the prospect of “dependency” in old age threatened to undermine an ideal of the wage-earning household in which men assumed the role of chief breadwinner and women remained economically subordinate, if not completely dependent.

Agree though they might on the outlines of the problem, reformers differed widely on the solution, and drew on different precedents for support. Early proponents of the social insurance approach looked abroad for inspiration, sending delegations to study and observe the comprehensive system of compulsory health, accident, and old-age insurance established in 1880s Germany, as well as the more limited approaches adopted by the British and other European countries in the early decades of the twentieth century. After World War I and throughout the 1920s, European social insurance continued to expand to cover new groups and new needs, starting from health and employment and eventually extending to old-age insurance. The momentum in the United States was far more halting and uncertain, however, reflecting controversy about the social insurance idea as well as ambivalence about how far it should extend. Thus, when an influential Progressive reform organization, the American Association for Labor Legislation, launched its campaigns for social insurance beginning in 1912, it focused on workmen’s compensation, health, and unemployment but stopped short of endorsing old-age insurance. The American Association for Old Age Security (which later changed its name to the American Association for Social Security), established in 1927 by economist and leading social insurance advocate Abraham Epstein, also took the politically safer route of pushing for expanded old-age relief rather than insurance. By then operating in a more conservative political environment, old-age insurance advocates were mindful of the opposition they faced from private insurers, employers, and political leaders suspicious of its European roots, vaguely socialist undertones, and “un-American” collectivism.

But at least as important in the reluctance about old-age insurance was the comparative appeal of direct payments to the elderly in the form of government-funded pensions. Unlike social insurance, which was compulsory and based on the idea of shared risk, pensions involved outright grants to elderly recipients based on past service or established need. In addition to being more straightforward, this approach had the advantage of familiarity: Civil War pensions, originally intended for disabled Union army veterans, had grown into an

enormous social welfare program for northern veterans, their families, and survivors—an expansion that drew disdain from some legislators but that nevertheless established an important precedent among the general public. Like other campaigns to establish public pensions for poor widowed mothers and their children, old-age pensions could be presented as aid to the “deserving” poor. Moreover, the pension movement had at least the appearance of being home-grown; old-age pension campaigns took place at the state level, sidestepping the charge of federal government expansionism and preserving local discretion over who among the elderly would receive aid. By the early 1930s old-age pensions had been proposed in a number of states but enacted in only six. That number quickly rose to thirty by mid-decade in response to the Great Depression.

Still another approach offered as an alternative to public old-age insurance envisioned relying on the private sector through expansion of company-sponsored retirement plans. For the most part, these “welfare capitalist” plans combined a percentage of withheld wages matched by employer contributions and invested in a retirement fund. Very few employer-sponsored programs existed by the late 1920s, however, and they offered workers no guarantee or protection against company default. Still, private retirement plans exerted a strong influence on public-sector planning, as influential business leaders organized to preserve a central role for employer benefits in any system of social provision.

THE GREAT DEPRESSION: GROWING DEMAND FOR REFORM

Despite considerable groundwork on many fronts, in reality the system of old-age provision was threadbare on the eve of the Great Depression, and utterly inadequate once mass unemployment and destitution set in. With an estimated half of all elderly Americans living in poverty (a rate nearing 90 percent among non-whites), only about 3 percent were receiving public benefits from the state pension programs, and then only under the stringent conditions imposed by local administrators. As their presence in bread lines, among the homeless, and in harrowing letters to President and Mrs. Roo-

sevelt made evident, the plight of older Americans demanded action at the federal level. But what made federal action on old-age security a top priority was more than dire need. Equally important was the combination of political pressure and reform advocacy brought to bear on the Roosevelt administration by grassroots movements and social policy experts alike.

One important source of pressure was the growing segment of the population over age 65, which by the time the Roosevelt administration was facing the 1934 congressional elections had become an increasingly potent political force. Seeking to capitalize on that potential, Huey Long, the populist senator from Louisiana, made universal pensions for the elderly a prominent part of his “Share Our Wealth” campaign, promising generous monthly payments financed by taxes on millionaires. The Townsend movement was more singularly focused on the elderly, both as a constituency in need and a potential source of much-needed consumer spending. Named for Francis E. Townsend, a 66-year-old retired doctor from California, the Townsend Plan proposed to pay \$200 monthly to people over 60, provided they were retired, American citizens, without criminal records, and prepared to spend the money within thirty days of receipt. Within months of its 1933 publication in a Long Beach, California, newspaper, the Townsend Plan had garnered millions of supporters across the country and thousands of local Townsend Clubs. The outcry for federal aid to the elderly, coming from a group the Democrats were eager to court, was a voice the Roosevelt administration could not afford to ignore.

Equally important in the momentum for change was the commitment to reform among a number of the social policy experts recruited for service by the Roosevelt administration, and ready to be mobilized as the New Deal shifted its focus from the immediate crisis of providing relief to the longer-range challenge of building a lasting system of protections against economic insecurity. While the demand for federal old-age pensions was mounting at the grass roots level, these policy experts were working behind the scenes on behalf of the more politically controversial social insurance

approach. Dismissing the Townsend Plan and other popular pension schemes as far-fetched and prohibitively expensive, they used their expertise to present social insurance as the more fiscally responsible, long-term solution—one that they felt could be more easily insulated from the whims of politicians pandering to their constituencies.

Social insurance advocates also had two other important advantages in their efforts to influence the administration's approach to old-age security. One was Roosevelt's desire to avoid federal relief as a permanent policy, in line with his personal belief that "the dole" would undermine individual initiative and self-esteem. The other was that social insurance advocates found a strong institutional base within the administration. In the summer of 1934, President Roosevelt appointed the cabinet-level group known as the Committee on Economic Security (CES), and asked it to construct a comprehensive, stable, and permanent system of government social protections for consideration by the Congress. Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, who chaired the committee, was a longtime advocate of social insurance for the unemployed. Edwin Witte, the University of Wisconsin professor brought in to head the CES staff, had played a central role in drafting the landmark unemployment insurance law in Wisconsin. And Roosevelt himself, while governor of New York and later as president, had expressed admiration for social insurance as a truly modern, forward-looking reform idea. While initially reluctant about extending the social insurance principle from unemployment to old age, the CES leadership eventually came to endorse the concept, thanks largely to the energies of the old-age security planners on its staff.

STRUCTURING SOCIAL SECURITY: THE CES PROPOSALS AND CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE

Chief responsibility for designing the old-age provisions was in the hands of a three-person committee headed by Berkeley law professor Barbara Nachtrieb Armstrong, a leading expert and fervent advocate of social insurance, along with Princeton economist J. Douglas Brown, and Murray Latimer, an economist with expertise in pension policy. It was their initial work, based on a combination of intensive study, careful actuarial calculation, and

internal political negotiation, that gave Social Security some of its cardinal features. They were also animated by their own values and commitments to the New Deal, to a more socially responsible government, and to a principle of inclusion that did not always cross the boundaries of gender and race. Thus, in making federal retirement insurance rather than public pensions the centerpiece of their long-range proposal, they were not simply acting on research suggesting that this was the most fiscally sustainable approach. They were also embracing the New Deal spirit of revising and updating the social contract between government and the citizenry, with all the implications of a greater public responsibility for economic security it brought. Similarly, their decision to design a system that would be self-financing and based on worker contributions meshed with President Roosevelt's long-range political calculus, as well as their own concern for fiscal responsibility. Knowing that the payroll tax would initially prove unpopular, Roosevelt insisted that making the system contributory would eventually prove a political asset, avoiding the need to turn to general tax revenues while allowing workers to claim benefits as a right rather than on the basis of proven need.

Finally, their insistence on inclusiveness had both practical and principled elements. As a practical matter, universal coverage would help to ensure a large pool of contributors while helping to ease the unemployment problem by allowing older workers to retire at age 65. But the planners also saw inclusiveness as a matter of equity, and on this basis included the substantially nonwhite population of agricultural along with industrial wage earners in their original old-age insurance proposal. And yet, the spirit of inclusiveness only went so far. Domestic workers, sharecroppers, and temporarily or irregularly employed workers were all excluded from the original insurance proposals, along with the self-employed. Although couched as a practical decision, these exclusions effectively denied coverage for much of the female, non-white, and lower-class workforce. It would remain for Congress, and its powerful southern bloc, to instill even deeper racial divisions in the system, using the mechanism of occupational exclusion. Rightly perceiving the threat to their control over African-American labor,

southern members of Congress insisted on excluding agricultural as well as domestic workers from coverage. It was a price the administration was willing to pay for the sake of passing the Social Security Act.

Two other aspects of the legislation's old-age security provisions reflect its careful balance of principle with practical and political considerations. The first was ensconced in Title I of the Social Security Act, providing federal aid to states for needs-based Old Age Assistance programs. Viewed by the CES planners as a necessary stopgap for those too old or otherwise unable to benefit from insurance, it was also a response to the political threat posed by the Townsendites and other sources of popular activism. Second was the legislation's implicit promise to keep public insurance benefits adequate but low, sending important reassurances to private employers that Social Security would complement, not replace, their own employee retirement plans. This unspoken bargain proved essential in garnering political support from liberal-leaning business leaders, who in turn helped to fight off congressional efforts to allow employers to opt out of Social Security altogether.

Significantly, the dynamics shaping the creation of the Social Security Act's old age provisions also played out in its other major provisions. Thus, the CES experts responsible for the unemployment insurance program were committed to using the social insurance model, based on a payroll tax imposed on employers, and designed to provide laid-off workers with temporary benefits. But, in efforts to reassure advocates of state control as well as business leaders wary of higher federal taxes, they adopted a proposal based on the approach developed in Wisconsin, which allowed states to devise their own plans and benefit levels, and to lower tax rates for employers with stable employment records. In this, they rejected an alternative, known as the Ohio Plan, which would have required uniform tax rates within states and minimum federal standards, thus assuring a more adequate level of benefits for unemployed workers. Meanwhile, capitulating to prevailing racial and gender norms, they also excluded agricultural, domestic, and irregularly employed workers from UI coverage.

The other major provision of the Social Security Act, Aid to Dependent Children, was based on the patchwork but widely accepted system of mothers' pension programs introduced during the progressive era and adopted in nearly every state by 1930. Advocated by a widespread and predominantly female network of "maternalist" reformers, the idea of providing relief for single—mostly widowed—mothers and their children proved appealing to Depression era legislators eager to discourage women from entering the full-time labor force. Although materinalists considered ADC an important achievement, their proposals to assure more adequate benefits, uniform standards, and to prevent discrimination were fought back in Congress. With states largely in control and due to weak federal oversight, the program remained riddled with inadequacies and racial inequities that would contribute to the stigma associated with welfare in future decades.

FROM RETIREMENT TO FAMILY SUPPORT SYSTEM: THE 1939 AMENDMENTS

No sooner had the Social Security Act won passage than its old-age insurance provisions came under fierce attack. Republican candidate Alfred Landon called for repealing old-age insurance in the 1936 presidential elections. With payroll deductions set to begin in 1937, some prominent employers simply refused to cooperate, and backed a constitutional challenge that came before the Supreme Court. The Court's 1937 decision ultimately upheld Social Security's constitutionality, but by then old-age insurance had once again come under congressional scrutiny. The Senate controversy hinged on the issue of financing, an increasingly volatile issue as the country receded into further economic downturn during the recession of 1937 to 1938. Under the original financing plan, the system would build up a large accumulation of funds before any benefits were paid out. Workers would start paying into the system in 1937, but no retirees would receive benefits before 1942. Besides draining income from already hard-pressed workers, critics charged, this represented an irresponsible build-up of funds that might otherwise be circulating in the economy. Meanwhile, Old Age Assistance was growing to unprecedented proportions,

providing millions with immediate benefits that Social Security could only promise in the distant future.

With the entire system under threat, Congress and the Social Security Board agreed to appoint an advisory council, chaired by former CES staff economist J. Douglas Brown, to recommend changes. Their deliberations, which resulted in the 1939 amendments to the Social Security Act, sought to strengthen the program by transforming it in fundamental ways. The first was to broaden it from an individual retirement plan to a system of family support, by adding survivors' and spousal benefits; the second was to make benefit calculations more generous and favorable to lower-income workers, while making provisions to start benefit payments by 1940; and the third was to shift to a "pay as you go" financing formula to accommodate these more expansive benefits. Under this formula, worker contributions are not held in reserve for their own future retirement, but are used to finance benefits for the current generation of retirees. As the advisory council acknowledged, this method would provide ample funding for the Social Security trust fund created by the 1939 amendments for several decades, but would eventually require supplementation as the population aged and reached retirement age. Their shift to a "family concept" of Social Security also served to reinforce traditional gender roles, albeit in unacknowledged ways. Thus, the 1939 amendments made spousal and survivors' benefits available to wives and not to husbands, on the assumption that a wife was rightfully dependent on her husband and that her earnings were not essential to the overall well-being of the household. Most immediately important to the survival of Social Security, however, the 1939 changes would enable the program to deliver on its initial promise of a more dignified, and ultimately more generous, form of support than means-tested old-age relief.

SOCIAL SECURITY AND THE NEW DEAL LEGACY

Through these and other provisions, the 1939 amendments instituted a new, more expansive idea of Social Security that in turn set the stage for significant program expansions in the decades to come. Beginning in 1950 with amendments extend-

ing coverage to previously excluded agricultural, domestic, and self-employed workers, the program gradually came to realize the inclusive vision articulated by its original architects, and eventually to redress the racial, gender, and class inequities perpetuated by the occupational exclusions. The addition of disability insurance in 1954, along with more progressive benefit formulae, has also proved especially important to non-white and lower-wage workers. Major court decisions in the 1970s overruled the gender biases in survivors' and spousal benefits. Especially important to Social Security's anti-poverty objectives, the 1972 adoption of automatic cost of living allowances (COLAs) has provided crucial protection against inflation. Few of these major changes would have come about without the combination of political activism and policy advocacy that helped to shape the original program.

And yet, while these changes made it a more popular and effective program, since the 1980s Social Security has faced an ongoing series of "crises," stemming in part from concern about the program's ability to meet future benefit obligations in the wake of the "baby boom" retirement, but more fundamentally from an ideological challenge to the very principles of social insurance. Nevertheless, Social Security remains the most lasting legacy of Depression-era activism, New Deal policymaking, and above all of the public commitment to a broadly inclusive system of shared social protection against the insecurities of a market economy. Future debate will hinge on these values as well.

See Also: AID TO DEPENDENT CHILDREN (ADC); OLD-AGE INSURANCE; PERKINS, FRANCES; TOWNSEND PLAN; UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

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ALICE O'CONNOR

SOCIAL WORKERS

The 1930s proved to be a transformative decade for the social work profession. The appointment of Frances Perkins as secretary of labor in 1933 and the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935 convinced many social workers that the Roosevelt administration would effectively address the major

social woes of the Depression. Perkins, who was the first woman appointed to a presidential cabinet, was a noted social worker from New York, and many social workers anticipated that their concerns would receive national spotlighting as a result of her appointment. In addition, the Social Security Act convinced social workers that people in need could turn to the federal government for relief, and would no longer have to rely solely on local communities. Moreover, during the 1930s, the 1920s model of casework-related social work fell out of favor and there was a gradual move away from the community settlement house concept toward the establishment of government welfare agencies. John H. Ehrenreich contends that the 1920s model of social work professionalism became an anachronism with the advent of the Depression and its massive poverty, its newly energized social programs, its new social work institutions, and the transformation of the relationship between social workers and government. Social work elites could no longer claim that they worked solely in the interest of their clients, and division arose in the profession between the old guard and rank-and-file social workers who came of age during the 1930s.

The best known of the old guard reformers, Jane Addams, died in 1935, and according to historian Judith Trolander, no one came along in the settlement movement to replace her. Even the leaders of the settlement homes that remained by the mid-1930s began to realize that they had to make fundamental changes in order to keep up with trends in their profession. Perhaps the greatest failure of the settlement house movement was that it did not embrace integration during this period of Jim Crow segregation. Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn concludes that racial prejudice was the main cause of the decline of the settlement movement, and the reason the great promise of the movement remained unfulfilled.

There were some social workers, however, who addressed the concerns of racial injustice within the social work profession during the 1930s. These rank-and-file social workers also played a major role in left-wing agitation during the 1930s. Social workers who belonged to the leftist rank-and-file often focused their energy on linking the broad so-

cial objectives of their profession with the labor movement. The group's greatest success was the inauguration of the radical journal *Social Work Today* in 1934. The journal was edited by noted social work scholar Jacob Fisher of the Bureau of Jewish Social Research, and many of the era's major figures in social work were contributors, including Gordon Hamilton, Eduard C. Lindeman, Ira Reid, Roger Baldwin, and Mary Van Kleeck. By the 1930s, this leftist branch of the social work profession was cooperating with African-American reformers, such as Eugene Kinckle Jones of the National Urban League, Forrester B. Washington of Atlanta University school of social work, and Charles S. Johnson of the Fisk University department of sociology. Their goal was to eliminate discrimination within social work policies. *Social Work Today* stood in opposition to *Survey*, another professional journal that addressed more traditional and nonconfrontational issues within social work.

Jacob Fisher, chairman of the National Coordinating Committee of Social Service Employee Groups, was a leader of the rank-and-file radical social workers. Edith Abbott, president of the National Conference of Social Work during the 1930s and a faculty member at the University of Chicago, represented the more traditional social work core. Abbot and Fisher were particularly opposed on issues of race. Aside from concerns about racial discrimination within the profession, there were other forces that threatened peaceable relations. One conflict concerned new professional qualifications for the master of social work degree that was adopted in 1937 at the National Conference of Social Work. Since Atlanta University was the only black school of social work in 1937 that offered an advanced degree, the number of trained social workers serving the African-American community was limited. The ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in *Missouri ex. rel. Gaines v. Canada* (1938), however, required many colleges that had previously been open only to whites to accept black students, a ruling that had a major impact on the social work profession.

Another important development in social work during the 1930s was its spread to the rural United States. Before the Depression, social work had

mostly been accomplished in urban environments, but new government regulations facilitated social work in rural areas, and rural people were able to receive attention to their social needs for the first time during the 1930s.

See Also: PERKINS, FRANCES.

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FELIX L. ARMFIELD

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE (SCS)

In April 1935 the U.S. Congress passed the Soil Conservation Act, which created the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) within the Department of Agriculture (USDA) and declared that the federal government bore permanent responsibility for reducing water and wind erosion of the nation's soils. The SCS included more than ten thousand permanent and part-time employees, and utilized the labor of some 450 Civilian Conservation Corps units. The SCS also operated twenty-three research stations, where it studied the causes, extent, and prevention of soil erosion.



A farmer in Vernon County, Wisconsin, shows his fields to a representative from the Soil Conservation Service in 1942. This farmer was experimenting with strip cropping, a method used to prevent soil depletion. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Before the creation of the SCS, soil conservation had not figured prominently in government policy and had been overseen variously by the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Chemistry and Soils, by county agricultural extension agents, and from 1933 to 1935 by the Soil Erosion Service, a temporary agency in the Department of Interior. President Franklin Roosevelt transferred the Soil Erosion Service to the USDA in March 1935, only weeks before the SCS was created. The Great Depression, coupled with the massive dust storms that swept the country's southern Plains in the spring of 1935, compelled the federal government to address the urgent and related problems of the depressed

agricultural economy and the squandering and mismanagement of the nation's natural resources.

The Soil Conservation Service was headed by Hugh Hammond Bennett, who had directed the Soil Erosion Service. Bennett had been advocating soil conservation since the early twentieth century. In 1928, he warned that soil erosion posed a "menace" to the nation's food supply and prosperity. In 1934, experts from the Soil Erosion Service estimated that more than 260 million acres of American cropland had been severely damaged by water and erosion. The following year, Bennett estimated that more than 50 million acres had been so severely damaged that they were no longer arable.



Soil erosion during the 1930s ruined the fields of many farms, including this one near Dalhart, Texas, photographed in 1938.

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The SCS addressed the problem of soil erosion by creating “demonstration projects” in which the Service cooperated with landowners to implement conservation measures. The SCS assisted farmers in devising and implementing soil conservation plans for their land. In exchange for the landowner’s agreement to cooperate for a five-year period and to contribute his labor, the SCS supplied technical advice, materials, and additional labor. The Service urged farmers and ranchers voluntarily to plant ground cover vegetation to protect vulnerable soils, to rotate crops and allow fields to occasionally lie fallow, to build terraces and use contour plowing to

retain soil moisture, and to refrain from planting crops on highly erodible land.

Although more than fifty thousand farmers participated in SCS demonstration projects, attacking the widespread problem of soil erosion one farm at a time was costly and inefficient. In 1936, therefore, the SCS published a model statute that would enable farmers to create a soil conservation district in their vicinity, which could stipulate land use practices within the district. Many state governments passed laws permitting farmers to form soil conservation districts, but many farmers and state legislators were reluctant to grant districts the

power to require landowners to comply with district regulations, and soil conservation efforts remained largely voluntary.

See Also: DUST BOWL; SHELTERBELT PROJECT.

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CHRIS RASMUSSEN

SOUP KITCHENS

Soup kitchens are establishments that prepare and dispense food to the needy on a regular basis, usually soup, sandwiches, bread, and other minimal dietary essentials. The soup kitchens of the Great Depression era were one small part of larger collective community-based efforts that included penny restaurants, welfare cafeterias, and milk lines that came into being to combat the negative impact of the Depression. Although soup kitchens existed in cities during the decades following the Civil War, and continue to exist at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the number swelled during the 1930s.

During the early years of the Depression, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt's predecessor, Herbert Hoover claimed that "No one has starved," soup kitchens provided food assistance when the federal government would not. In the absence of any substantial local or federal relief programs, Americans did as they had done in the past: They turned to churches and civic organizations for help. Despite



Young girls accept buckets of free soup for their families at a city mission in Dubuque, Iowa, in 1940. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the scarcity of government-sponsored support during the years that preceded the New Deal, the growth of these establishments was so extensive that virtually every town and city in America had a substantial number of private organizations offering food to those in need.

One charitable organization, the Ohio Fraternal Order of Eagles, opened a free cafeteria in 1930 serving soup, bread, milk, and cheese to an average of two hundred persons per day. Within a year, the number of people served quadrupled. In November 1929, a Franciscan order expanded its long-standing tradition of feeding the poor from the door of its monastery by opening a soup kitchen in Detroit to respond to the increasing number of unemployed. In the beginning, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen served only rolls and coffee. At its peak, the kitchen fed well over seven hundred people daily



Unemployed men line up for a meal at a soup kitchen in Washington, D.C., in 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

using donations from local bakers, farmers, and merchants. So generous were the donations that the director of the kitchen boasted that the soup could be eaten with a fork. The infamous mobster Al Capone even joined this collective struggle against hunger by opening a popular soup kitchen in Chicago. Newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst did the same, opening soup kitchens at opposite ends of New York City's Times Square that served sandwiches from trucks plastered with posters advertising his paper's philanthropic efforts.

But the "good work" of feeding the indigent was not limited to established organizations and wealthy businessmen. Countless individuals supplemented those efforts, many volunteering in soup kitchens that were set up in abandoned or makeshift structures and horse-drawn carriages. In New York, samaritans like "Lady Bountiful" fed thou-

sands of men daily in lower Manhattan. Urban Le-doux, known as Mr. Zero, handed out wagonloads of day-old doughnuts in Times Square, and a man called Mr. Glad not only gave out food, but also nickels and gloves. The beloved minister Father Divine opened his Long Island home to those in need and was convicted of disturbing the peace when his middle-class neighbors became appalled by the sight of busloads of hungry worshippers flocking to his doorstep.

Acquiring the food offered by soup kitchens was no simple task. Regardless of the weather, long lines (or breadlines) began to form outside soup kitchens at dawn. Many of the people waiting in breadlines did not have shoes or coats to protect them from rain or snow. To avoid public humiliation, women often sent children to collect the day's offering. Families could use the pail of soup (mostly

broth) to supplement food acquired through their own efforts and the limited resources acquired from other relief agencies. Single persons and married couples without children in their households relied more heavily on soup kitchens than families did because they were not eligible for such relief as cash grants, food orders, food baskets, and commissary privileges. However humiliating the experience was for most Americans, soup kitchens provided a benevolent alternative for those reduced to begging for food, eating dandelions, or even worse, scavenging for discarded fruits and vegetables in the city dump.

See Also: BREADLINES; CHARITY; CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FAMILY AND HOME, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; FATHER DIVINE; HOMELESSNESS.

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GREGORY BAGGETT

SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE

On the eve of the Great Depression the South was the poorest region in the United States, its per capita income scarcely 50 percent of the national figure. It was a poor rural one-crop society in which too many people chased too little farm income. It was the bastion of the open shop. It was rigidly segregated and African Americans were economically and politically powerless. The region's politics were dominated by a conservative alliance of county-seat elites, planters, and industrialists, largely immune to popular pressure because of their economic dominance and the restricted nature of the electorate. Planters and industrialists had a mutual interest in a surplus labor force, low wages, low taxes, and minimal government services.

POVERTY

The onset of the Depression merely confirmed the South's poverty. The collapse of world commodity prices and foreign markets devastated cotton and tobacco farmers. Overproduction meant that the cotton crop yielded \$1.5 billion in 1929 but only \$465 million in 1932. In Mississippi, times were described as "tough as jailhouse stew." On a single day in April 1932 one-quarter of the land in the state was sold at sheriff's sales. Total receipts for the cigarette tobacco crop in 1932 were one-third those of 1929. One tobacco county in North Carolina saw 3,500 foreclosures in one year on the county's 5,280 farms. In addition, in 1930 drought ravaged a number of states.

For the 8.5 million tenants and sharecroppers, 3 million of whom were black, the onset of the Depression reinforced their hopelessness and dependency. As one black Georgian wryly observed, "Most blacks did not even know the Great Depression had come. They had always been poor and only thought the whites were catching up." The cash incomes of black families rarely reached \$100 a year.

Southern industries were just as vulnerable. Textiles firms had moved to the southern Piedmont region for lower labor costs in the 1920s, but too many small firms sought to grab a slice of a highly



A Farm Security Administration supervisor visits a client in Green County, Georgia, in 1939 to see how his crops are faring.

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competitive market by expanding production at ever lower prices and lower wages. The same was true of coal in northern Alabama, the lumber industry, and oil. In Birmingham, where U.S. Steel paid its workers between ten and fifteen cents an hour, 25,000 of the city's workforce of 108,000 were out of work and most of the remainder were employed only part-time. The city had abolished its welfare department in the 1920s. Private charity, the community chest, could not meet Birmingham's welfare needs: It had helped eight hundred families in 1929; by 1932 it struggled to help nine thousand.

Revenue-starved state and local governments responded to the Depression with retrenchment:

slashing government spending and services and turning to sales taxes to offset plunging income from property taxes. For the rural and industrial poor there was little to do other than endure. Sharecroppers, unable to move from the countryside to urban jobs, could only bargain by leaving one landlord and working for another, and 40 percent of Mississippi tenants did so in 1930. Occasionally desperation drove the poor to violence or radicalism: In Arkansas they threatened to loot food stores; in Alabama they joined a Communist-organized sharecroppers union; in the Piedmont they struck the textile mills in 1929 and 1931; in Atlanta they joined Unemployed Leagues. Violent repression met these efforts and simply emphasized



Flood refugees take shelter at a temporary camp in Forrest City, Arkansas, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

the powerlessness of the “have-nots” in the segregated South.

PLANTER’S HEAVEN AND WELFARE REVOLUTION

What impact did the New Deal have on the region that Franklin Roosevelt described as the nation’s number one economic problem? The New Deal rescued cotton and tobacco farmers. North Carolina senator Josiah Bailey wrote in December 1933, “Eastern North Carolina, a very large section devoted to agriculture has been prostrated for five years. This year the people are really prosperous . . . with one accord they give the credit to the President.” A Mississippi banker told Turner Catledge in 1935 about his county’s cotton farmers, “I can show you papers in our current portfolio that had been cancelled as uncollectable years ago. People come in here and ask to pay back interest on

notes we literally have to fish out of the waste basket.” The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) established the mechanisms—production control, price-support loans, and ample credit that would enable farmers who managed to stay on the land to work in a relatively risk-free environment and to enjoy prosperity when it returned during World War II. The AAA also created the political processes whereby organized commodity groups could guarantee favorable government responses in the future. As William Faulkner observed, “Our economy is not agricultural any longer. Our economy is the federal government. We no longer farm now in Mississippi cotton fields. We farm now in Washington corridors and Congressional committee rooms.”

The result was what Gavin Wright described as a “planter’s heaven.” Tenants and sharecroppers



An Alabama farmer surveys the eroded land surrounding his home in 1935. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

lost out both in the allocation of payments under the production control programs and in the operation of those programs by planter-dominated local committees. The worst abuses sparked the rise of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union in the harsh Arkansas Delta and an abortive effort by New Deal radicals in Washington to interpret the cotton contract to protect the tenants. Ultimately the New Deal launched a tenant-purchase and resettlement program for poor southern farmers. But the harsh reality was that the New Deal was a step on the road to the mechanization of southern agriculture and the displacement of tenant farmers. The New Deal, through the rental and benefit payments of the AAA, gave the planters the capital to buy tractors and mechanize the pre-harvest cotton production. Acreage reduction gave them the excuse to

evict tenants. They could replace them with hired laborers. No longer did planters have to support tenants all year round to ensure that they had an adequate labor force for the still unmechanized harvesting. Now New Deal welfare programs could support the surplus labor force through the winter and early summer. Then, with the assistance of sympathetic relief administrators, the planters could simply hire that labor for the harvest. This process of mechanization was at an early stage in the 1930s. Few planters in 1940 in Mississippi owned tractors. More people left the land in the 1920s and after 1940 than during the 1930s. High prices and labor shortages during World War II were what gave planters the means and the incentive to bring in the cotton harvester. After World War II the revolution in agricultural chemistry en-



A Tennessee Valley Authority representative (sitting at left) interviews unemployed men for TVA jobs at a shop near Lead Mine Bend in Tennessee in 1933. Many unemployed Southerners found work with the TVA during the Depression. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

abled farmers to dispense with hired labor to eradicate weeds and defoliate cotton plants.

New Deal unemployment relief, works programs, and Social Security engineered a welfare revolution in the South. Aid from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in 1932 had forced southern states, ensconced in the old Poor Law traditions of county responsibility, to adopt some form of welfare organization. But it was Harry Hopkins's Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) that transformed relief provision in the South. Ninety percent of relief spending under FERA in the region was provided by federal money, compared to 62 percent in the rest of the country. To qualify for such aid, states had to professionalize their welfare

organizations. As Michael Holmes noted, "Many counties in Georgia that had never seen a social worker now had one permanently stationed within their borders." Later, to qualify for federal matching funds for categorical assistance to the old, the blind, and dependent children, southern states had to maintain that revolution in professionalism. Southern cities established departments of public welfare for the first time. Southern states were forced to develop unemployment compensation programs. Old-age insurance became a federal responsibility.

But local administration and joint federal-state responsibility lessened the impact of the welfare revolution. It was difficult to find qualified staff to run relief programs, especially as local politicians



Dilapidated quarters for migrant agricultural laborers in Homestead, Florida, in 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

objected to women and nonpartisan appointments. Opposition from planters and employer elite to the whole idea of relief made state legislatures reluctant to make appropriations or to take over the burden of the able-unemployed, who did not get Works Progress Administration (WPA) jobs after 1935. Everywhere FERA and WPA operations were curtailed at harvest time to ensure the availability of as large a labor force as possible for cotton picking.

The federal-state operation of Social Security not only meant that states varied considerably in the generosity of the benefits they offered and the conditions they imposed on recipients, it also meant that many southern states could scarcely afford to participate in the system at all. Planters lobbied

to keep benefits low: They feared that an alternative to their own paternalist but minimal in-kind benefits would loosen their control of their tenants. Poverty-stricken Mississippi was the last state in the union to enter the Aid to Dependent Children program. The principle of matching funds in general meant that poor southern states received less per capita from New Deal spending than any other region.

INDUSTRY AND WORKERS

New Deal industrial policy did little to solve the problems of southern industries in the short term. Cotton textile executives were so desperate to curb overproduction that they conceded the elimination

of child labor and a \$12-per-week minimum wage in return for the National Recovery Administration (NRA) code restricting the hours that mills could operate. When the Supreme Court ended the NRA in 1935 the industry lobbied, like the lumber industry, for legislation to perpetuate price and production controls, but failed. Southern coal operators, fearing wage rises and unionization, were less enthusiastic. Tobacco manufacturers, already operating as an oligopoly, resisted NRA codes until 1935, just before the NRA collapsed. The New Deal simply did not solve the problems of excessive production in southern industry. It would take dramatically rising demand and profits in World War II to absorb that production and to enable consolidation and integration in, for example, the textile industry, where larger firms could finally buy out smaller mills.

What the New Deal did do was to stimulate worker militancy. Inspired by section 7a of the National Industrial Recovery Act, twenty thousand Alabama coal miners joined the United Mine Workers in 1933 and 1934. In a massive explosion of frustration, Piedmont textile workers joined the moribund United Textile Workers, forcing their leaders into a premature strike in September 1934. In 1937 and 1938, the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee attempted to unionize the industry under the banner of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Rubber workers in Gadsden, Alabama, made repeated efforts to unionize in the face of employer violence. Steelworkers in Birmingham unionized the Tennessee Coal and Iron subsidiary of U.S. Steel.

But determined protest was not enough. Nor could the new federal protections always help. The prospect of rapidly filling order books might persuade U.S. Steel to sign a union contract in 1937 and force their southern subsidiaries to do likewise, but other steel employees in Birmingham saw no need to follow. The final employer there to sign a union contract did so in 1974. In textiles, employers had no incentive to concede to union demands in 1934 when they already had excess capacity in stock, or in 1937 and 1938 when recession once again gripped the industry. As before, where employers were determined to resist they could utilize

local sentiment to defeat the unions, using the local press, vigilante strikebreakers, and sympathetic law enforcement officers. In the South, labor was too politically powerless to impose its will on local sheriffs, state legislatures, and state governors. Despite the 1935 Wagner Act (National Labor Relations Act), traditional anti-union tactics by employers would go unchecked, and neither rank and file militancy nor federal law could break down the longstanding patterns of worker dependency in labor relations.

Nevertheless, Gavin Wright has argued that "the economic underpinnings and social glue that had kept the regional economy isolated were no longer present in 1940." The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, despite its temporary provision of regional wage differentials, confirmed the trends of the NRA and meant that employers at the end of the 1930s and in World War II could no longer quarantine the low-wage economy of the South from national economic forces.

New Deal programs did modernize the infrastructure of the South. They rescued southern education: Relief programs, the National Youth Administration, and works programs paid teachers and students, and built and repaired schools and colleges at a time when southern governments had to slash school spending. The New Deal built and resurfaced thousands of miles of roads, and built and improved port facilities and airports. In the southern cities, New Deal programs built the capital projects that private enterprise had built in the northern cities a generation earlier. Above all, the New Deal provided cheap power and easy credit: The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and the Rural Electrification Administration started the electrification of southern farms and provided abundant power and water for southern industry. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation made credit available to a new generation of regional entrepreneurs anxious to capture government contracts and to attract outside investment.

THE POLITICAL RESPONSE

Nevertheless, in 1940 the South was still a poor, rural, one-crop region, wedded to low wages and the open shop, in which African Americans were

rigidly segregated and disfranchised. But a new generation of southerners had ambitious plans to reform and modernize the region from the bottom up. Southerners, such as Aubrey Williams, Clark Foreman, and Clifford Durr, who served in Washington in New Deal agencies, were radicalized on racial and economic issues: They saw full-scale rural poverty programs, unionization, and the extension of Social Security and political democracy to African Americans as the key to the development of mass purchasing power in the South. Newly elected congressman, such as John Sparkman and Albert Gore, Sr., saw the TVA as the model of what the federal government could do to transform not merely a river valley but a whole region through infrastructure investment and aid for education and health. African Americans were segregated in New Deal programs, discriminated against in the distribution of benefits and jobs, and, as farm laborers and domestic servants, disproportionately excluded from Social Security. But they received more than they had ever had before from the federal government and more than they would have received from white state governments. Black leaders saw how the federal government had intervened in the region's economy and, rightly, as it turned out, believed that the federal government could in the future intervene in the region's race relations.

There emerged, therefore, a loose pro-New Deal coalition of liberal politicians, union organizers, students, Communist Party members, and black leaders committed to the extension of political and economic democracy in the South. This alliance manifested itself in the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, the election of TVA liberals to Congress, the campaign to abolish the poll-tax, and membership campaigns and legal struggles by the NAACP.

Conservatives had an alternative top-down vision for modernizing the South. They believed that a low tax and anti-union environment would attract outside investment. Southern political leaders had been enthusiastic for the New Deal in the emergency of 1933, immensely grateful for the relief that Roosevelt brought to their desperate constituents. They remained fervent supporters of farm programs and measures to offset the power of northeastern

financial interests. Many were personally loyal to Roosevelt and strong supporters of pro-British intervention in World War II. But the non-emergency direction of the New Deal after 1936 troubled them. More New Deal benefits seemed to be going to northern urban states. In addition, New Deal rural credit and labor policies seemed to undermine the traditional power of county seat elites: They disturbed the traditional patterns of deference and dependence between landlord and tenant, and employer and worker. Above all, conservatives feared that the New Deal, catering to newly Democratic black voters in the North, would threaten traditional patterns of white supremacy in the South.

Southern Democrats therefore joined Republicans after 1938 to form a bipartisan conservative coalition to thwart any significant expansion of the New Deal for the next quarter of a century. A casualty of this process in the short run were the ambitious plans of southern New Dealers to tackle rural poverty, unionize southern workers, and enfranchise African Americans. Instead, southern political leaders ensured that when the region modernized, kick-started into self-sustaining economic growth by federal defense spending during the war and after, the modernization strategy was a conservative one sustaining low-wage, open shop industries and traditional patterns of race relations.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); SHARECROPPERS; SOUTHERN AGRARIANS; TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA).

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TONY BADGER

SOUTHERN AGRARIANS

Meeting fortnightly at the apartment of a Nashville eccentric named Sydney Mtttron Hirsch, John Crowe Ransom and Walter Clyde Curry, both of whom taught English at Vanderbilt University, launched the fugitive movement in 1914. Although American entry into the first world war temporarily dispersed the group, by 1921 the gatherings had resumed at the home of James M. Frank, a Nashville businessman and Hirsch's brother-in-law. Besides Ransom, Curry, and Hirsch, the original fugitives included Donald Davidson, William Yandell Elliott, Stanley Johnson, and Alec B. Stevenson. After the war, a number of younger poets also participated, among them Merrill Moore, Alfred Starr, Jesse Wills, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren.

Initially confining themselves to the discussion of literature, the Fugitive poets, by 1925, had begun to examine the culture and history of the South and to voice their growing opposition to science, industrialism, capitalism, and the other forces shaping the modern world. During the next several years Ransom, Davidson, Tate, and Warren conferred with thinkers outside the Fugitive circle, including psychologist Lyle H. Lanier, political economist Herman Clarence Nixon, historian Frank Lawrence Owsley, and literary scholar John Donald Wade, all of whom, like Ransom and Davidson, were then members of the faculty at Vanderbilt. Andrew Nelson Lytle, a former Vanderbilt undergraduate and a future novelist, and Henry Blue Kline, who completed a master's degree in English at Vanderbilt in 1929, also joined the deliberations. The most celebrated figures of the 1920s associated with Southern Agrarianism were John Gould Fletcher, who enjoyed an international reputation as an Imagist poet, and Stark Young, already renowned as a playwright, journalist, and theater critic.

Believing the "American industrial ideal" inimical to the humane traditions of the South, the Agrarians sought to develop political, economic, social, and moral alternatives. In *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition*, published by Harper and Brothers in 1930, and in dozens of essays written over the next decade, the Agrarians argued that industrialism had enslaved human be-

ings, rendering modern life hurried, brutal, servile, and mercenary. To rescue society from the rigors of the assembly line, the blast furnace, and the book-keeper's ledger, the Agrarians championed an "imaginatively balanced life lived out in a definite social tradition." For them, the historic South offered ideal terrain from which to mount a defense of family, community, manners, art, and religion against the destructive and dehumanizing onslaught of unbridled industrial capitalism.

The onset of the Great Depression made the Agrarian critique of modern America seem even more credible and prophetic. Although their proposals to resolve the economic crisis of the 1930s often lacked specificity, most of the Agrarians remained ambivalent about New Deal policies and programs. Fearful that the rise of bureaucracy and the emphasis on planning characteristic of the New Deal would result in the establishment of a collectivist regime, the Agrarians suggested that Americans preserve their independence by returning to the land. Only the abandonment of commercial farming and the adoption of production for use, sustained through the widespread ownership of property, could restore economic health and safeguard political liberty.

In practical terms, the Southern Agrarians failed. They never organized an Agrarian political party, secured control of a wing of the Democratic Party, or cultivated a mass following among fellow southerners. Even the appearance in 1937 of *Who Owns America?: A New Declaration of Independence*, which brought the Agrarians together with Hilaire Belloc's and G. K. Chesterton's English Distributists, who also advocated political decentralization and broad property ownership, could not prevent their movement from languishing. Yet, whatever their political weaknesses and philosophical defects, the Agrarians did raise fundamental questions about the beneficence of American national development and the impact of industrial capitalism on the spiritual welfare of the American people.

See Also: BACK-TO-THE-LAND MOVEMENT; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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MARK G. MALVASI

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE (SCHW)

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW), formed in 1938, was the product of an alliance of southern liberals and radicals, black and white, who sought to bring the full force of New Deal reforms and Popular Front ideals to the South.

In its original incarnation, the SCHW was an extremely diverse collection of men and women united by the common goal of revitalizing the southern economy. The founders sought to create an organization that could take advantage of the Roosevelt administration's increased interest in improving the stagnant southern economy. With the support of the president, who had recently classified the South as "the nation's no. 1 economic problem," in November 1938 the SCHW held its inaugural meeting in Birmingham, Alabama. Attendees included business-leaders, labor organizers, politicians, sharecroppers, and newspaper editors; of the 1,200 in attendance, approximately 20 percent was African American.

The SCHW sought to create broad-based support through advocating economic reforms, with a

focus on improving the lives of the southern workers and farmers. While deeply committed to creating an interracial movement, the SCHW leaders also worked to prevent the race issue from dividing their fragile coalition. This approach lasted less than two days. On the second day of the convention, Birmingham police commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor forced the group to adopt segregated seating in the meeting hall. In response, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, a featured speaker at the convention, famously placed her chair on the line dividing the races. The SCHW pledged not to hold any future meetings where segregation would be required, although the leadership steered clear of more sweeping denunciations of segregation. Even this attempt at moderation, however, alienated some early supporters, particularly after critics used the controversy to label the SCHW an advocate of racial equality. Throughout its ten-year history, the organization's ambivalent position toward the increasingly pressing question of racial segregation would prove a major point of division.

The SCHW's most significant policy initiative was its attack on the poll tax, an issue that perfectly encapsulated the organization's approach to reform. The poll tax was used as a tool of both economic and racial oppression. The anti-poll-tax campaign thus became a centerpiece of the SCHW's effort to create a labor and farmer coalition, to address civil rights concerns, and also to minimize the potential backlash of white southerners uncomfortable with the idea of racial equality. Although the campaign failed to achieve its ultimate goal of pressuring Congress to pass an anti-poll-tax bill, the SCHW brought much-needed attention to the voting rights issue in the South.

In 1948 the SCHW disbanded, the result of a chronic lack of funds, increased attacks on the organization for its connections with Communists, and internal rifts over its wavering position on racial segregation. Its auxiliary, the Southern Conference Educational Fund, continued to function with a more limited agenda, focusing predominantly on the civil rights issues that, by the late 1940s, had largely supplanted the movement for a working-class alliance envisioned by the founders of the SCHW in 1938.

During its ten-year life, the SCHW had two primary accomplishments. First, it successfully highlighted the benefits of an interracial working-class movement, even as this approach to social and economic reform lost momentum in the years following the Depression. Second, and more importantly, it did this in the South, the part of the country where such reform was not only most needed, but also where it faced the largest obstacles.

See Also: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL.

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CHRISTOPHER W. SCHMIDT

SOUTHERN NEGRO YOUTH CONGRESS (SNYC)

Founded in 1937, the Southern Negro Youth Congress (SNYC) was a civil rights organization that worked to empower southern black people to fight for their rights and looked with hope to interracial working-class coalitions as the key to undermining the southern caste system.

The SNYC had its roots in both the National Negro Congress (NNC) and the leftist student movement of the 1930s. In 1936, the NNC convened to address the economic problems and discrimination faced by African Americans, particularly in New Deal programs. Although the vast majority of NNC delegates were from northern communities, younger delegates acknowledged that the problems facing southern black people were especially acute and inseparable from the problems northern African Americans faced. Many of these younger delegates were also active in leftist student organizations, such as the American Student Union and the American Youth Congress. In fact, the student movement was an important train-

ing ground for SNYC leaders like Edward Strong, James E. Jackson, Jr., and Louis Burnham. These student activists resolved that the battle against discrimination and segregation had to be waged by a black-led southern organization, and they spearheaded a conference of young black southerners.

Over five hundred delegates attended the founding conference of the SNYC, held in Richmond, Virginia, in February 1937. The conference delegates issued a broad proclamation, demanding equal educational and employment opportunities, the right to organize unions, the right to vote, and an end to lynching and segregation. The delegates also reached out to southern white youth and to workers, especially those in the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), which advocated organizing workers on an interracial basis. At the close of the conference, the delegates created a permanent organization, headquartered in Richmond. The SNYC initiated its work in April 1937, when it organized black workers on strike at the Carrington and Michaux tobacco factory. Their efforts resulted in an independent union, called the Tobacco Stemmers' and Laborers' Union (TSLU); the TSLU succeeded in gaining an eight-hour day and forty-hour workweek, along with a wage increase. The SNYC went on to organize other TSLU locals among black workers in other tobacco factories.

The SNYC exemplified the inclusiveness of Popular Front politics during the Great Depression by reaching out to all members of the black community and to political radicals, as well as to the white working class. SNYC moved its headquarters to Birmingham, Alabama, in 1940 and was active until 1949.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS.

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These Arkansas sharecroppers were evicted from the Dibble Plantation in January 1936 because of their membership in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. They later found shelter in a tent colony. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

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LARISSA M. SMITH

SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION (STFU)

As the Great Depression intensified by 1933, the plight of southern tenant farmers and sharecroppers worsened. Barely eking out a living for their families, tenant farmers and sharecroppers looked

to Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal for relief. Initially, the New Deal addressed the agricultural crisis by implementing the 1933 Agricultural Adjustment Act, which was designed to limit farm production by paying farmers not to plant certain crops, such as cotton. Although the intent of the law was to help all farmers, landowners took the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) subsidies and used them however they wanted, often without consideration for the needs of their tenants or sharecroppers. Even when Jerome Frank and other AAA legal administrators tried to force southern landowners to at least retain their tenants for more than one year, the situation did not change. Instead, AAA director Chester Davis fired the "Frank group" and sustained the landowners' practices.



An evicted Arkansas sharecropper, an active member of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, builds a new home near Hill House, Mississippi, in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Facing increasing economic pressures, a group of black and white tenant farmers met in the delta town of Tyronza, Arkansas, and organized the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union (STFU) in July 1934, under the leadership of H. L. Mitchell, a socialist and former sharecropper, and H. Clay East. Committed to helping tenant farmers, the STFU faced numerous problems, the most serious of which was the southern landowner. Although landowners initially did not take the STFU seriously, their attitudes changed when significant numbers of southern tenant farmers began to join the union. Landowners quickly implemented policies designed to intimidate and frighten the member-

ship. Violence was used to break up STFU meetings, members were beaten, and meeting places were burned down. Despite the threats and violence, the union grew and spread to other states, including Mississippi, Alabama, Oklahoma, North Carolina, and Texas. The STFU called strikes in 1935 and 1936 over such issues as cotton pickers' wages. In Earle, Arkansas, landowner violence against the union caught the nation's attention as local police opened fire in a church where STFU members were meeting. Further violence occurred as mobs organized to attack union members. In 1939, the STFU became involved in the famous Missouri roadside demonstration, designed to pro-

test the AAA's refusal to help sharecroppers and led by Reverend Owen Whitfield, former sharecropper and STFU vice president.

By January 1937 the STFU claimed over thirty thousand members. In spring 1936, the La Follette congressional committee had begun investigating violations of basic rights guaranteed by the Constitution, certainly apropos of what the tenant farmers faced in the South. The leadership of the union, amid tensions and debate, decided to become a subsidiary of the Congress of Industrial Organizations' United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America in July 1937. This move, along with the union's identification with socialism (given its leadership and Socialist Party leader Norman Thomas's open support for the group) and some activities that were seen as sympathetic to Communists, eventually contributed to the union's decline. Remnants of the STFU were absorbed by the American Federation of Labor in the 1940s.

In spite of its decline, the STFU did accomplish more than it is given credit for. The union coalesced national attention on the plight of southern tenant farmers and sharecroppers, while exposing the violence southern landowners often used in dealing with their tenants. If nothing else, the STFU demonstrated the growing need for the federal government to step in and protect the rights of its poorest citizens.

See Also: SHARECROPPERS; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; THOMAS, NORMAN.

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

SPANISH CIVIL WAR

The Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939 was the culmination of a prolonged period of national political

unrest in a country that was increasingly polarized and unable to ameliorate the poverty in which millions of its citizens lived. In Spain at the time, landless peasants cobbled together a bare subsistence as migrant laborers, following the harvests on vast agricultural estates. The hierarchy of the Catholic Church, identifying with wealthy landowners, was in full control of secondary education; education for women seemed to the Church unnecessary, and universal literacy a danger rather than a goal. The military, meanwhile, had come to see itself, rather melodramatically, as the only bulwark against civil disorder and as the ultimate guarantor of the core values of Spanish society.

When a progressive Popular Front government was elected in February 1936 with the promise of realistic land reform as one of its key planks, conservative forces immediately gathered to plan resistance. The Spanish left, meanwhile, celebrated the elections in a way that made conservative capitalists, military officers, and churchmen worried that broader reform might begin. Rumors of a military coup led leaders of the Spanish Republic (the elected government) to transfer several high-ranking military officers to remote postings, with the aim of making communication and coordination between them more difficult. But the planning for a military uprising continued.

The military rebellion began on July 18, 1936, with the officers who organized it expecting a quick victory and a rapid takeover of the entire country. What the military did not anticipate was the determination of the Spanish people, who broke into barracks, took up arms, and crushed the rebellion in such key areas as Madrid and Barcelona. At that point, the character of the struggle changed, for the military realized that it was not going to win by fiat. Military leaders faced a prolonged struggle against their own people and an uncertain outcome. They appealed to fascist dictatorships in Italy, Germany, and Portugal for assistance, and they soon began receiving both men and supplies from Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler, and Antonio Salazar.

The 1936 election in Spain had been widely celebrated in progressive publications in Great Britain, France, and the United States. In the midst of the worldwide Depression, the military uprising was

thus seen as an assault against the interests of working people everywhere. Moreover, the rapid intervention of German and Italian troops gave what might otherwise have remained a civil war a dramatic international character. Almost from the outset, the Spanish Civil War became a literal and symbolic instance of the growing worldwide struggle between fascism and democracy. Indeed, the Republic perceived the country as being under invasion by foreign troops. By the time the pilots of Hitler's Condor Legion reduced the Basque holy city of Guernica to rubble in April 1937, many in the rest of the world had come to share that opinion.

Yet the Spanish Republic faced the difficult task of defending itself against a substantial portion of its own military. Local militias worked well in inner city skirmishes but were of little use against mechanized battalions in the field. The Republic needed to raise an army, having lost most of its own to the rebel generals. After General Francisco Franco took command of the rebel army, he mounted an assault on the capital city of Madrid, hoping to end the war with one bold stroke. The situation looked desperate enough that the government fled to Valencia. Yet the capital held, with the small Spanish Communist Party playing a key role in the city's defense. Other Western powers signed a pact agreeing to abstain from arming either side, a pact that Hitler immediately violated. Only the Soviet Union was willing to sell quantities of arms to the Republic, a decision that helped gain the Communists increasing influence in the Spanish government. In addition, the Comintern, the international coalition of Communist parties, organized the International Brigades, with forty thousand people from fifty countries volunteering to fight on the side of the Republic. Among the International Brigades was the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, made up of volunteers from the United States.

Yet neither Soviet arms nor the international volunteers ever matched the arms supplied by Hitler and Mussolini. And the Spanish Left was deeply divided, with anarchists and anti-Soviet Marxists seeking a fundamental social revolution, while the Spanish Communist Party urged only moderate reform and cooperation with liberal parties as a way of winning the war. Despite winning occasional

battles, the Republic steadily lost territory until it fell to Franco's forces in the spring of 1939.

See Also: ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; POPULAR FRONT.

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CARY NELSON

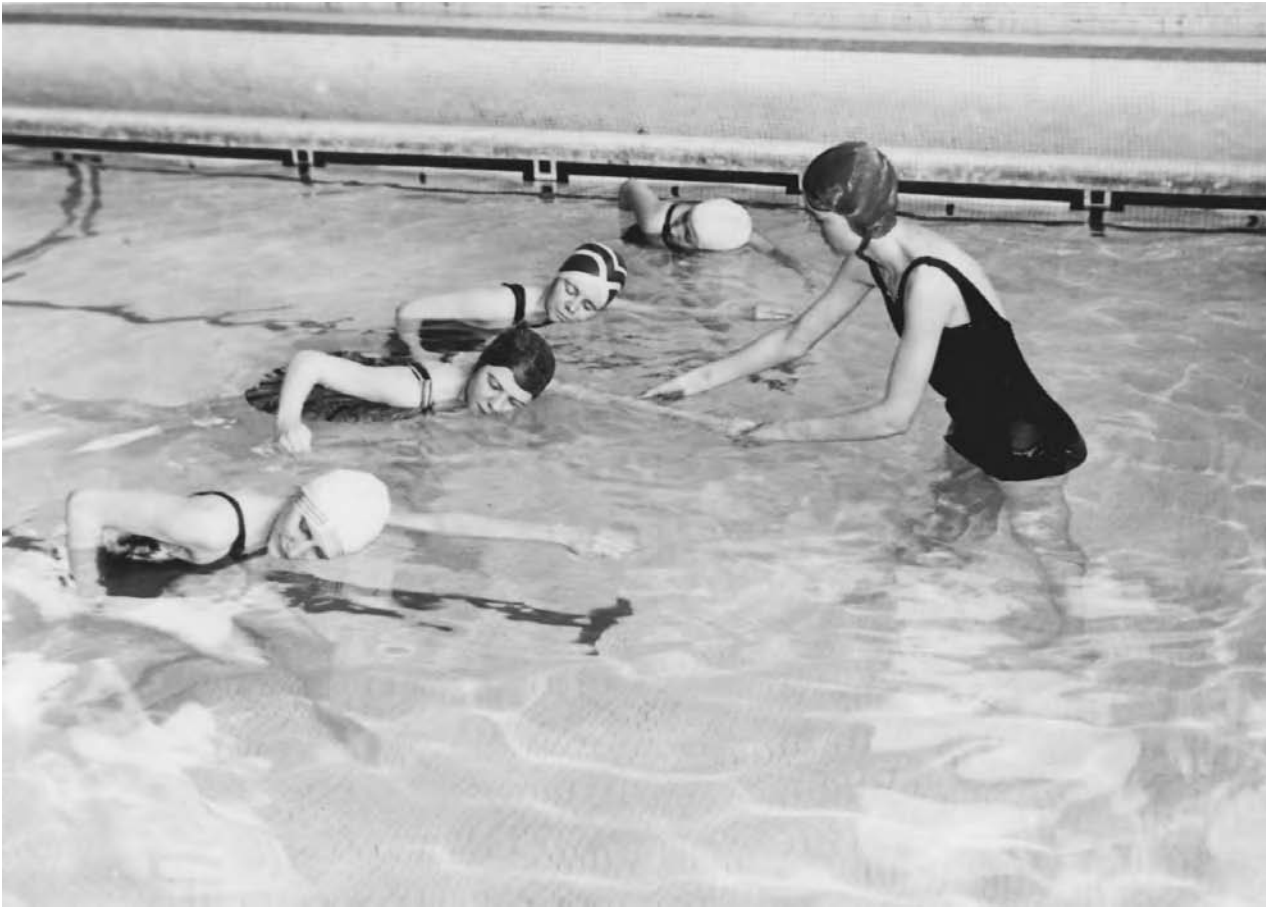
SPORTS

American athletics, especially commercial sports, were more heavily damaged by the Great Depression than was the rest of the entertainment industry. Still, American sports survived and managed to rebound after the middle of the 1930s.

THE IMPACT OF THE DEPRESSION ON MAJOR PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Baseball. Major league baseball attendance dropped from 10.2 million in 1930 to 6.1 million by 1933. The Saint Louis Browns, for example, drew a paltry 88,113 fans in 1933. Major League gate receipts dropped from \$17 million in 1929 to \$10.8 million in 1933. Total payrolls dropped from \$4 million in 1930 to \$3 million in 1933, when the average salary was \$4,500. Even Babe Ruth's \$80,000 salary was cut by half. Professional baseball did not cut ticket prices or initiate rule changes. But low attendance caused Connie Mack, owner of the Philadelphia Athletics, World Series champions from 1929–31, to sell off star players Al Simmons, Mickey Cochrane, Lefty Grove, and Jimmy Foxx.

Baseball teams were leery of radio broadcasting, which they felt hurt attendance. New York's teams banned radio from 1934 until 1939. Night baseball was introduced following the model of the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro National League (NNL), which had started using a portable



The Works Progress Administration promoted sports by building hundreds of swimming pools and athletic fields around the country. This swimming class was conducted by a National Youth Administration instructor in Boise, Idaho, in 1936. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

light system in 1929. In 1930, minor league teams in Des Moines, Iowa, and Wichita, Kansas, began playing night ball to encourage attendance of people who worked during the day. In 1935, the Cincinnati Reds became the first major league team to play night games, but no other team put in lights until 1938. Another Depression-era innovation was the creation of the All-Star Game in 1933. A further promotional effort was the founding in 1936 of the Baseball Hall of Fame, which opened in Cooperstown, New York, in 1939.

The NNL folded in 1931, but was reorganized two years later by Gus Greenlee and other African-American numbers racketeers, who instituted the East-West All-Star Game in Chicago before the

first major league all-star game. A rival midwestern and southern association, the Negro American League, was founded in 1937. Top black players barnstormed extensively in the off-season, often playing major league all-star teams. Many players, especially star pitcher Satchel Paige, jumped teams with frequency.

Horse racing. Horse racing was badly damaged by the onset of the Depression. Stakes and purses, at near peak values in 1930, dropped from \$13.7 million that year to \$8.5 million in 1933, an average decline of \$672 per race. The typical stakes event dropped from \$8,309 to \$4,741. The Belmont Stakes dropped from \$66,040 in 1930 to \$35,480 in 1935. The average price of yearlings fell from \$1,966 in



Although professional football suffered during the Depression, the sport remained popular. These high school boys in Wildrose, North Dakota, played six-man football in the fall of 1937. High school enrollments were too low to field eleven-man teams.

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1930 to \$569 in 1932. Earnings did not return to 1930 levels until 1937, but by 1939 they were up to \$15.9 million. Despite the sport's financial problems, the number of tracks increased 70 percent to fifty-eight. Ten states authorized pari-mutuel betting in 1933 as a new source of revenue. New tracks built during the 1930s included Sportsman's Park in Cicero, Illinois (the former site of Al Capone's dog track), Tropical Park and a rebuilt Hialeah in Florida, and Santa Anita and Hollywood Park in Los Angeles.

Football. Like horse racing, college football was hurt by the onset of the Depression. Although ticket prices were cut, attendance by the fall of 1932 dropped about 20 percent in the East and 15 percent in the Midwest, and many institutions considered dropping their football programs to save expenses. However, the sport recovered and spectatorship reached its pre-Depression level by

1935. In addition, the economic downturn encouraged several cities in warm climates to organize post-season bowl games to promote tourism: Miami inaugurated the Orange Bowl in 1933, followed by New Orleans with the Sugar Bowl in 1935, El Paso with the Sun Bowl in 1936, and Dallas with the Cotton Bowl in 1937.

By 1932, the National Football League (NFL), a struggling enterprise to begin with, was down to eight teams. By the late 1930s, however, spectatorship was growing. A championship game was initiated in 1933 to promote fan interest, and in 1934, the college football all-star game was established. In 1936, the NFL initiated a draft of college seniors to equalize competition. Pro football became more successful in attracting collegiate stars by helping players secure off-season employment.

Basketball. Basketball became much more popular in the 1930s than ever before. In 1931, Madison

Square Garden in New York City staged intercollegiate tripleheaders to raise funds for unemployment relief. This practice encouraged sportswriter Ned Irish to promote intersectional college doubleheaders in 1934. In 1938 the first national tournament, the National Invitational Tournament, was established. The National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament began one year later.

Professional basketball was a minor sport at the time. There were only two professional leagues, the predominantly Jewish American Basketball League, which became defunct in 1931 but was reorganized in 1934, and the mostly industrial Midwestern National Basketball League, founded in 1937. These leagues were mainly weekend organizations, and players held full-time jobs. Eastern basketball teams were often ethnically based, like the renowned SPHAs (South Philadelphia Hebrew All-Stars) and the Irish Brooklyn Visitations. Games were often played before dances at ballrooms. In 1939, the Harlem Globetrotters won the first Chicago World Professional Basketball Tournament.

Boxing. Boxing was one sport that benefited from the hard times of the Depression as tough inner-city Jewish, Italian, Irish, and African-American youths tried to escape poverty through prize fighting. There were some eight thousand professional boxers during the 1930s, and competition was fierce in nearly all weight classes. Contenders were commonly controlled by underworld figures, including gangster Frankie Carbo, who established a virtual monopoly over the middleweight division. The greatest fighter of the period was Joe Louis, the first African American to get a shot at the heavyweight title since champion Jack Johnson was defeated in 1915. Louis won the championship in 1937 by knocking out James Braddock. In 1938, Louis fought in a much anticipated rematch with Max Schmeling, a German former world champion who had beaten Louis in 1936. The fight at Yankee Stadium in New York drew over 70,000 spectators. The match had heavy political overtones because it symbolized the conflict between German Nazism and American democracy. Louis represented the hopes of all Americans regardless of race, and his first-round knockout of Schmeling was regarded as a vindication of the American way of life.

THE 1932 AND 1936 OLYMPIC GAMES

The United States hosted the 1932 Olympics. Winter sports were not popular then, but the winter Olympic games in Lake Placid, New York, spurred interest. American speed skaters Jack Shea and Irving Jaffee became stars after each of them won two gold medals. Los Angeles hosted the 1932 summer Olympic games. Organizers feared that the worldwide Depression would cause the games' cancellation, and, in fact, only about 1,400 athletes competed, less than half the number at the 1928 Amsterdam games. Still, the event was a great success, and boasted such innovations as the first Olympic village and many outstanding athletic performances. American athlete Babe Didrikson won two gold medals and one silver medal in women's track and field. The 1932 summer Olympics was also the first to make a profit; the games earned \$214,000 for the city and county.

The next Olympic games, held in Berlin in 1936, were almost boycotted by the Americans to protest Nazi oppression of political opponents and ethnic minorities. The United States opted in the end to participate and sent a powerful track-and-field squad, led by Jesse Owens of the Ohio State University, who won an unprecedented four gold medals.

PARTICIPATORY SPORTS

Participation in recreational sports dwindled at the beginning of the Depression due, in part, to rising costs. After 1935 however, the need for diversion, coupled with increased governmental support for recreational activities, significantly improved opportunities for sports in America. The economic downturn did impact the preferred sports of the wealthy. Country club memberships dropped, many clubs closed, golf tournaments were canceled, and prizes were drastically cut. The United States Golf Association, for example, included 1134 affiliated clubs in 1930; by 1936, there were only 763.

Participation in sports among working-class men and women declined during the early 1930s after one-fourth of company sponsored industrial sports programs were eliminated to save money, with the rest struggling to survive. But interest and



Boxing was one sport that benefited from the hard times of the Depression as tough inner-city youths tried to escape poverty through prize fighting. These two young men engaged in a boxing match in 1941 at the Farm Security Administration migratory labor camp in Athena, Oregon. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

participation reemerged later in the decade. Male industrial sports programs stressed bowling, softball, and basketball, while women engaged in bowling, softball, and tennis. Softball, in particular, grew in popularity. It required less skill or space than baseball and was often played at night at lighted parks. In the crowded inner city, neighborhood pool halls and bowling alleys remained important hangouts, but the number of facilities and bowling teams declined at the beginning of the Depression. Bowling rebounded in the late 1930s, as the number of registered teams tripled. Chicago alone had

over nine hundred leagues. By 1939, there were 4,600 bowling alleys with receipts of nearly \$49 million, and the purse for the American Bowling Congress tournament reached \$170,000.

Second-generation immigrants relied on ethnic and religious organizations to facilitate sporting and social events. Ethnic basketball championships in Chicago drew huge crowds. In 1930, Bishop Bernard Sheil founded the Catholic Youth Organization in Chicago to promote sports and to shield young Catholics from Protestant influences.

During the Depression years, the public became increasingly dependent on community recreational facilities, which were heavily financed with \$750 million in New Deal money. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) promoted sports by building 770 swimming pools and 5898 athletic fields. The Civilian Conservation Corps built ski runs, camp grounds, and boating facilities. The number of cities sponsoring public recreation programs between 1934 and 1936 doubled to 2,190. Expenditures on recreation programs in the United States rose from \$27 to \$42 million during those years, and reached \$57 million in 1940.

See Also: LEISURE; LOUIS, JOE; OLYMPICS, BERLIN (1936); OWENS, JESSE.

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STEVEN A. RIESS

STALIN, JOSEPH

Throughout the 1930s Joseph Stalin (December 21, 1879–March 5, 1953) was the leader of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and the world Communist movement. Born Joseph Djughashvili, son of a Georgian cobbler, he studied at the Tiflis Orthodox Theological Seminary in his youth but was expelled in 1899. He was soon active in the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party, and by 1903 was drawn to its more militant and centralized faction, the Bolsheviks, led by Vladimir Ilyich Lenin. In the revolutionary underground, he assumed the

name Stalin (man of steel) and rose in the ranks of the Bolshevik Party due to organizational and administrative skills.

With the working-class overthrow of the Russian monarchy in 1917, followed by a socialist revolution led by Lenin's Bolsheviks, Stalin assumed the important role of commissar of nationalities in the Bolshevik organization (renamed the Communist Party in 1918) and in the new Soviet Republic. In 1919 he became part of the Politburo, the central leadership of the Communist Party. Between 1919 and 1922 Stalin accumulated additional positions of authority, culminating in the newly created position of Communist Party general secretary, in which capacity he was nominally subordinate to the Politburo, but in fact increasingly able to "guide" its decisions. Stalin's power was greatly enhanced because during the brutalizing Russian Civil War of 1918 to 1921 "emergency measures" were established that gave the Communist Party a dictatorship over the country's political life.

During his fatal illness in 1922 and 1923, Lenin waged a struggle from his sickbed against Stalin's authoritarian policies and excessive power, enlisting the support of the brilliant revolutionary Leon Trotsky. But other key Communist leaders, including Gregory Zinoviev and Lev Kamenev, initially distrusted Trotsky and preferred the seemingly more easygoing Stalin. After Lenin's death, they discovered that Stalin's control of the bureaucratic apparatus of the party and the government allowed him to reject their perspectives. They joined with Trotsky to struggle against bureaucratic corruption and maintain a revolutionary-internationalist orientation for the Communist International, but they were no match for the powerful apparatus under Stalin's control, and Trotsky was even expelled from the country. Other veteran Bolshevik leaders aligned themselves with Stalin to defeat this opposition, the most prominent being Nikolai Bukharin, who was soon swept aside for opposing some of Stalin's most brutal policies.

From 1928 to 1930, Stalin's "revolution from above" through the forced collectivization of land and rapid industrialization employed extreme repression and violence against masses of peasants and workers who resisted the exploitative effects of



Joseph Stalin (left) with President Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill during the Teheran Conference in Iran in 1943. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

his new policies. Many were killed, with many more arrested and sent to forced-labor camps. Much of the USSR's agriculture was wrecked, resulting in famine that cost the lives of perhaps five million people. While the Communist apparatus under Stalin tightened its control over the intellectual and cultural life of the country, many seasoned Communist Party members nonetheless began to question Stalin's policies. In several sensational "purge trials" from 1936 through 1939, the Stalin regime claimed that a traitorous conspiracy against the USSR had been hatched by Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, and a majority of those who had led the 1917 revolution. Tens of thousands of Communists were arrested and shot, and many

more were sent to forced-labor camps. Millions of lives were destroyed.

At the same time, an immense propaganda campaign orchestrated a personality cult glorifying Stalin and proclaimed that socialism was now being established in the USSR. The mobilization of millions of people animated by the idealistic goals of socialism contributed to impressive economic development. Employment, the necessities of life, and an increasing number of social improvements were guaranteed to ever-broader sectors of the population. Much of the increase in industrial output was made at the expense of quality (half of all tractors produced in the USSR during the 1930s are said to have been defective), and government figures indi-

cating that overall industrial production increased by about 400 percent between 1928 and 1941 are undoubtedly inflated. The fact remains, however, that the USSR became a major industrial power in that period.

Stalin's grand claim about creating "socialism in a single country" had a powerful appeal beyond the USSR. Especially with the onset of the Great Depression, idealistic workers and intellectuals throughout the world looked to the Communist revolutionary process in the USSR as an alternative to capitalism and a bulwark against the rising tide of fascism. In the early 1930s, Communist parties in many countries were denouncing other socialist parties as "social-fascists," but the failure of German Communists to unite with German Social-Democrats to stop the rise of Adolf Hitler led not to a workers' revolution but to the Nazi regime.

By 1934 the USSR was calling on the League of Nations for a "collective security" alliance of Western capitalist democracies with the USSR against the militaristic expansionism of Germany, Italy, and Japan. In 1935 the Communist International declared that all Communists should work to create a "Popular Front" of Communist and Socialist parties with liberal pro-capitalist parties to establish governments that would maintain both capitalism and political democracy, implement social reforms, and follow a foreign policy friendly to the USSR. After most of the Popular Front efforts collapsed, and major Western capitalist powers proved unwilling to make common cause with the USSR against Hitler, Stalin shifted toward an accommodation with Hitler. The consequent German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 enabled Hitler to launch World War II.

Stalin's regime and the Communist International proclaimed neutrality in this "imperialist conflict," but the German assault on the USSR in June 1941 belatedly helped to create the sort of "collective security" alliance that Stalin had advocated in the latter half of the 1930s. At the conclusion of World War II, however, tensions emerged between the USSR and its war-time capitalist allies, leading to the Cold War confrontation that would last for more than four decades. While millions sincerely mourned Stalin's death in 1953, within three

years his successors denounced him for some of his worst crimes, and his system proved incapable of surviving the twentieth century.

See Also: DICTATORSHIP; EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN; POPULAR FRONT.

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PAUL LE BLANC

STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE (SWOC)

The Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) was founded in June 1936 at a Washington, D.C., meeting marked by the absence of steelworkers. The reigning assumption was that because the nation's steel companies were rigidly hierarchical and ruthlessly autocratic, the union that developed in the industry would have to mimic its adversary. Thus, throughout its six-year history, SWOC was led by a cadre of trade union "executives" who spoke the language of "centralized" and "responsible" unionism and had little or no regard for rank-and-file democracy. But during those six years the industry witnessed a succession of militant strikes, most notably the bloody "Little Steel" strike of 1937, that challenged the prevailing image of a union characterized by "stability, strength, and unity."

SWOC was an arm of the Committee for Industrial Organization (later called the Congress of Industrial Organizations, or CIO) and was essentially the brainchild of John L. Lewis, the charismatic but dictatorial president of the United Mine

Workers of America (UMW) and the CIO. Lewis placed UMW vice president Philip Murray in charge of SWOC and staffed it mainly with organizers on loan from the miners' union. Murray had begun working in the mines of his native Scotland at age ten and had become the president of a UMW local in Pennsylvania's Westmoreland County at age eighteen. A long-time Lewis ally and loyalist, one of Murray's first acts as SWOC chairman was to establish the organization's national headquarters on the thirty-sixth floor of Pittsburgh's tallest office building, where he could, literally, look down on the steel barons.

The ties between coal and steel had always run deep. Many steelworkers were the sons of coal miners; some had begun their own working lives "underground." Moreover, Lewis and Murray saw to it that their "union of steel" would bear the mark of the UMW. Four of the top five officials in SWOC were also UMW officials, and as late as 1940 two-thirds of the organization's district directors continued to draw their salaries from the miners' union.

Speaking the language of the UMW and the CIO, Murray announced a policy of "absolute racial equality in Union membership." But in the idiom of the day, the word *racial* could refer to ethnicity and nationality, as well as color. Murray's priority in this regard was not the substantial concentrations of black workers in the industry but the fraternal organizations of the foreign-born, notably the International Workers Order, a Communist-controlled benefit society with more than sixty thousand members, many of them in the steel towns and other industrial communities of Pennsylvania and Ohio. In October 1936, Murray gave the keynote address at a Fraternal Orders Conference in Pittsburgh, where organizations such as the Croatian Fraternal Union, the National Slovak Society, the Lodge of Lithuanians of America, and the United Ukrainian Toilers came together to endorse the steel campaign.

Another key to SWOC's development was the steel industry's company unions, or Employee Representation Plans (ERPs), which the employers had formed after the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act in June 1933. By the end of 1934, more than 90 percent of the industry's workers were en-

rolled in ERPs, and SWOC decided to capture them from within. Already, the leadership of these unions had demonstrated a remarkable degree of independence, especially in the plants of U.S. Steel's Carnegie-Illinois division, where ERP representatives, such as John J. Mullen and Elmer Maloy from Western Pennsylvania and George Patterson from Chicago, were destined to become important grassroots leaders in the steelworkers' union. By January 1937, many of the ERPs had voted to cast their lot with SWOC, which was claiming a membership of 125,000.

In fact, SWOC was hardly the juggernaut it claimed to be. In early 1937, its leadership had no reason to believe that it could win a representation election at any of the major steel companies. But on March 2, U.S. Steel, the giant corporation that accounted for nearly forty percent of the industry's steel-making capacity, signed a collective bargaining agreement with SWOC. Franklin Roosevelt's overwhelming electoral victory in November 1936, combined with the election of New Deal Democratic governors and mayors in states and municipalities that had long been loyal Republican strongholds, made it appear that government, at all levels, would be more likely to support than to suppress unions. Then, in February 1937, a militant minority of autoworkers, led by defiant sit-down strikers in Flint, Michigan, compelled mighty General Motors to come to terms with the CIO. In these radically new circumstances, it must have seemed to U.S. Steel board chairman Myron Taylor that cautious accommodation was a more appropriate response to SWOC than stubborn, and costly, resistance.

With "Big Steel" under contract, SWOC's next great test came with the Little Steel strike that began on May 26. The Little Steel companies—American Rolling Mill, Bethlehem, Inland, National, Republic, and Youngstown Sheet and Tube—were "little" only in comparison to U.S. Steel. In reality, they were major corporations, with abundant resources, and their leaders were rabidly anti-union. U.S. Steel's willingness to recognize SWOC only strengthened their determination to resist any further encroachment on the industry's open-shop tradition. On Memorial Day, at Republic Steel in Chicago, ten strikers and their supporters were

gunned down by a vast phalanx of uniformed policemen in what became known as the Memorial Day Massacre. Overall, eighteen men died in the course of the strike, which ended in a crushing defeat for the union.

The Little Steel strike was a major setback for SWOC and the CIO, but the devastating impact of the Roosevelt recession created even greater problems. The nationwide economic downturn of 1937 and 1938 caused a 70 percent drop in steel production and massive layoffs among steelworkers. Even among workers who remained on the job, the number of paid-up union members fell sharply. Often, in giant plants with thousands of workers, only a few hundred continued to pay dues, and SWOC resorted to “dues picket lines,” where staffers and loyal union members surrounded the plants and refused to let hourly employees go to work until they paid their monthly dollar.

Recession and employer intransigence caused the steel drive to falter; sympathetic government intervention and a booming war economy allowed it to triumph decisively. Bethlehem Steel fell to SWOC after a strike in the spring of 1941. Republic, the most intransigent symbol of the open shop, capitulated without a strike soon thereafter. With the American Federation of Labor still claiming jurisdiction at U.S. Steel, SWOC called for a representation election at “the Corporation” and defeated its rival by a margin of better than eleven to one. At this juncture, even the paternalistic Murray recognized that the time had come to transform SWOC into an international union. In May 1942 at Cleveland’s Public Music Hall, 1,700 delegates gave birth to the United Steelworkers of America. In less than six full years, SWOC had organized the vast majority of the nation’s steelworkers—often, they had organized themselves—into one big industrial union, thus breaking an employer stranglehold that had prevailed since the 1890s.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); LEWIS, JOHN L.; MURRAY, PHILIP; ORGANIZED LABOR; STRIKES; UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA).

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BRUCE NELSON

STEINBECK, JOHN

John Ernst Steinbeck, Jr., (February 27, 1902–December 20, 1968) was an American writer and winner of the 1962 Nobel Prize for literature. His 1939 novel *The Grapes of Wrath* is the single most important literary work dealing with the Great Depression.

Steinbeck was born in Salinas, California, and the area around Salinas became the setting of his best books. He graduated from Salinas High School in 1919 and attended Stanford University off and on without completing a degree. His first novel, *Cup of Gold* (1929), about the seventeenth-century pirate Henry Morgan, and his next two books, *Pastures of Heaven* (1932) and *To a God Unknown* (1933), received little attention. Carol Henning, who became his first wife in 1930, helped him focus his fiction on the suffering resulting from the Depression, and Ed Ricketts, a marine biologist he met shortly after his marriage, helped crystallize Steinbeck’s vague

notions about group behavior, individualism, and ecology. Ricketts's scientific outlook tempered Steinbeck's inveterate sentimentality. *Tortilla Flat* (1935), Steinbeck's first financially successful book, was the first to treat marginalized characters he had observed first hand. *In Dubious Battle* (1936) concerned a strike among migrant fruit pickers. *Of Mice and Men* (1937) is the tragic story of a pair of itinerant ranch hands. Steinbeck's greatest achievement, the crucial literary text of the Depression, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), is the story of an Oklahoma family who leaves the Dust Bowl and heads for California in search of the American dream. *The Grapes of Wrath*, a huge best-seller and Pulitzer Prize winner in 1940, assured Steinbeck's place in American literature.

Although Steinbeck published eighteen more books in his lifetime, nothing afterwards ever matched the critical success of *The Grapes of Wrath*. His writing after the 1930s lacks the power of his Depression novels. Perhaps what critics have regarded as Steinbeck's "decline" can be attributed to the prosperity after the war and his own financial success, which may have cost Steinbeck his affinity with those who are down and out. The divorce from his first wife in 1943 and the death of Ed Ricketts in 1948 contributed to his turning away from the concerns of the Depression-era novels. His moving to New York from California cut him off from the region so central to his best works. His return to that setting in *Cannery Row* (1945) and *East of Eden* (1952) resulted in books that were thematically incoherent and sentimental. Despite the critics' views about his later work, his books remained popular with the reading public. *Travels with Charley* (1962), an account of driving across the United States with his pet poodle to get a sense of the mood of the country in the 1960s, sold well but did not enhance his standing with literary critics. The Nobel Prize for literature that he was awarded in 1962 was clearly for his work more than two decades earlier. He died in New York in 1968. His ashes, taken across the country by his third wife and one of his sons from his second marriage, were interred in the Salinas cemetery.

See Also: GRAPES OF WRATH, THE; LITERATURE; OKIES.

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AUSTIN WILSON

STFU. See SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION.

STIEGLITZ, ALFRED. See PHOTOGRAPHY.

STIMSON, HENRY

Stimson, Henry Lewis (The Colonel, September 21, 1867–October 20, 1950), a Wall Street lawyer and Republican, served twice as United States secretary of war under presidents William Howard Taft, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Harry S. Truman. Stimson also served as secretary of state for President Herbert Hoover. Born to privilege, Stimson attended Phillips Academy (Andover), Yale University, and Harvard Law School. He began his public service as the U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York under Theodore Roosevelt, and later served as governor-general of the Philippines. Conservative on domestic politics, Stimson was an internationalist who advocated an increasing American involvement in world affairs.

As Hoover's secretary of state, Stimson pursued greater cooperation with the powers of Europe, modification of the financial burdens imposed by the Treaty of Versailles, and further disarmament as the keys to maintaining peace. With the coming of the Great Depression and the economic collapse of Europe in 1931, the Colonel, as Stimson liked to be called after his rank during World War I, pushed with limited success for further debt reduction and cancellation of reparations payments. Stimson could only convince President Hoover to agree to

a one-year moratorium on debts and a temporary standstill agreement of private debts. Neither action, however, provided a long-term solution to the international economic crisis.

Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 led to the establishment of the *Stimson Doctrine*, the principle of nonrecognition of territory seized by force. Stimson believed that the Japanese had to be made to realize that no matter what their success in Manchuria, they still had to contend with the opinion and power of the rest of the world. The Stimson Doctrine served as a clarion call for the United States to act against aggression during the 1930s and made Stimson the leading advocate of American opposition to first Japan's and then Germany's expansion. Throughout the decade Stimson served as the loyal opposition to Franklin Roosevelt, supporting the president's efforts to increase American awareness of international events and preparedness for the coming war.

When war erupted in Europe in 1939, Roosevelt needed someone capable of managing the War Department who would also make foreign policy a less divisive issue. In June 1940 the president turned to Stimson for this task, knowing he would approach it in a bipartisan manner while maintaining his loyalty to the administration's policies. As secretary of war, Stimson successfully oversaw the mobilization of the American economy, the military strategies of fighting in both Europe and Asia, and the development of the atomic bomb.

See Also: HULL, CORDELL; ISOLATIONISM; MILITARY: UNITED STATES ARMY; MILITARY: UNITED STATES NAVY.

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DAVID F. SCHMITZ

STOCK MARKET CRASH (1929)

The great bull market of the 1920s and the spectacular collapse of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) in late 1929 occupy a pivotal position in popular explanations of the cause of the Great Depression. Professional historians, however, are more circumspect in assessing the impact of the Wall Street crash.

MARKET GROWTH DURING THE 1920s

The U.S. economy staged a rapid recovery from the postwar Depression of 1920 and 1921, and between 1922 and 1929 real gross national product (GNP) grew by 22 percent. This period was an era of stable prices, full employment, high levels of investment and high company profits. The United States exuded great confidence in the economy. The nation seemed blessed with business talent, which could skilfully employ the riches at its disposal. Big business in particular flourished, building on the technological advances that had been adopted during World War I. National prosperity encouraged stock market growth. Securities had been relatively undervalued at the start of the expansion but soon began to rise as corporate profits grew.

Everyone involved in the market seemed to benefit. Investors could look forward to a dividend and also to a rise in the value of their stock, which could easily be converted into cash if necessary. The small investor who could not afford to develop a diversified portfolio found especially attractive investment trusts, which grew spectacularly in the twenties. Business looked first to retained profits to fund investment on which future profits were based but did so in the clear knowledge that any shortfall could easily be addressed by approaching the market. Commercial banks, no longer approached by companies anxious to borrow, reacted to the loss of business lending opportunities by moving into the investment banking and brokerage business themselves. In doing so they encouraged greater participation in the market.

THE BOOM GATHERS PACE

It is difficult to be certain when the market was transformed from vigorous expansion to unsustain-



The trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange just after the October 1929 stock market crash. HERBERT HOOVER LIBRARY

able growth, but this change probably occurred in early 1928. Between early 1928 and the middle of 1929 the economy grew very rapidly, and the confidence that many investors had in the market increased also. Indeed, some scholars believe that those who bought stock at progressively higher prices were acting rationally as they would expect earning on their investments to justify the price paid. However, during this period stock prices were rising far more rapidly than dividends, and it is reasonable to assume that the judgement of a number of investors was clouded by the prospect of an inexorable increase in stock prices.

As Eugene White (1990) notes, when the market was at its most vigorous some of the stock which investors found most attractive was in companies that paid no dividends and did not expect to

pay any in the near future. In other words the advantage of owning such stock was solely that its price would continue to rise. For example, investors were attracted to stock in public utilities, which had come to the fore in the 1920s with the expansion of electricity, and also in companies employing the latest technology, for example the movie-making industry. Both groups contained large numbers of firms that paid no dividends.

Moreover, many share deals were financed by credit. The investor made a deposit and borrowed the remainder of the purchase price from the broker using the stock as collateral. This transaction was called "buying on the margin" and seemed a sensible option, as the capital gain from the stock would easily cover the cost, including the interest charge on the broker's loan. The brokers, who supported



Nervous investors and curious onlookers crowd Wall Street in lower Manhattan after the stock market crashed in October 1929.

BETTMANN/CORBIS

this system of trading as more stock could be sold and more commission earned, borrowed from banks to advance loans to their clients. As long as stock prices continued to improve, the relationship between borrowers and lenders was relatively risk free. However, if securities failed to appreciate as expected, some purchasers would have difficulty in repaying their brokers' loans. If the price falls were very steep, the broker would be in difficulty as the shares accepted as collateral would have to be sold on a declining market. The majority of investors, however, did not consider the prospect of a collapse in prices as a realistic possibility.

Nevertheless, there was some unease as prices soared. A few major investors began to withdraw from the market, and some leading executives even volunteered that their own company stock was overvalued. Most significant, the Federal Reserve (Fed) became concerned that the mounting speculation was potentially destabilizing. The Fed decided to gently deflate the speculative bubble instead of running the risk that it might eventually burst and result in an economic collapse.

The Fed exhorted its member banks not to lend for speculative purposes. More positively, in early 1928 it began to pursue a tight money policy by raising interest rates and selling government bonds. The Fed believed that its action would make borrowing for speculation more expensive and that gradually it would cease and the market would return to normal. The monetary authorities were confident that their actions would only affect the stock market and would not impair the performance of the economy.

To the chagrin of the Fed, the funding of brokers' loans increased by 50 percent between June 1928 and June 1929. The source of the money flowing into the market was not member banks, but foreign banking houses and U.S. businesses and private individuals attracted by the high rate of interest which borrowers were prepared to pay. Idle balances and funds that had been earmarked for foreign investment were switched to the home market, causing consternation in those countries that had come to rely on U.S. international capital flows. Indeed, there was a plentiful supply of credit for brokers' loans even though the Fed had pursued a

restrictive monetary policy. Investors were prepared to pay higher rates to lenders because they believed that the rising market made it worthwhile. But the availability of credit was not the cause of continuing speculation. Speculators were not forced to borrow.

THE GREAT CRASH

The New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) hit its peak in early September 1929 and then declined, even though that month saw a record volume on new issues. During the first three weeks of October the market performed erratically, but on October 23 prices fell sharply to levels reached at the beginning of the year. On the following day, "Black Thursday," panic set in and 12.9 million shares were traded. The urge to sell became so overwhelming that the tickertape on which stockholders relied for the most up-to-date information ran several hours late, thus adding to the confusion. Brokerage firms were inundated. Good stock was liquidated along with the indifferent. A group of prominent bankers made a public move to rally the market by purchasing \$125 million worth of stock, which for a while had a positive effect. However, on October 29, 16.4 million securities, a record volume, were traded on the NYSE. That day became known as "Black Tuesday," and it symbolized the panic, helplessness, confusion, and fear that had taken a firm grip on the market. Confident statements from leading financiers, such as the Rockefellers, were seized upon by the few remaining optimists who attacked the gloomy for "talking down the market." However, nothing could arrest the fall, and the market continued to decline until November 14. The collapse had lasted three weeks during which time the average value of stocks had declined by over 50 percent. The market then seemed to revive coincident with the decision of the Fed to reduce interest rates, but those who thought the worst was now over were sadly mistaken.

Why did the stock market crash? There is no doubt that the price of some stocks had reached levels that could not be justified by a rational assessment of future earnings. Elements of the market were therefore potentially unstable. But the collapse embraced virtually all stock, not just the out-

rageously overpriced. Why did panic replace confidence so comprehensively?

The stock market crash followed the peak of economic activity, which was reached in the middle of 1929. As the prospects for the economy declined sharply, it was increasingly clear to investors that they would have to revise downward their estimates of future business profitability and do so quickly. Once the certainty of high company profits evaporated, so did confidence in rising stock prices. Buying "on the margin" had boosted sales in prosperous times, but the system worked sharply in reverse when conditions changed.

One significant factor acting as a brake on economic activity was the tight money policy pursued by the Fed to erase speculation. High interest rates and a slowdown in the growth of the money supply were sufficient to tilt the economy into a steep recession. The Fed's monetary initiative failed to halt stock market speculation, but unfortunately it did affect the economy. However, the Wall Street crash did not cause the Great Depression. It was an early and violent reaction to changing economic circumstances.

The crash did have some adverse effects. It markedly reduced the wealth of investors and adversely affected their ability and willingness to purchase goods and services. Public confidence was shaken as one of the most potent symbols of national prosperity tumbled. However, in early 1930 there was a note of optimism. The fortunes of the economy and the market were in the ascendant. Perhaps the speculative boil had been lanced, and the worst was over.

WALL STREET 1930–1933

Confidence in the market evident in early 1930 proved sadly misplaced, and in the second half of the year a steep decline in stock prices commenced. During 1931 the economy continued to deteriorate, and problems were compounded by domestic bank failures and by the international financial crisis that culminated in the devaluation of sterling in September. The consumer durable sector, which had been so vigorous during the boom, now faced declining sales. Few consumers purchased automobiles or other goods whose purchase was not con-

sidered essential. All these factors helped to increase unemployment, lower confidence, and erode corporate profits. The stock of some food manufacturers, some retailers, and most tobacco companies was relatively sound, but stock in heavy industry and investment trusts fell precipitously. The year 1932, during which aggregate business profits were negative, was the worst year of the Depression for most stocks. On average prices had fallen to a mere 12 percent of their 1929 levels and only five stocks exceeded by one-third their 1929 prices. The worst affected stock could be found in the automobile, steel, railroad, and farm equipment sectors.

Amid the gloom some individual companies performed relatively well. Wigmore identifies J. C. Penney, General Electric, IBM, and Woolworth as examples, in which cases exceptional management resulted in a financial performance far ahead of their rivals. Gold mining and tobacco companies had the best stock results between 1929 and 1933. The worst performances were in the financial sector and the entertainment industry where many major movie companies flirted with ruin. The downward slide of the market mirrored that of the depressed economy, though some stocks, which had been driven high by the unrestrained enthusiasm of the pre-Depression boom, fell a long way and became worthless. It is important to remember that this was a time of massive general deflation when all prices declined, so it is not surprising that the market also shared this phenomenon. It is also clear that the decline in stock prices after mid-1930 was even more dramatic than the falls during the Wall Street crash. However, at this time the falling market was just one of a number of shocks forcing public and business confidence to ever lower levels.

THE STOCK MARKET AND THE NEW DEAL

During the first few months of the Roosevelt presidency the economy began a vigorous recovery and dragged the securities market along in its wake. However, even in 1937, the best year for the economy during the 1930s, an index of total stock prices, using 1929 = 100 as its base, had only reached 59. A disaggregation of this index shows that the figure for railroad stock was 34 while public utilities stock,

which had played such a vigorous role in the boom of the 1920s, had reached 44. The performance of industrial stock was relatively good but, at 69, was still a long way below the level achieved in 1929. The depressed stock market as a whole was substantially below even 1928 price levels. Since both business profits and investment were very depressed during the 1930s compared to the levels that had been achieved during the booming 1920s, it is not surprising that the market as a whole failed to stage a more vigorous recovery.

Many investors who had directly experienced the market at its most capricious called for some level of state regulation, especially as there was a lingering suspicion that unfair practices may have been responsible for the debacle. Early in the Depression President Herbert Hoover had asked the Senate Banking and Currency Committee to investigate trading practices on Wall Street. When Ferdinand Pecora was appointed counsel to the committee, he attracted public attention by exposing wrongdoing by senior financiers previously thought to be men of the highest probity. Pecora was a highly effective publicist, and newspapers were able to carry vivid stories of dishonesty or practices so close to it that the people were unable to make the subtle distinction to which the minds of several bankers were carefully attuned. Respect for financiers, which had been high in the 1920s, was eroded. The public expected something to be done, and bankers were in a very weak position to fight any congressional attempts at regulation. Although scandal caught the public attention and provided desirable scapegoats, it would be wrong, nonetheless, to see financial malpractice as other than a very minor contribution to stock market misfortune. Still, it is easy to appreciate the strong view emanating from Congress that investors, especially the small investors, needed strong protection, even if only to prevent them being misled.

The Securities Act (May 1933) and the Securities and Exchange Act (June 1934) provided investors with more accurate information so that they could feel more confident when purchasing stock. Investors were also given a breathing space, time to change their minds over stock purchase rather than having to regret an instant decision. As a result the

hard-sell tactics that had been used successfully to boost sales in the 1920s, and which were highly popular while the market boomed, were curtailed. The Fed was given the power to set margin requirements for the purchase of securities, which was seen as an additional tool in any future fight against speculation. An independent agency, the Securities and Stock Exchange Commission (SEC), was established to oversee the implementation of the new legislation. The first chairman of the SEC was Joseph P. Kennedy, in his day a formidable Wall Street operator and the father of President John F. Kennedy.

A separate piece of legislation, the Banking Act (1933), separated commercial from investment banking. This legislation compelled commercial banks to quit securities markets and restricted their authority to underwrite securities to those issued by states and local governments. During the 1920s the growth of commercial bank securities affiliates had led to increased competition in the sales of securities. In the frenzied atmosphere of the time, mass marketing techniques, aggressive advertising, and mail shots had drawn many small investors into the market. We see here a typical piece of New Deal regulation where restrictions on competition were seen as essential for the provision of stability. The Banking Act was an attempt, among other things, to curb activities that were considered contributory factors to the great bull market. Speculative excesses were, indeed, absent from the market for the rest of the 1930s, but neither the performance of the economy nor the mood of investors was likely to create the conditions for a return of them.

The securities market expanded, as did the rest of the economy during the 1950s, and in 1954 the Dow Jones Index exceeded its 1929 peak. During this period the Eisenhower administration reduced the SEC's staffing. The volume of trading on the NYSE reached and overtook its pre-Depression high in 1963. By the 1960s it was becoming clear that the restrictions on competition that had seemed so sensible thirty years previously were contributing to a growing inefficiency in securities markets. Moreover, the increasing globalization of capital markets, and the growing use of computers that led to a rapid diffusion of knowledge as well as

the speedy clearance and settlement of accounts, totally transformed the manner in which business was transacted. Indeed, in 1975 Congress urged the SEC to encourage competition rather than help curb it.

On October 19, 1987, the financial world was shaken by a dramatic stock market collapse when the Dow Jones Index fell 508 points, the largest single day drop in U.S. history. Immediately commentators drew parallels between the booming 1980s and the 1920s. They noted that both collapses followed attempts by the Fed to counter speculation by the use of restrictive monetary policy and wondered if the latest crash would be followed by a new Great Depression. In 1987 the Fed moved promptly and provided ample liquidity for the system by engaging in open market operations. Within a few months it was apparent that the economy had been unaffected by the crash, and as confidence in the market returned the Fed was able to reimpose a restraining monetary influence. The 1987 crash showed that regulation cannot prevent stock market crises, but rapid reaction by the Fed can minimize the effect. It was a pity that this was not part of the received wisdom in 1929.

See Also: CAUSES OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION; FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM; GLASS-STEAGALL ACT OF 1933; SECURITIES REGULATION.

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Year	Number of Workers Involved in Work Stoppages
1929	289,000
1930	183,000
1931	342,000
1932	324,000
1933	1,170,000
1934	1,470,000
1935	1,120,000
1936	789,000
1937	1,860,000
1938	688,000
1939	1,170,000
1940	577,000
1941	2,360,000

SOURCE: United States Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*. 1975. Series D-971.

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PETER FEARON

STRIKES

Between 1930 and 1941, 172 million days of labor were lost over the course of 27,000 work stoppages. Strikes, however, interrupted more than just the flow of business. Their failure to resolve the economic crisis early in the Great Depression led to growing desperation on the part of workers, union leadership, and government officials. The New Deal sought to contain popular protest but its effect was to encourage further labor militancy. Organized labor initially discouraged strikes but slowly realized the opportunities they offered. Rank-and-file workers, who started the majority of stoppages by either walking out or sitting down, also understood their costs and benefits. During the summer of 1937 alone approximately ninety workers lost their lives to employer violence and state repression, while countless more were wounded, evicted from their homes, or jailed because of their involvement in strikes. Still, organized labor could not have achieved its unprecedented victories in the

Year	Number of Work Stoppages
1929	921
1930	637
1931	810
1932	841
1933	1,695
1934	1,856
1935	2,014
1936	2,172
1937	4,740
1938	2,772
1939	2,613
1940	2,508
1941	4,288

SOURCE: United States Bureau of the Census. *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*. 1975. Series D-970.

1930s without workers' willingness to employ their ultimate weapon.

The Great Depression began with a surprisingly passive labor movement. In the first three years of the 1930s, workers engaged in fewer strikes than at almost any moment in the twentieth century. Those that did occur mostly dealt with immediate bread-and-butter issues relating to wages and hours rather than with efforts to establish new independent unions. Indeed many were wildcat strikes—unplanned, spontaneous eruptions in which workers walked off the job without consulting their unions in reaction to conflicts with their supervisors. With little administrative and financial support from mainstream organized labor, these strikes were destined to be ineffective, short-lived, and have little impact.

Many of the major strikes that erupted in the early years of the Great Depression occurred in rural regions rather than in the urban centers of manufacturing that later proved more receptive to labor protest. Due to overproduction and falling prices, the agricultural and textiles industries had fallen on hard times well before much of the country. In Gastonia, North Carolina, for example, textile mills had begun laying off employees, lowering wages, and increasing workloads in the mid-1920s. In response, mill hands staged a walkout followed by a massive strike in April 1929. Although they called for modest reforms and quickly won the sup-

port of local residents, who joined in the pickets, the poor workers were no match for the desperate textile mills. Evictions from company-owned homes and a campaign to discredit the Communist Party organizers succeeded in derailing the strike after less than two weeks.

The prominence of the Communist Party in labor protest partly reflected the inaction of the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the nation's largest body of organized labor, which sought to resolve the economic crisis through closer cooperation with employers. Some labor leaders preferred confrontation but could not win the support of the AFL's Executive council. Rising unemployment also constrained workers, who felt fortunate to have a job and knew that they could easily be replaced by strikebreakers. Left without options, workers were forced to rely on company unions, which were controlled by employers and resolutely opposed to strikes.

The power of employers gradually weakened as the federal government increasingly became involved in labor disputes. Under growing pressure from trade unionists, Congress passed the Norris-La Guardia Act in 1932. The law limited the use of federal injunctions to forestall strikes and prevented federal courts from enforcing yellow-dog contracts in which workers agreed to not join unions as a condition of employment. Section 7(a) of the National Industrial Recovery Act of 1933 (NIRA) gave workers the right to "organize unions of their own choosing" and bargain collectively with their employers. The new legislation had an immediate impact. Twice as many strikes broke out in 1933 as the year before, involving three and a half times the number of workers.

The strike wave culminated in 1934, with one and a half million workers going on strike—more than eight times the number that had gone out in 1930. For the first time in thirty years, the principal issue in most strikes was long-term union recognition rather than immediate concerns involving wages or hours. The most severe unrest began on the docks of San Francisco. After years of abuse, longshoremen abandoned the company union to form a local of the International Longshoremen's Association (ILA) in the summer of 1933. When the



Striking workers picket the King Farm near Morrisville, Pennsylvania, in 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS

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ILA failed to address the concerns of its members, longshoremen issued their own demands and went on strike in May 1934. The shipping companies responded violently, hiring vigilantes to beat strikers. The day after Independence Day, police opened fire on a crowd of unarmed strikers, killing two and wounding dozens more. Workers across the city responded by rallying together with a short-lived general strike. By the end of July, rank-and-file dockworkers had won their main demand, a union-controlled hiring hall, without any major outside support.

Employees at Electric Auto-Lite, a supplier of automobile parts in Toledo, Ohio, also exercised their NIRA-protected rights by organizing a federal

union under an AFL charter in 1933. When the company refused to negotiate, workers walked out in early 1934. Thousands of unemployed workers affiliated with A. J. Muste's American Workers Party joined the strike in solidarity, turning it into a wider popular protest. As in San Francisco, police provoked riots in which two strikers were killed. A general strike was averted, however, when the federal government successfully pressured the company to recognize the union. Community was also essential in the Teamster's strike in Minneapolis that same month. Trucking employers there had rejected their drivers efforts to organize an independent union. After a strike was declared, building trades workers and taxi drivers walked out in sympathy. In



Union strikers picket a Manhattan department store in 1934. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

short order, the city was polarized between workers and employers. After much tension a street fight broke out between police and twenty thousand workers that resulted in the death of two strikers. Fruitless negotiations led to another mass strike in

July in which several more strikers were killed. Finally, President Franklin Roosevelt interceded directly and helped push through an arbitration in which employers agreed to bargain collectively with the Teamsters.

Although many strikes were successful, the failure of the nationwide textile strike—at that time the largest labor protest in American history—deeply worried many in the labor movement. Spontaneous walkouts had spread throughout the southern states and engulfed much of the East Coast in the summer and fall of 1934 when an industrial code was issued that neglected to increase wages or improve working conditions. In all, more than 400,000 strikers had crippled the industry. However, with victory in sight the United Textile Workers (UTW) called off the strike on what proved to be empty promises by the Roosevelt administration. Labor statesman John L. Lewis blamed the failure of the textile strike on the AFL's lack of support and demanded that the body encourage new forms of industrial unionism that would respond to workers' solidarity and militancy. Other labor leaders recognized that by 1935 many workers had dropped out of unions because the AFL could not maintain their enthusiasm. The UTW's membership, for instance, had dropped from several hundred thousand to only eighty thousand in a matter of months.

The Roosevelt administration, on the other hand, feared that popular unrest would continue to escalate unless the federal government established a stable balance between industry and labor. After the NRA was declared unconstitutional, it embraced Senator Robert Wagner's National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (NLRA) to strengthen labor's bargaining power. By establishing the National Labor Relations Board to oversee votes for union representation, the administration hoped that the law would remove the impetus for the recent burst of strikes.

Over the next few years, strikes would more than double in number, reaching a peak of 4,720 in 1937. The establishment of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) by Lewis and his associates in 1935 gave industrial workers the financial and administrative support they needed to carry out effective unionization drives. The Supreme Court's decision on April 12, 1939, upholding the NLRA prompted a flood of efforts to take advantage of the newfound federal protection. But the CIO and the NLRA only gave structure and sustenance to what

was primarily a movement of ordinary workers enforcing their right to bargain collectively with employers.

One of the sources for the revitalization of the grassroots effort was the strike by United Rubber Workers (URW) in 1936. Rubber workers in Akron, Ohio, had broken from the company union the previous year and obtained an AFL charter establishing the URW. Among the union's earliest supporters were Lewis and the CIO, who demanded that the city's firms negotiate. At the end of January and through February spontaneous protests broke out at Firestone and Goodyear plants. Emulating a tactic conceived by rubber workers in 1934, tire builders sat down at their workplaces, refusing to move unless the firms negotiated with the union. Confounded URW officials, who did not authorize these unconventional actions, had no choice but to follow the course of action laid out by their aggressive members. The Akron community soon sided with the nonviolent rubber workers, donating to the strike relief fund and threatening a general strike if the municipal government interfered with the strike. On March 22, Goodyear signed an agreement that recognized the union, reinstated workers, and granted significant concessions.

The CIO rapidly built on its initial success. The United Automobile Workers (UAW), originally established by the AFL, broke away in 1936 and affiliated itself solely with the CIO. When the UAW president was unable to pressure the major car manufacturers to bargain collectively, militant workers closed down a General Motors plant in Flint, Michigan, on December 30, 1936. As it spread to other factories, the Great Sit-down Strike brought the entire company's production to halt. Unsure of how to contend with the occupying force, the company cut off the heat, attempted an invasion by police that was repulsed, and unsuccessfully lobbied for the National Guard to intervene. Finally, on February 11, 1937, under pressure from Roosevelt, General Motors recognized the union and agreed to negotiations.

The CIO's victory over the powerful company had an immediate effect. Over the next year, 400,000 workers in mass-production industries participated in similar sit-down strikes. The threat

of such crippling strikes convinced companies that had never tolerated unions to negotiate settlements. On March 2, 1937, the CIO's Steel Workers' Organizing Committee (SWOC) and U.S. Steel, the nation's largest corporation with an unbroken history of resistance to organized labor, signed a contract that recognized the union and gave its members a 10 percent wage increase. Within two months, SWOC membership had tripled to 300,000 and it embarked on a campaign to unionize the remaining steel firms known as "Little Steel." By the end of 1937, the CIO represented over two million workers; even the turgid AFL experienced a significant growth in membership.

Yet, at its peak, the CIO began to suffer a backlash. It was unable to properly fund the Little Steel Strike, though 75,000 workers had walked out. The steel firms also fought more aggressively than had been expected. Rather than sign a gentleman's agreement as U.S. Steel had done, they organized citizens committees, won the assistance of municipal governments, and hired vigilantes to attack picket lines. On May 30, 1937, Chicago police fired on unarmed strikers, killing ten, injuring more than a hundred, and ushering in a summer of deadly violence that sapped labor's commitment to protest. An economic recession, beginning that same month and lasting for over a year, increased the ranks of unemployed by another two million. The number of workers participating in work stoppage fell by more than 60 percent in 1938.

The momentum would not shift again until the nation's economy recovered as it began its rearmament for war. By 1941, new records were set as workers surpassed the strike wave of 1937. But even then, the major unions soon issued no-strike pledges to demonstrate their patriotism and avoid the anti-labor crackdown that had followed World War I. Walkouts would remain numerous but the institutional base that had supported strikers would dramatically weaken. Again, strikes turned on immediate concerns of wage, hours, and working conditions. The AFL and the CIO would not regain effective control of rank-and-file militancy until after the war.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION (ILA); ORGANIZED LABOR; SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL STRIKE (1934); SIT-DOWN STRIKES.

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Members of a family of eight work in their garden at the El Monte federal subsistence homesteads in California in 1936. The father, a streetcar conductor whose monthly pay was one hundred dollars, paid sixteen dollars and twenty cents per month toward purchase of the four-bedroom house seen in the background. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI

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EDUARDO F. CANEDO

SUBSISTENCE HOMESTEADS DIVISION

One of the smallest New Deal programs was the Subsistence Homesteads Division. The Division was created by Section 208, Title II of the 1933 Na-

tional Industrial Recovery Act. The Subsistence Homesteads Division was given \$25 million and granted the task of addressing both urban concentration and unemployment by creating new rural communities where underemployed and unemployed industrial workers could combine part-time farming with work in nearby industrial establishments. President Franklin Roosevelt placed the division in the Department of the Interior, which was run by Harold L. Ickes. Ickes appointed agricultural economist M. L. Wilson as director of the program, a post that he held until 1934. In 1935 the Subs-

tence Homesteads Division was absorbed into the Resettlement Administration, which itself was replaced by the Farm Security Administration in 1937.

As director of the Subsistence Homesteads Division, Wilson stamped his own views on the program. He was idealistic and optimistic that the division would not only help to solve the economic problems of the nation but that it would spur the creation of a new type of community. Historian Paul Conkin describes Wilson as a relativist and pragmatist who hoped that the communities would be both democratic and locally controlled. Wilson believed that this would inspire communal, anti-materialistic, familial, agrarian, and democratic values to counter the dominant trends in modern society.

Initially Wilson and his associates decided that the Subsistence Homesteads Division would fund four types of communities, including colonies for stranded rural workers (most importantly unemployed coal miners), industrial communities for unemployed urban workers, experimental farm colonies, and subsistence gardens for city workers. Ideally, twenty-five to one hundred families were to live in each community and cultivate anywhere from one to five acres of fruits and vegetables. Of the thirty-four communities actually funded by the division, twenty-four were industrial communities, four were stranded communities (rural areas where the laborers lost their jobs when the main employers left town), three were farm communities for submarginal farmers, and one was a cooperative industrial community. The number of units in each community varied from 20 to 287, and the average cost per unit was \$9,114.

In spite of the optimistic aspirations of Wilson and others, the Subsistence Homesteads Division became a victim of poor planning, administrative bungling, and political divisions. The stranded communities proved the least successful. The division found that it could not attract new industry to these areas and Congress refused to give the division federal funds to build its own factories. In 1934, the stranded communities were deemed illegal by the solicitor of the Department of the Interior because Section 208 did not authorize the resettlement

of farmers. The industrial communities were certainly the most successful of the entire program. More specifically, the Duluth (MN), El Monte (CA), San Fernando (CA), Granger (IA), and Longview (WA) homesteads were the most successful because of their close proximity to industrial employment and their siting on fertile soils for subsistence farming. However, if judged in terms of absolute numbers, the Subsistence Homesteads Division must be viewed as an interesting social experiment but ultimately an unsuccessful attempt to bridge the rural/agricultural and urban/industrial boundaries in modern America.

See Also: APPALACHIA, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; ARTHURDALE, WEST VIRGINIA; FARM SECURITY ADMINISTRATION (FSA); NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY ACT (NIRA); RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA).

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KATHY MAPES

SUICIDE

It is probably a myth that the stock market crash in October 1929 caused an epidemic of dramatic suicides by distraught investors after they lost their fortunes. Suicide rates in the United States had been steadily increasing each year since 1925, and only a slightly greater increase in 1930 and 1931 may be attributed to the effects of the Great Depression (see table).

Even for New York City, which is thought to have been particularly affected by the crash, the

changes in suicide rates during this period are not dramatic and the rates were already increasing before 1930. Since the crash occurred in late October 1929, can a causal effect be seen by reviewing the suicide rate for the entire year? In fact, the number of suicides in the United States for October and November of 1929 was lower than in all the other months of that year except January, February, and September. Most suicides in 1929 occurred during the summer months when the stock market was doing well. Brad Edmondson found that the Manhattan suicide rate for October 15 to November 13, 1929, was lower than it had been the previous year. From October 24, 1929, to the end of the year, only eight people jumped to their death in Manhattan, and only two of these suicides occurred on Wall Street.

Although there was only a slight increase in suicide deaths during the Great Depression, there were certainly a few well-publicized suicides that may have fueled the myth of a suicide epidemic. Steven Stack has examined the possibility that media publicity on suicide influenced suicide rates during the Depression. When Stack looked for suicide stories that were printed on the first pages of seven American newspapers during the Depression, he found 105 such stories printed on the first page of the *New York Times* from 1933 to 1939. At that time, the *New York Times* served as a source paper from which other newspapers throughout the country picked up "important" stories, but only twenty of the page-one suicide stories received national coverage. The majority of suicide stories were not directly related to the Depression or the stock market crash, but involved sensational cases, including those of Kathy Schoch, who dressed up as Santa Claus and murdered six of her relatives while they slept before killing herself; an unemployed restaurant worker who killed himself by allowing his pet spider to bite him; and a chauffeur who jumped to his death while thousands watched after eleven hours of efforts to talk him out of it failed.

One of the most publicized Depression-era suicides was that of J. J. Reordan, who killed himself on Friday, November 8, 1929. Reordan was a well-known and important supporter of the Democratic Party in New York; he was treasurer of Mayor

Number of Suicides per 100,000 Population in the USA and the City of New York

Year	USA	New York City
1925	12.1	14.4
1926	12.8	13.7
1927	13.3	15.7
1928	13.6	15.7
1929	14.0	17.0
1930	15.7	18.7
1931	16.8	19.7
1932	17.4	21.3
1933	15.9	18.5
1934	14.9	17.0

SOURCE: Vital Statistics, Special Reports 1-45, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1937.

Jimmy Walker's election campaign and of Al Smith's campaign for president. Walker was president and Smith served on the board of directors of a bank called the County Trust Company. On November 8 Reordan walked into the bank, took a pistol from a cashier, returned home, and shot himself. The medical examiner withheld announcing Reordan's death until after noon the next day, just after the bank had closed for the weekend. Despite rumors (later proved to be true) that Reordan lost a fortune in the stock market, his colleagues announced that Reordan never invested in stocks and that the bank was financially sound. In addition, the City of New York announced that it would maintain all its deposits in the County Trust Company, and, in the end, Reordan's suicide did not cause a run on the bank. The Catholic Church concluded that Reordan was "temporarily insane" and thus had a right to a religious burial. His funeral was widely publicized and was attended by the political and banking elite of New York.

In his study of media effects, Stack concluded that, contrary to his expectations, publicity about suicides did not have a significant impact on the suicide rate during the Great Depression. Stack had hypothesized that people would be more vulnerable to media reports on suicide because of the effects of the economic collapse. He suggested that the lack of media impact (which has been shown to have occurred later in the twentieth century) may

have been averted because “while mass unemployment may have put many members of the suicide audience in a suicidal mood, it also created many movements for social and economic change.” Stack continued, “possibly a considerable portion of the frustration generated by the Great Depression did not get channelled into a suicidal mood, but, instead was channelled into other-directed aggression in such form as social movements.”

Several studies of the relationship between suicide and unemployment cover the period of the Great Depression. Stephen Platt’s extensive literature review of unemployment and suicidal behavior found that there is a consistent relationship between levels of unemployment and suicide rates during all periods. The twelve studies he reviewed that included the period of the Great Depression generally supported a relationship between unemployment and suicide. However, Platt’s interpretation of the data was that there may not be a direct causal link; rather he concluded that both unemployment and an increased suicide risk may be due to mental health problems. Persons who are mentally ill are at greater risk of suicide and are also more likely to be unemployed. Stack’s interpretation is, of course, subject to debate.

Thomas Cook compared different methods of time series analysis to examine the relationship between suicide and unemployment in the United States between 1900 and 1970. Unlike Stack, Thomas concluded that no matter which method is chosen, there is a significant link between unemployment and suicide. Since increases in unemployment rates precede increases in suicide rates, he suggests that the relationship may be interpreted as causal, with unemployment influencing suicide.

The relationship between marital disruption and suicide during this period has also been analyzed. During the Great Depression there was an increase in divorce and many couples postponed marriage because of financial difficulties. However, studies by Gideon Vigderhous and Gideon Fishman on the relationship between unemployment, family integration, and suicide rates in the United States between 1920 and 1969 found that unemployment rates tended to be the most important

and stable predictor of variations in suicide rates over time. Family disintegration as measured by the ratio of divorce to marriage was not found to be a significant predictor of suicide rates after controlling for unemployment.

This brief review of suicide during the Great Depression leads to the conclusion that if suicide rates did increase as a result of the distress caused by the Great Depression, the increase was not dramatic. The most likely explanation for increased suicide during this period is the well-documented link between unemployment and suicide, although the interpretation of this relationship is subject to debate. Unemployment may lead to greater social vulnerability and less social integration by decreasing the possibility of marriage and increasing divorce rates. However, both unemployment and suicide may result from other factors, such as stress-induced mental health problems. An alternative interpretation is that the presence of protective factors during the Depression, such as the development of social solidarity among vulnerable persons, may have compensated for any increased risk that resulted from economic factors. Another interpretation, which has not been subjected to empirical verification, is that people in a desperate situation tend to focus upon the needs of their family and loved ones. Such a focus upon the needs of others may protect against suicide, since most suicides involve a primary focus on one’s own suffering.

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SUPERMAN

Superman is the most important character to come out of American comic books and one of the most popular icons that American culture has ever produced. First conceived in 1933 by high school students Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, Superman debuted in the June 1938 issue of National Periodicals' (later called DC Comics) *Action Comics*. Emerging from a nexus of immigrant culture, New Deal sensibilities, and male adolescent insecurities, Superman found phenomenal success, helped to launch the fledgling comic book industry, and heralded a new era in the marketing of youth fantasies as consumer culture.

Superman was a science-fiction character whose origin mirrored the immigrant heritage of his young Jewish creators. Fleeing from a doomed planet, an infant arrives in the American heartland, is adopted by an elderly couple, demonstrates amazing physical strength and invulnerability, and grows up to take his place in the urban middle class as newspaper reporter Clark Kent. Shy, bespectacled, and unpopular in school, Siegel and Shuster created a two-sided character representing both how the world saw them and how they imagined themselves. The mild-mannered and, in the terminology of a later generation, nerdy Clark Kent was only a façade to disguise the heroic Superman. It was a compelling fantasy for a generation of powerless and insecure young males.

With his impossible abilities and colorful costume, Superman was so deeply rooted in a young imagination that Siegel and Shuster failed to sell their idea to the middle-aged businessmen who managed the newspaper syndicates. After years of frustration and rejection, they finally sold the publishing rights for the sum of \$130 to a tiny comic book company soon to be known as DC Comics. Within a few years, Superman comic books were selling over a million copies per month.

Cast as a "champion of the oppressed," Superman was a wise-cracking hero for common Americans menaced by the forces of greed and corruption. Pitted against crooked stockbrokers, heartless businessmen, and "merchants of death" who plotted to embroil the nation in foreign wars, Super-

man struck a heroic balance somewhere between the righteous violence of hard-boiled detectives like Sam Spade and the benevolent interventionism of Franklin Roosevelt. Within a few years, spectacular commercial success and the demands of a world war would tame Superman into a much more conservative icon of stability. But in his formative period, no other hero in American culture spoke more directly and colorfully to the economic, social, and personal dislocations of a generation coming of age during the Great Depression.

See Also: COMICS; HEROES.

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SUPREME COURT

The 1930s was a period of transition and transformation for the United States Supreme Court. In 1930 the Court was comprised by the conservative "Four Horsemen": Willis Van Devanter, James Clark McReynolds, George Sutherland, and Pierce Butler; three constitutional liberals: Louis D. Brandeis, Harlan Fiske Stone, and Oliver Wendell Holmes (replaced in 1932 by the like-minded Benjamin Cardozo); and two constitutional moderates: Owen Roberts and Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. Of these, only Stone and Roberts would still be on the Court when the United States entered World War II in December 1941. Though Franklin Roosevelt would be frustrated by his lack of appointments to the Court during his first term, and by his inability to "pack" it early in his second, he would appoint seven New Dealers to the Court between 1937 and 1941: Hugo Black, Stanley Reed, Felix Frankfurter, William O. Douglas, Frank Mur-

phy, James Byrnes, and Robert Jackson. Just as Roosevelt changed the face of the Court, his Court changed the face of American constitutional law.

This transformation took a variety of forms. By the end of the decade the Court had recognized significantly greater executive branch authority over domestic and foreign affairs, had upheld the massive regional power initiative embodied in the Tennessee Valley Authority, and had dramatically enhanced protections of civil rights and civil liberties, particularly concerning free speech and the rights of the accused. At the center of the Hughes Court's docket, however, were cases involving the constitutionality of the New Deal and related state attempts to confront the economic crisis that engulfed the nation. The key issues concerned the scope of the congressional powers to spend for the general welfare and to regulate interstate commerce, and the extent to which the provisions of the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments, most notably the due process clauses, limited state and federal regulatory authority. Many initiatives, particularly those involving spending, were comfortably accommodated by existing constitutional doctrine. Other programs were invalidated in their first incarnations, but survived challenge when reformulated to comply with constitutional requirements. Still others withstood challenge only due to transformations in constitutional doctrine brought about by changes in Court personnel. (Contentions that these doctrinal transformations and decisions sustaining New Deal legislation were caused by the pressure of Roosevelt's "court-packing plan" are more problematic.)

THE SPENDING POWER

The Roosevelt administration created the modern American welfare state, dramatically increasing both the number of federal programs designed to alleviate conditions of want and the amount of federal revenue devoted to that purpose. Yet no significant transformation of constitutional doctrine was necessary to accommodate this development. The Court did definitively settle a longstanding dispute in American constitutional discourse concerning the scope of the power to spend for the general welfare. Advocates of the Madisonian position had long maintained that the power to spend was con-

finied to carrying into effect exercises of other powers enumerated in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution, while advocates of the Hamiltonian position treated the power to spend as an independent grant of power not so limited. In *United States v. Butler* (1936) and the *Social Security Cases* (1937), the Court confirmed that the Hamiltonian interpretation was the correct one. Indeed, most of the justices do not appear to have regarded this conclusion as open to serious doubt: The old-age pension provisions of the Social Security Act, for instance, were upheld in *Helvering v. Davis* (1937) by a vote of seven to two. Moreover, it had long been recognized that congressional exercises of the spending power could be immunized from judicial review by designing them in light of the taxpayer standing doctrine. *Frothingham v. Mellon* (1923) had confirmed that so long as Congress appropriated the funds to be spent from general revenue rather than from a specified or "earmarked" tax, no one would have the right to question the constitutionality of the expenditure. The Supreme Court and the lower federal courts repeatedly invoked this doctrine, for example, in upholding grants and loans made by the Public Works Administration, one of the New Deal's most important and popular agencies. Furthermore, the formidable obstacle raised by the taxpayer standing doctrine appears to have successfully deterred any constitutional challenge to a wide variety of New Deal spending programs financed from general revenue. These included the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Farm Credit Act, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, the Rural Electrification Administration, and the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1936. Established constitutional doctrine assured the safety of the safety net.

CONSTITUTIONAL CONSULTATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ADAPTATION

The justices were less receptive to a number of federal regulatory programs of the early New Deal. Yet it would be a mistake to conclude that the decisions invalidating these congressional statutes were motivated simply by hostility to their objectives. The opinions in a number of these cases offered implicit or explicit suggestions on how the statute might be reformulated so as to achieve its aim in a

constitutional manner. In several instances Congress took the hint and redrafted the statute, this time paying greater attention to the constraints imposed by contemporary constitutional doctrine. The justices uniformly upheld this second generation of statutes, just as the earlier opinions had suggested they would.

So, for example, in May 1935 Justice Brandeis wrote the unanimous opinion in *Louisville Joint Stock Land Bank v. Radford* invalidating the Frazier-Lemke Farm Debt Relief Act of 1934 on the ground that it took the property of creditors without due process of law in violation of the Fifth Amendment. His opinion painstakingly identified the statute's constitutional deficiencies, enabling Congress quickly to eliminate those flaws in a reformulated statute enacted that summer. The Court upheld the revised statute in *Wright v. Vinton Branch Bank* in 1937. The decision was again unanimous—even the Four Horsemen agreed that Congress had rectified the earlier statute's shortcomings.

In early 1935 the Court also heard a challenge to the New Deal's program to stabilize oil prices in the face of frenetic wildcat drilling in the East Texas oil fields. Section 9(c) of the National Industrial Recovery Act authorized the president to prohibit interstate shipments of so-called contraband or hot oil—oil produced in excess of that allowed by the law of the state of production. The Court invalidated Section 9(c) by a vote of eight to one, holding that Congress had not provided any standard to guide the president's implementation of congressional policy, and that this omission constituted an unlawful delegation of legislative authority to the executive. Hughes's opinion left little doubt that Congress could achieve its policy objective—it needed only to remedy the delegation problem. Congress promptly did so with the Connally Act, which was uniformly upheld in the lower courts and unanimously sustained by the Supreme Court in 1939.

The Guffey Coal Act of 1935 sought to bring order to cutthroat competition in the coal industry in two ways: first, by regulating the price at which coal moved in interstate commerce, and second, by regulating wages, hours, and labor relations at the mines. In *Carter v. Carter Coal Co.* (1936), the Court

struck down the labor provisions of the Act on the ground that they regulated local production, a matter reserved to the states. The Court held that the price regulation provisions were inseparable from the labor provisions, and thus must fall with them. The majority did not, however, hold the price regulation provisions independently unconstitutional. Chief Justice Hughes wrote a concurring opinion explicitly stating his view that the price regulation provisions were constitutional. Justice Cardozo's dissent agreed with Hughes on this point, and suggested moreover that a statute regulating only the price of coal might nevertheless indirectly stabilize labor relations by enabling employers to pay higher wages. Observers in Congress construed the *Carter* opinions to indicate that a new statute containing only the price regulation provisions would be upheld by the Court. In 1937 Congress enacted such a statute, the Bituminous Coal Conservation Act of 1937. When the Act was upheld by the Court in *Sunshine Anthracite Coal Co. v. Adkins* (1940), only Justice McReynolds dissented.

In 1935 the Court held by a vote of five to four that the Railroad Retirement Act of 1934 was unconstitutional, on two grounds: because a number of its provisions violated the due process clause of the Fifth Amendment, and because creating a pension system for railroad workers lay beyond the power of Congress to regulate interstate commerce. Many observers, including Chief Justice Hughes, believed that this latter objection meant that no comparable pension legislation, even if revised to rectify the due process problems, could be sustained. Yet some in Congress recognized that a pension system financed out of general revenue rather than from a specific source would be insulated from constitutional challenge under the taxpayer standing doctrine. The revenue necessary to finance the payments could be raised by a separate tax on interstate carriers, with the proceeds of the tax paid into the treasury rather than earmarked for pension payments. At the urging of President Roosevelt, representatives of the major railroads and railway unions negotiated the terms of such a system, and by the summer of 1937 it had been embodied in the Carrier Taxing Act and the Railroad Retirement Act. Representatives of the railroads and the unions, moreover, honored their pledges not to contest the

constitutionality of the legislation, and the pension system they negotiated survives in modified form today.

A similar story of congressional adaptation unfolded in the domain of agricultural policy. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 sought to lift farm commodity prices by reducing output. The mechanism for doing so was the acreage reduction contract, under which a farmer would agree to reduce production in exchange for a payment from the secretary of agriculture. These payments were to be financed by a special excise tax on food processors rather than from general revenue, which enabled a taxpayer challenging the validity of the excise to question the constitutionality of expenditures underwritten by his tax payments. In *United States v. Butler* (1936), the Court invalidated the tax, holding that it was a step in a plan to regulate agricultural production in violation of the Tenth Amendment.

Though *Butler* held that the excise tax could no longer be collected, the administration continued to pay farmers holding acreage reduction contracts out of general revenue. Congress effectively reenacted the program two months after the *Butler* decision with the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, which paid farmers to shift acreage from “soil-depleting” to “soil-conserving” crops. This time the payments were to be made from general revenue, effectively immunizing them from constitutional challenge. In 1938 Congress enacted a second Agricultural Adjustment Act, which sought not to regulate the production of farm commodities, but instead authorized the secretary of agriculture to establish marketing quotas for such crops. The Act’s congressional sponsors read a passage from Roberts’s opinion in *Butler* to suggest that such a regulation of interstate commerce in agricultural produce might pass muster where the earlier Agricultural Adjustment Act had fallen short. This judgment was vindicated the following year by Roberts’s opinion upholding the Act in *Mulford v. Smith*.

The unemployment compensation provisions of the Social Security Act provide a final illustration of this phenomenon. Justice Brandeis was himself intimately involved in conceptualizing, drafting, and even lobbying for the program. Brandeis’s ad-

vice on framing the statute to withstand constitutional challenge was vindicated when the Court upheld the Act’s provisions in *Steward Machine Co. v. Davis* (1937). And while two of the dissenting justices believed that certain provisions of the statute as ultimately enacted were unconstitutional, their opinion made it clear how Congress could easily remedy those deficiencies, thereby bringing the statute into conformity with constitutional requirements. At the same time, the Court upheld Alabama’s state unemployment compensation statute by a vote of five to four. Yet three of the four dissenting justices indicated that, while the statute under review was plagued by constitutional defects, the relief of unemployment was an objective within the constitutional power of the states. The dissent identified the deficiencies in the statute and suggested the manner in which they might be rectified, specifically holding up as an exemplary constitutional statute the unemployment compensation act of Wisconsin. That Wisconsin statute had been drafted by Paul Raushenbush, Justice Brandeis’s son-in-law, based on a memorandum written by the justice himself.

SUBSTANTIVE DUE PROCESS

Yet the fact that many of the objectives of the New Deal could be and ultimately were accommodated within the framework of existing constitutional doctrine should not obscure the real and significant changes in constitutional law that occurred between the onset of the Depression and the early years of World War II. Among the most important of these was a weakening of the constraints imposed upon federal and state economic regulation by the Fifth and Fourteenth amendments. The extent to which the Court deployed those amendments to obstruct regulatory reform in the decades preceding the Depression has often been significantly overstated. Nevertheless, there can be no disputing the fact that those constitutional constraints were far more substantial in 1930 than they were in 1940. Between 1921 and 1927, the Court had invalidated approximately 28 percent of the economic regulations alleged to violate the due process clause, often because the entity regulated was not a business “affected with a public interest.” By the end of the 1930s, that percentage would

drop to zero, and that legal category would have disappeared from the constitutional lexicon. It became clear early in the decade that President Herbert Hoover's appointments of Hughes and Roberts in 1930 had made a significant difference. In 1931, a narrowly divided Court issued an opinion upholding state regulation of commissions paid to fire insurance agents, in language indicating considerable deference to legislative judgment. That signal would be amplified in dramatic fashion in 1934, when the Court upheld a New York statute regulating the price of milk in *Nebbia v. New York*. "There is no closed class or category of business affected with a public interest," wrote Justice Roberts for a five to four majority. The guarantee of due process required only that the regulation be reasonable. Earlier that year the Court had surprised many observers by upholding the Minnesota Mortgage Moratorium in *Home Building & Loan Association v. Blaisdell* (1934). After *Nebbia* was decided, Justice McReynolds wrote despairingly to a friend that these two cases marked "the end of the constitution as you and I regarded it. An alien influence has prevailed." (McReynolds would similarly announce in open court that "The Constitution is gone" when, in early 1935, the Court upheld the administration's historic reorientation of monetary policy in the *Gold Clause Cases*). Meanwhile, New Dealers saw *Nebbia*'s sweeping approval of price regulation as a signal that the justices were prepared to sustain a variety of regulatory reforms, first among them the minimum wage. The Court did uphold the Washington minimum wage statute in *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish* (1937), though only after invalidating a similar New York statute the preceding year for what appear to have been technical reasons.

Yet neither *Nebbia* nor *Parrish* constituted a total repudiation of substantive due process. Hughes and Roberts had struck down a regulation designed to exclude new entrants to the ice business in Oklahoma in *New State Ice v. Liebmann* (1932); they would similarly join the majority invalidating provisions of a New York regulation raising a barrier to entry in *Mayflower v. Ten Eyck* (1936), and would dissent from the decision upholding a federal regulation disadvantaging small milk handlers in *United States v. Rock Royal Cooperative* (1939). Roberts would vote to invalidate a discrimi-

natory state tax under the privileges or immunities clause in *Colgate v. Harvey* (1935), and would dissent from the opinion upholding a comparable tax in *Madden v. Kentucky* (1940). And when the Court effectively overruled Roberts's 1935 railway pension decision in *United States v. Lowden* (1939), Roberts suppressed the dissent he had voiced in conference. "Regulatory legislation affecting ordinary commercial transactions," as the Court put it in *United States v. Carolene Products* (1938), would come to enjoy a virtually irrebuttable presumption of constitutionality, but only once Roosevelt appointments had begun to replace the retiring Four Horsemen, thereby depriving Hughes and Roberts of control over the Court's center.

THE COMMERCE POWER

Nebbia did, however, enable Congress to regulate the price at which such items as coal and agricultural produce moved in interstate commerce. The *Shreveport Rate Cases* (1914) permitted federal regulation of intrastate railroad rates where it was shown that such regulation was necessary to effective control of interstate rates. The *Shreveport* doctrine had always been confined to businesses affected with a public interest, because only such businesses were amenable to rate regulation. But with *Nebbia*'s abolition of that limitation, Congress could draw upon *Shreveport* in regulating intrastate sales of a broad range of commodities. The Court relied on *Shreveport* in sustaining congressional regulation of intrastate sales of tobacco in *Currin v. Wallace* (1939) and *Mulford v. Smith* (1939), and of milk in *United States v. Wrightwood Dairy Co.* (1942).

Nebbia also enlarged the category of local activities that could be regulated by Congress because they occurred in a "stream" of interstate commerce. Application of the stream of commerce doctrine had always been limited to businesses affected with a public interest, such as public stockyards and grain exchanges. After *Nebbia*, however, virtually any business located in such a flow was arguably subject to federal regulation. This development was of no consequence in the "Sick Chicken Case," *United States v. Schechter Poultry Co.* (1935), which struck down a conviction under the Live Poultry Code of the National Industrial Recovery Act on the

ground that the code regulated a “local” activity (butchering) that affected interstate commerce only “indirectly.” (The decision prompted Roosevelt to accuse the justices of having a “horse and buggy” conception of interstate commerce.) Schechter’s slaughterhouse was not in a stream of commerce because interstate transportation had come to an end—the butchered chickens were sold locally rather than in interstate trade. The Guffey Coal Act invalidated in *Carter Coal* suffered from the same problem, but at the other end: The coal mine lay at the source of the stream rather than amidst its interstate flow. When defending the collective bargaining provisions of the National Labor Relations Act, therefore, attorneys for the government carefully selected test cases involving factories that brought in raw materials from outside the state of production and then shipped their products for sale across state lines. They argued that these businesses were located in a stream of interstate commerce, and that a strike at the plants could disrupt the interstate flow of that stream. The Court upheld application of the Act to those business in the *Labor Board Cases* (1937). Throughout the late 1930s, decisions in which the Court upheld application of the Wagner Act hesitated to suggest that the commerce power had been significantly enlarged. Uncertainty about the scope of the commerce power would not be resolved until the early 1940s, long after the court-packing plan was dead and buried, when Roosevelt appointees dominated the Court.

In *United States v. Darby* (1941), the Court upheld the Fair Labor Standards Act, which banned child labor and prescribed maximum hours and minimum ages for businesses selling goods in interstate commerce. And in *Wickard v. Filburn* (1942), the Court upheld a penalty imposed on a farmer for planting more wheat than he was allotted under the terms of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. Roscoe Filburn argued that he did not intend to sell the wheat, but only to keep it for use and consumption on his farm. Justice Jackson’s opinion responded that if many farmers emulated Filburn, they would reduce the overall demand for those crops and thus the price at which those crops moved in interstate commerce. Congress could therefore reach Filburn’s activity as a means of regulating the interstate price of wheat. Internal Court

records show that not all of the justices were comfortable with such expansive interpretations of the commerce power. By the end of the Depression, however, no one could doubt that there had been a dramatic increase in the federal government’s power to regulate the nation’s economy.

See Also: LEGAL PROFESSION; SUPREME COURT “PACKING” CONTROVERSY.

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BARRY CUSHMAN

SUPREME COURT “PACKING” CONTROVERSY

After seeing important measures of the First New Deal repeatedly invalidated by the Supreme Court, President Franklin D. Roosevelt charged a small group of his advisors to devise a proposal that would increase the chances of future success. The result was the proposed Judicial Reorganization Act, which the president sent to Congress on February 5, 1937. One of the bill’s provisions would have empowered the president to appoint to the Supreme Court an additional justice for each sitting justice who had not retired within six months after reaching the age of seventy. Six of the sitting justices were then over seventy, which would have enabled Roosevelt immediately to expand the Court from nine to fifteen justices. Though Roosevelt explained that the current justices were too aged to stay abreast of their work, it was widely recognized that the bill’s true aim was to secure for the Roosevelt administration a sympathetic majority on the Court.

Such an effort to influence the Court’s decisions was not novel. Comparable bills had made regular appearances in the legislative hopper since the 1890s, and a number of proposals to control the Court had been introduced in the wake of decisions invalidating New Deal initiatives in 1935 and 1936. None of these bills had gotten anywhere in Congress, and the support of an extremely popular president would not prove sufficient to secure for this proposal a different fate. Powerful opposition to the bill emerged almost immediately after its announcement. The press, leaders in higher education, and a variety of prominent civic organizations, including the American Bar Association, each denounced it. Eminent liberal spokesmen and former members of the administration also criticized the proposal. At the same time, crucial members of the New Deal coalition refused to rally to the president’s cause. Organized labor issued official endorsements but otherwise sat on its hands, while key farm organizations actively campaigned in opposition. Meanwhile, the electorate that had so resoundingly returned Roosevelt to office the preceding November deluged Congress and the Court

with letters and telegrams running nine to one against the proposal. Public opinion polls, while more closely divided, showed both consistent opposition to any proposal to enlarge the Court’s membership and a steady decline in the president’s popularity.

THE COURT PLAN IN CONGRESS

Roosevelt’s more immediate concern, however, lay in shepherding the bill through Congress. He and his advisors had prepared the bill in secret, without consulting congressional leaders, and this left many of those leaders feeling alienated. So, for example, Vice President John Nance Garner was seen outside the Senate chamber shortly after the plan’s announcement giving it the thumbs-down sign and holding his nose in distaste. Similarly disaffected was Hatton Sumners, the Democratic chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, who was provoked to take two steps. The first was to hustle a judicial retirement bill through Congress in hopes that he might persuade his colleagues to solve the problem of judicial obstruction simply by creating a financial incentive for the elderly conservative justices to leave the bench. The second was to assemble a comfortable majority of his committee in opposition to the president’s proposal. Sumners’s defection meant that the bill’s opponents would control the committee hearings, and that the proposal might be bottled up in committee for an indefinite period. These circumstances persuaded the administration to take the unusual step of introducing the bill not in the typically compliant House, but instead in the Senate. But here, too, the obstacles were considerable. Unsurprisingly, every Republican senator quickly announced his opposition to the plan, as did a number of conservative Democrats. The opposition scored a coup when it secured the allegiance of Senator Burton Wheeler, a liberal Democrat from Montana. Wheeler became the opposition’s leader, and recruited several fellow liberals to its standard, while a number of other key senators remained noncommittal or offered only nominal support. Within ten days of the plan’s announcement, Roosevelt’s secretary of the treasury, Henry Morgenthau, gave it at best a fifty-fifty chance of passage. Roosevelt’s defense of the bill in a March 9 fireside chat did little to alter the dynam-

ic. When the Judiciary Committee opened its hearings on March 10, its members were evenly divided, with two members undecided.

The opposition used the hearings to filibuster the bill, grilling administration witnesses at length while leisurely putting on a parade of opposing witnesses. The most dramatic moment came on March 22, when Senator Wheeler read a letter from Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes. Wheeler and two colleagues had initially approached Hughes on March 18 to testify before the committee, but after consulting with two of his fellow justices, Hughes had declined. At the suggestion of Justice Louis Brandeis, however, Wheeler persuaded Hughes on March 20 to write a letter demonstrating that the Court was not behind in its work, that it was hearing all meritorious appeals, and that the president's proposal would impair rather than enhance the Court's efficiency. Hughes reported that he had been able to discuss the letter's contents with only two of his colleagues, the liberal Justice Brandeis and the conservative Willis Van Devanter, each of whom had approved it. He was confident, however, that its contents accorded with the views of his other colleagues as well. This statement left the impression that the justices endorsed Hughes's letter unanimously. When Wheeler had finished reading the letter, Garner telephoned Roosevelt and told him, "We're licked."

At least two weeks earlier, it had become clear that the opposition was planning to filibuster the bill on the Senate floor, and appeared to have the votes to do so successfully. Over the course of the ensuing weeks, the bill's fortunes only deteriorated further. By the end of April it was apparent the Judiciary Committee would issue an adverse report; by early May the opposition commanded an absolute majority in the Senate. A mid-May Gallup poll showed only 31 percent of the public supporting the bill. On May 18, the committee delivered its negative recommendation; on the same day, the conservative Van Devanter's announcement of his retirement seemed to deprive the bill of its very reason for being. Roosevelt could now fill the vacancy with a New Dealer.

Yet the president faced a difficulty: He had promised the next seat to Senator Joseph Robinson

of Arkansas. Robinson was a loyal lieutenant in the Senate, but Roosevelt feared that, once on the Court, he would vote as a conservative. Roosevelt therefore withheld the appointment, urging Robinson to lead the fight for a compromise bill that would permit the president to appoint a smaller number of additional justices over a longer period of time. The obstacles to enactment of the compromise bill remained formidable, but the promise that its enactment would lead to a place on the Court for the popular senator breathed a measure of new life into a seemingly moribund initiative. That new life was brief, however. Robinson was found dead in his Washington apartment on July 14, and hopes for the bill's passage died with him. The Senate quickly voted to recommit the bill, instructing the committee to remove its court-packing provisions. The battle was over.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE COURT-PACKING CONTROVERSY

During the Court fight, the justices handed down a series of important decisions that further compromised the bill's chances. All of these decisions favored government regulation, and have been called collectively "the switch in time that saved the Nine." On March 29, the justices upheld a state minimum wage law similar to one they had invalidated only the preceding term. The cause of Justice Owen Roberts's "switch" on this issue is still debated, but it is clear that his change was not attributable to the Court plan. The vote in *West Coast Hotel v. Parrish* was actually taken in conference on December 19, more than six weeks before the justices knew about the president's scheme. Similarly, on May 24, the Court upheld the old-age pension and unemployment compensation provisions of the Social Security Act. Here again, the Court plan does not appear to have played a significant role. It had been known for nearly a month that the Senate committee would report the bill unfavorably and that the opposition had the votes to defeat the bill in the Senate. Moreover, two of the conservatives, who had dissented in the minimum wage case, actually voted to uphold the act's old-age provisions. There is perhaps a stronger case to be made that the April 12 decisions upholding the application of the National Labor Relations Act to three manufactur-

ing enterprises may have been influenced by the plan. Those advancing this hypothesis take the view, disputed by others, that the Court would not have upheld the act without such external pressure. This claim similarly dismisses the possibility that the obstacles posed by the Senate filibuster and Sumners and company's opposition in the House may have given the justices reason to doubt the likelihood of the bill's ultimate enactment. It is generally agreed, however, that the Court-packing episode dealt a blow to Roosevelt's reputation for political infallibility, and opened a rift in the Democratic Party, contributing to the breakdown of the New Deal coalition and what one scholar has called the "End of Reform."

See Also: LEGAL PROFESSION; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; SUPREME COURT.

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BARRY CUSHMAN

SWOC. See STEEL WORKERS' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE.



TALMADGE, EUGENE

Eugene Talmadge (September 23, 1884–December 21, 1946), a demagogic governor of Georgia, became a major opponent of the New Deal. Born in Forsyth, Georgia, to a prosperous farmer and cotton gin operator, Talmadge tasted farm work but had more aptitude for schoolwork. A superb debater, he graduated from the University of Georgia in 1904. After a short stint teaching at a rural school, Talmadge returned to his alma mater for a law degree and began practicing in Atlanta in 1907.

Talmadge soon moved to the greener pastures of small-town Georgia but tired of being paid in produce by his poor clients. After briefly farming, he entered politics and won a statewide election in 1926 as agricultural commissioner. A conservative who sought to maintain the Old South, Talmadge constantly urged farmers to keep doing what they had been doing despite the collapse of farm prices. Using a populist approach, he built a substantial power base among poor whites that propelled him into the governor's mansion in 1932 and kept him there in the 1934 election. Profane, quick-tempered, arrogant, and in possession of a mean streak, Talmadge preferred confrontation to compromise and government by executive decree. Not surprisingly, he had enormous trouble putting his programs into effect.

Once a supporter of Roosevelt, Talmadge soured on the president's policies by 1934. The emerging social activism and growing federal involvement of the New Deal offended his governmental and social philosophies. Privately critical of Roosevelt's programs, he came out publicly in opposition in 1935. Complaining that work relief programs benefited loafers and made it impossible for farmers to find anyone willing to accept low pay for menial tasks like plowing, he denounced the popular Civilian Conservation Corps. The Agricultural Adjustment Act came under similar attack.

Talmadge did not grasp that the Great Depression had forced an attitudinal change among Georgians. Unable to practice self-sufficiency, they regarded government relief programs as a godsend. Talmadge consequently lost the 1936 Georgia Senate race to Richard Russell in one of the biggest landslides in Georgia history.

Returned to the governor's mansion in 1940, Talmadge toned down his anti-Roosevelt rhetoric but increased his racial baiting. After insisting upon the termination of University of Georgia professors who advocated racial equality, the university lost accreditation and Talmadge lost the 1942 election. He formed the Vigilantes, a Ku Klux Klan-like group, to intimidate opponents and won the 1946 gubernatorial election but died a month before assuming office.

See Also: CONSERVATIVE COALITION; ELECTION OF 1936.

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CARYN E. NEUMANN

TAMMANY HALL

Tammany Hall (or, the Executive Committee of the New York County Democratic Party) in the 1920s was the nation's most powerful political machine. It controlled New York City government, as it had with only brief interruptions since the days of the Tweed Ring (a group of corrupt politicians who dominated the Hall and New York City government in the 1860s.) It also dominated state politics, electing one of its own, Alfred E. Smith, as governor in 1918, 1922, 1924, and 1926. It even played a significant role in national Democratic Party politics: Smith captured the party's presidential nomination in 1928, and another Tammany graduate, Robert F. Wagner, sat in the U.S. Senate. However, after the death of its most able leader, Charles F. Murphy, in 1924, Tammany began a long decline. It was rent by internal squabbles, and population shifts to the other boroughs allowed the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens County Democratic organizations increasingly to assert their independence at Tammany's expense.

Tammany and the other party organizations did cooperate to elect James J. Walker mayor in 1925 and again in 1929. It was a disastrous choice. While "Gentleman Jimmy" played, his Tammany appointees looted the city. The electorate, which had been willing to overlook corruption and mismanagement in the booming 1920s, became more critical in the Depression. In response to mounting criticism, Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Republican-controlled state senate launched three investigations of the Walker administration, all headed by Samuel Seabury. The inquiries uncov-

ered sales of judgeships and extortion in the magistrates' courts, a district attorney's office that protected racketeers, and a pattern of citywide corruption that Walker knew of and tolerated. On the basis of these findings, Seabury recommended that Roosevelt remove the mayor from office in 1932.

At the 1932 national convention, angry Tammany chief John Curry led a delegation committed to Al Smith's presidential nomination and irreconcilably against Roosevelt's. Once Roosevelt triumphed, Tammany loyalists blocked a move to make the nomination unanimous. Later, candidate Roosevelt, eager to disassociate himself from Tammany's scandals, forced Walker's resignation. Even after Roosevelt's inauguration, Tammany did not follow the lead of most other urban Democratic machines and line up behind the president.

The Hall soon paid the price of its folly. The Roosevelt administration cut off all federal patronage, funneling it instead to Tammany's rivals, Bronx County Democratic Chairman Edward J. Flynn and Brooklyn County leader Frank Kelly. In 1933, a coalition of Republicans, anti-Tammany Democrats, and other reformers, disgusted by the Seabury revelations and Tammany's inability to handle the Depression-spawned fiscal and relief crises, organized the Fusion Party and elected Fiorello H. La Guardia mayor of New York City. La Guardia relentlessly cleared Tammany appointees from municipal posts, replacing them with people who were both Fusion backers and well qualified. By 1939, 74 percent of all city jobs were under civil service. Roosevelt wrote off Tammany and recognized in La Guardia an honest and progressive politician with whom he could work. Washington made it possible for La Guardia to build more public works and offer more services and jobs than the old political bosses ever could. The Works Progress Administration alone employed 700,000 city residents. To attract the votes of progressive Republicans, anti-Tammany Democrats, and independents for his own reelection in 1936, 1940, and 1944, and for La Guardia's in 1937 and 1941, Roosevelt gave his blessing to the establishment of the American Labor Party. In 1937 and 1941, the President endorsed La Guardia over his Democratic opponents.

Deprived of patronage, jobs, and money, the machine languished. By 1936, membership in Tammany clubs had declined by 70 percent. Its treasury was so empty by 1943 that it had to sell its headquarters to the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. While it did help elect a string of Democratic mayors after La Guardia and briefly revived under the leadership of its first Italian boss, Carmine DeSapio, it never returned to its 1920s glory.

See Also: FLYNN, EDWARD J.; LA GUARDIA, FIORELLO H.; ROOSEVELT, FRANKLIN D.; SMITH, ALFRED E.

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BARBARA BLUMBERG

TAXATION

Taxation during the Great Depression is confusing enough without the two competing narratives that historians have imposed on it. The more familiar, accessible narrative follows the storyline Franklin D. Roosevelt himself sought to project: noble democratic efforts to lift up the "forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid" through whatever progressively redistributive tax reform could overcome the constraints of congressional special interests, corrupt "economic royalists," and financial exigencies. Like most myths, this first narrative reveals a great deal, but unfortunately obscures the second narrative on the fundamental ways in which the tax system evolved during the Depression.

The root of misunderstanding lies in certain peculiarities of the U.S. tax system. At the center of the standard twentieth-century tax reform story is the personal income tax. Today, that tax is an accoutrement—albeit an often-resented one—of citizenship. But, in the United States far more than anywhere else in the world, this tax emerged from a populist/progressive "soak-the-rich" tradition that exempted "the people" and specially targeted "surplus" incomes of privileged outlanders and plutocratic "malefactors of great wealth." Thus, between 1929 and 1939, upwards of 95 percent of Americans did not pay a dime of federal income tax, until World War II transformed it from a "class tax" to a "mass tax" through a 1,500 percent jump in the number of citizens covered by taxable returns. This narrowly-based "class tax" extracted most of its revenue in the 1930s from the tiniest fraction of 1 percent of Americans, the fewer than 20,000 tax returns reporting over \$50,000. With so few shouldering this tax, the New Deal income tax collected only about 1 percent of the nation's total personal income, as opposed, for example, to over 12 percent today. New Deal revenue yields relied far less on politically and historically celebrated "progressive" rate hikes on upper incomes than on "regressive" levies, which claimed larger shares of incomes from the bottom of the economic pyramid than from those nearer the pyramid's top.

The economic collapse of 1929 to 1933 was bad enough, but fiscal collapse made it worse. With upper tax brackets decimated by the stock market crash and vanishing profits, federal government tax collections halved. This fiscal crunch came at the worst possible time, amidst desperate citizen needs and demands, New Deal commitments, state and local government debt limits, and reigning dictates of fiscal orthodoxy.

The government's response to this crisis went through three phases: economic heavy lifting between 1932 and the spring of 1935, a tax reform thrust between June 1935 and 1937, and an antitax reform parry in 1938 and 1939. The first phase opened during the Herbert Hoover administration with the Revenue Act of 1932, the nation's largest peacetime tax increase and the dominant tax legislation of the Great Depression. Though an insur-



A highway billboard in southern Alabama, photographed in 1939, promotes lower taxes to stimulate job growth. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

gent congressional revolt blocked its most regressive sales tax formulation, the legislation still targeted consumers with new federal manufacturer's excise taxes on such widely-used items as cars, tires, gasoline, and electricity, while slicing exemptions and more than doubling most income and estate tax rates, restoring a gift tax, and hiking taxes on corporate profits.

Depression program costs, however, made it impossible simply to coast on these new revenues. At least until Roosevelt acquiesced to what came to be seen as a Keynesian policy of economic stimulation through deliberate deficits in the wake of the 1937 recession, Roosevelt was in principle a budget balancer, pledging fealty to fiscal responsibility by excluding what he labeled "emergency" expendi-

tures while "balancing" the "regular" budget. But as total federal spending doubled in his first term, even creative accounting could not erase the rising federal debt, as deficits at times exceeded tax collections. Seeking to minimize controversy and to pursue a "concert of interests" with corporate leaders positioned to spearhead economic recovery, the administration took a path of least resistance. Instead of offering a tax reform program between 1933 and the spring of 1935, it used a financial Trojan horse, bringing in regressive taxes as subordinate financial provisions of popular programs. It celebrated its reimposition of alcohol taxes as part of prohibition repeal in 1933. Redirecting grateful imbibers' money from bootleggers to the government was easy pickings. Its agricultural recovery program, the 1933

Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), was funded by processing taxes (e.g., imposed on millers of wheat, but then passed along to consumers of bread). And most important to the future of the U.S. tax system, at the insistence of Roosevelt and Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau in January 1935, its old-age insurance program was financed entirely by a tax (1 percent each for employees and—nominally—employers) on the first \$3,000 paid annually to workers qualifying for the program. Casting Social Security taxes in private insurance terms—as “premiums” that established an “earned right” to future pensions—made them a comparatively painless way to narrow New Deal deficits and to assure the program’s permanence. Decision makers and economists widely recognized that these taxes would ultimately either be subtracted from wages or added to prices. Yet a more progressive scheme—even general revenue subsidies used in social insurance programs elsewhere in the world—might have incurred unwelcome political costs.

In Roosevelt’s first two terms, collections from manufacturer’s excise taxes, alcohol taxes, the AAA processing tax, and Social Security taxes each separately peaked at over 12 percent of annual federal revenues—a regressive influence at odds with New Deal images of democratically redistributive taxation. State and local tax shifts only heightened this tilt toward taxes that exacted proportionately more from lower-income Americans. Local governments, primarily reliant on property taxes that squeezed farmers, home owners, and landlords whose Depression-wracked incomes could no longer cover their property tax bills, faced tax defaults, popular tax revolts, and reduced revenues that forced contraction at the very time when needs were most dire. State government spending rose substantially despite debt ceilings, partly in order to participate in shared federal/state welfare, public works, and unemployment insurance programs. But new regressive state retail sales taxes, along with the nonprogressive state unemployment insurance payroll taxes generated by the Social Security Act, carried a much greater portion of this new load than the personal or corporate state income tax.

Not all Americans took the regressive elements of this first phase of Depression taxation policy lying down. The Treasury, flexing its growing economic and legal expertise, relayed the broader conclusion of the economics profession and a few progressive political leaders, such as Senator Robert La Follette, Jr., that the New Deal tax system too heavily burdened the “forgotten man” while undertaxing—especially in comparison with European rates—lower and middle income tax brackets, where the real money was. Noting the New Deal’s failure to rectify “our fundamental malady, the maldistribution of wealth and income,” left-wing critics declared taxation to be “the weakest link in the Roosevelt program.” Millions scapegoated wealth concentration as “the greatest menace this country faces,” and gravitated toward plans such as those of Senator Huey Long’s share-the-wealth movement, formed in 1934 to confiscate or heavily tax the fortunes of multimillionaires. Pressures from congressional progressives, with measured support from the Roosevelt administration, resulted in minor antiplutocratic initiatives in the Revenue Act of 1934, which boosted estate taxes and tightened several upper-income and corporate tax loopholes, such as preferential rates on capital gains. Congressional pressure only increased with the 1934 elections, as extraordinary gains by liberal Democrats and left-wing third parties left Republicans outnumbered by three-to-one in Congress. Some conservatives now cast Roosevelt as “the bulwark between the country and the ‘wild men’ of Congress.”

Just as the thunder on Roosevelt’s left made problematic any strategy of business conciliation, conservative opposition erupted. Earlier in the New Deal, with economic survival and political stability hanging in the balance, businessmen had reason to go along with the New Deal’s “concert of interests” theme. But rising economic indicators quelled their desperation. In May 1935, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce stingingly condemned the New Deal, and the Supreme Court found unconstitutional the National Industrial Recovery Act, the New Deal’s main institutional vehicle for partnership with business interests.

Roosevelt responded to this new balance with a political masterstroke. His June 19, 1935, message

to Congress spearheaded a strategy that durably cast the New Deal on the side of the common people against “entrenched greed,” “economic tyranny,” and other evil “forces of selfishness and of lust for power” that his upcoming reelection campaign famously portrayed as “unanimous in their hate for me—and I welcome their hatred.” Noting that the tax system had “done little to prevent an unjust concentration of wealth and economic power,” he called for “very high taxes” on “vast fortunes” and “inherited economic power.” This was a message very much in the “anti-bigness” mold of Roosevelt adviser Felix Frankfurter and his patron Louis Brandeis: scaling down the over-concentrated power of big business and the bloated super-rich to safeguard democratic institutions and foster economic opportunity.

The mere reading of this speech, confessed one corporate lawyer, practically left him “frothing at the mouth.” But at first no draft legislation accompanied it. Would the speech itself suffice as a campaign document to preempt such critics as the flamboyant Huey Long, a likely third-party presidential candidate? Roosevelt was ambivalent, but a revolt of progressive senators forced his hand. By summer’s end, the Revenue Act of 1935, popularly known as the wealth tax, entered the statute books. More a “hell-raiser” than a “revenue raiser,” it institutionalized Roosevelt’s oratory by strafing mammoth incomes, estates, and corporations, while only augmenting tax collections by \$250 million. Contrary to conventional historical wisdom, this paltry yield—a fraction of collections from New Deal taxes disproportionately shouldered by ordinary Americans—cannot be attributed to congressional foot-dragging. Congress did reshuffle rates to dilute certain anti-bigness features of Roosevelt’s proposed inheritance tax on legatees (replaced by a reduced exemption and higher rates for existing estate and gift taxes), graduated corporate income tax (which now favored small companies instead of specially penalizing giant ones), intercorporate dividend tax, and personal income tax. Yet that original incarnation would have collected even less than the final law. Even in the revenue-enhanced but “diluted” final income tax schedule, increases only kicked in at \$50,000. Net incomes over five million dollars faced a 79 percent rate (up from 63 per-

cent)—an onerous-sounding top bracket, though it applied only to John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

The Wealth Tax established Roosevelt’s tax credentials for the 1936 presidential campaign. But early in 1936 the Supreme Court invalidated the AAA processing tax and Congress overrode Roosevelt’s veto of a budget-busting “bonus” for veterans of World War I. Into the breach came the undistributed profits tax. The Roosevelt administration dusted off a boldly innovative tax proposal to replace existing corporate taxes with a graduated levy on corporate profits not distributed to stockholders. Roosevelt, as was his wont (particularly in circumstances of high political visibility), joined the Department of the Treasury in casting the tax as a moral question of “fundamental equity” and “ability to pay.” Undistributed corporate profits, he said, were a haven for what would otherwise have been the taxable dividends of wealthy stockholders. Others, such as Brain Truster Rexford Tugwell, conceived of the tax as a tool of economic planning, transforming idle surpluses into needed consumer buying power, while reducing the use of retained earnings for redundant expansion by diverting them into more competitive investment markets.

Thanks in part to the Treasury’s inept defense of the tax (including a meltdown of its claim that the undistributed profits tax would reduce corporate concentration and empower smaller stockholders) and in part to corporate outrage over the government’s intrusion into investment decisions, the Revenue Act of 1936 retained existing corporate taxes while introducing a supplementary 7 percent to 27 percent tax on undistributed corporate profits. Still, this tax promised to yield far more added revenue from corporations and the wealthy than the more symbolic assault upon the super-rich in the 1935 wealth tax or in the upcoming Revenue Act of 1937, which penalized tax dodges of the super-rich, especially “personal holding companies.” The 1937 law—passed after genuinely indignant presidential denunciations of tax lawyers’ “clever little schemes” to help millionaires avoid their “fair share” of taxes—followed Roosevelt’s lead in targeting smaller, flagrantly sensational loopholes as opposed to more financially significant ones, such as oil depletion allowances.

Symbolic or not, New Deal tax reform of 1935 to 1937 infuriated congressional conservatives and business leaders, who bristled at New Deal campaigns that vilified them and denigrated their economic contributions. Rocked both politically and economically by the precipitous “Roosevelt Recession” of 1937 to 1938, the New Deal could not fend off these attacks. In 1938 and 1939, Congress one-sidedly gutted and then eliminated the undistributed profits tax, while slashing capital gains tax rates on the wealthy. This victory, however, came at a price to the resurgent congressional conservative coalition. Forced to recoup these cuts by raising the standard corporate income tax rate several points above its previous high, it left unscathed more fundamental New Deal transformations, such as in employment and labor policy. New Deal taxation, arguably a bane of the “forgotten man” in the 1930s, was a political masterpiece.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); NEW DEAL; TAXPAYERS LEAGUES.

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MARK H. LEFF

TAXPAYERS LEAGUES

The Great Depression introduced unprecedented tax burdens to Americans. While real-estate values plummeted and unemployment skyrocketed, the cost of government remained high. As a result, taxes as a percentage of the national income nearly doubled from 11.6 percent in 1921 to 21.1 in 1932.

Most of the increase occurred at the local level and especially squeezed the resources of real-estate taxpayers. Local tax delinquency rose steadily from a median of 10.1 percent in 1930 to 26.3 percent in 1933.

Many Americans reacted to these conditions by forming taxpayers leagues to call for lower taxes and cuts in government spending. These organizations were relatively rare before the Depression but soon became commonplace. By some estimates, there were three thousand of them by 1933. Thomas Reed, a leading political scientist, lamented that taxpayers groups “spring up like mushrooms, every time you go out in the morning, you find more of them,” while the American Library Association *Bulletin* observed that the “taxpayer is indeed in revolt. Local and state taxpayers leagues multiply.” The banner year for such organizations was 1933, with several hundred formed in the spring alone, according to an estimate by Howard P. Jones of the National Municipal League.

Taxpayers leagues endorsed such measures as laws to limit and roll back taxes, lowered penalties on tax delinquents, and cuts in government spending. Partly as a result of their efforts, sixteen states and numerous localities adopted property tax limitations, while three states instituted homestead exemptions. The National Association of Real Estate Boards provided a limited degree of interstate coordination by establishing property owners associations.

Although taxpayers leagues usually favored traditional legal and political strategies, a few were more radical. Probably the best known of these was the Association of Real Estate Taxpayers in Chicago. From 1930 to 1933, it led one of the largest tax strikes in American history. At its height, it had 30,000 paid members, a budget of \$600,000, and a weekly radio show.

By late 1933, the taxpayers leagues had entered a period of decline. The circumstances that had nurtured revolt were undermined as economic conditions gradually improved, the federal government extended aid to homeowners, and local governments reduced their reliance on real-estate taxes. To some extent, the tax revolt also fell victim to an effective counterattack by municipal reformers,

government officials, and the holders of municipal debt, such as bondholders and bankers. In Newark, New Jersey, and other cities, groups ranging from the Bankers Trust to various teachers unions organized Pay Your Taxes campaigns that used a combination of door-to-door solicitation, threats of coercion, and inducements, such as installment payment plans, to collect back taxes. Members from the same groups formed the basis of the Citizens Councils for Constructive Economy. One strategy of the Citizens Councils was to co-opt more radical forms of tax resistance and budget cutting by emphasizing reforms, such as centralized purchasing, which would make government more efficient rather than reduce its size.

See Also: TAXATION.

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DAVID T. BEITO

TAYLOR GRAZING ACT

When railroads were built across the American West after the Civil War, livestock producers found it profitable to turn cattle and sheep onto the unfenced plains, where they grazed without fee on public lands. For decades overcrowding and the consequent denuding of grasses generated tension between cattle and sheep producers and between stockmen and homesteaders. In the early 1930s declining livestock prices increased reliance upon free grazing. At the same time, drought caused water holes to dry up, vegetation to shrivel, and the region's deteriorated soils to drift eastward in the form of dust storms.

In 1928 a group of stockmen had collaborated on a proposal to merge public and private holdings with state and railway grant lands in a project for range improvement in southeastern Montana. They obtained congressional legislation authorizing

withdrawal of the public lands from further settlement and directing the secretary of the interior to lease tracts to stock producers who owned adjacent lands and who would agree to meet prescribed management regulations. The resulting range improvement there and in several similar ventures set a precedent for extending the program to public lands generally. As the drought conditions worsened, Representative Edward T. Taylor of Colorado assumed sponsorship of such a proposal, and the Taylor Grazing Act was passed by Congress. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the measure on June 28, 1934.

A landmark in the history of American public land policy, the Taylor Grazing Act virtually terminated the free homestead program initiated in 1862. The secretary of the interior was authorized to establish grazing districts over no more than 80 million, later amended to 142 million, acres of "vacant, unappropriated, and unreserved lands from any part of the public domain (exclusive of Alaska) . . . chiefly valuable for grazing and forage crops." A few other exclusions were enumerated, together with reservation of areas needed for owners of adjacent land to drive their stock to market or to other properties, tracts lying within watersheds forming part of the national forests, and areas within grazing districts that the secretary might classify as "more valuable and suitable for the production of agricultural crops than native grasses and forage plants." As a consequence, the number of homestead entries declined from 7,741 in 1934, to 609 in 1937, and to less than 500 any year during the following decade.

The secretary was further authorized to issue permits for running livestock in grazing districts upon payment of "reasonable fees," with preference to those within or near a district who were "landowners engaged in the livestock business, bona fide occupants or settlers, or owners of water or water rights." Permits were to run for ten years, renewable at the discretion of the secretary. Fees were low, far less than the rates for privately rented grazing property or for grazing leases in public forest reserves. Congressional opposition withheld adequate funding for administrative regulation or range improvements. Some increase of water facili-

ties by the Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930s and the introduction of crested-wheatgrass seeding in 1940 were the most notable early achievements. In response to a Senate inquiry the secretary of the interior reported in 1962 that conditions over the past seven years showed only 1.6 percent of the ranges excellent, 15 percent good, but 53.1 percent fair, 25.8 percent poor, and 4.5 percent bad.

As interpreted and applied until the mid-1960s, the Taylor Act was focused almost solely upon conservation for grazing. With the development of environmental concerns, however, a series of measures for safeguarding public water supplies, protecting endangered species, and limiting use of pesticides for weed control had to be implemented. A requirement for environmental impact statements necessitated greatly increased administrative appropriations and led to higher grazing fees. Litigation ensued, particularly over determination of fees and interpretation of grazing preference. Although the U.S. Supreme Court generally upheld the administration of the Taylor Act, opposition increased. Disgruntled stockmen complained of government control and rising fees, and in 2000 a symposium of environmentalists declared a National Campaign to End Public Lands Grazing.

See Also: CONSERVATION MOVEMENT; WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN.

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MARY W. M. HARGREAVES

TECHNOCRACY. *See* BLACK THIRTY-HOUR BILL.

TEMPORARY EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION, NEW YORK (TERA)

Because of the devastating effects of the economic Depression that hit the nation in 1930, New York State Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt called for immediate state aid to be given to the unemployed, declaring that the purpose of the state is the protection and well-being of its citizens. In January 1931 newly reelected Governor Roosevelt declared that the national economic emergency demanded new solutions for new problems. Under authority granted to him by the New York State Legislature in Extraordinary Session, the governor created the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA) in October 1931, with an appropriation of \$20 million for emergency relief of the unemployed. Roosevelt set a precedent by creating a new agency to meet a new problem, one he relied on during the New Deal years.

Roosevelt appointed Jesse Straus, president of R. H. Macy department stores, as chairman of the new agency and offered the job as executive director to New York City social worker Harry L. Hopkins, who took over the following August as chairman when Straus resigned. The TERA provided direct relief for approximately 160,000 New Yorkers in immediate need. Both Roosevelt and Hopkins were committed to jobs as a solution to the state's economic problems. The state legislature, prodded by Roosevelt, allocated an additional \$5 million for work relief programs. Hopkins concentrated on creating an efficient and effective work-relief program for unemployed industrial workers in New York, one that could set an example for other states. In directing TERA projects, Hopkins made sure that they were consonant with economic needs as well as prevailing cultural attitudes. He insisted on socially useful projects that would neither replace or duplicate normal municipal functions nor interfere with private industry. The wages would be paid in cash and be set at the prevailing rate for the type of work performed. Because of limited funds, Hopkins required a means test for applicants and limited jobs to one person per household.

As the Depression deepened, relief in New York State became increasingly inadequate, due largely to lack of state funds. While Hopkins always insisted that the states participate in relief programs by providing the lion's share of the funding, he also believed that relief administered at the federal level was essential. Soon after Roosevelt was inaugurated president in March 1933, Hopkins proposed that the TERA be replicated on a federal level and that a federal relief administrator be appointed to head the new agency. Federal responsibility for relief, Hopkins believed, would also convince the public that the unemployed were not at fault. Two months after Roosevelt's inauguration both houses of Congress passed the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) with an initial appropriation of \$500 million. Roosevelt, relying on his experience with the TERA, immediately signed the legislation that would for the first time provide federal aid in the form of grants to the states to help them meet their relief needs. The president offered the job to Hopkins who used his experience with the TERA to direct his work as FDR's federal relief administrator and as director of the FERA.

See Also: HOPKINS, HARRY.

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JUNE HOPKINS

TEMPORARY NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE (TNEC)

Congress established the Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC) in June 1938 to analyze the performance of the American economy. Created on the recommendation of President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of the policy re-evaluation provoked by the recession of 1937 and 1938 and the

persistence of the Great Depression, the TNEC initially was intended by the administration to focus on economic concentration and monopoly power. But the committee ultimately had a much wider scope and unexpectedly provided a more important forum for Keynesian fiscal policy than for anti-monopoly efforts. The TNEC conducted extensive hearings for more than two years, from December 1938 to March 1941, and published dozens of volumes of the testimony it received and the detailed economic studies it commissioned. Its final report and recommendations in 1941, coming in the much different atmosphere of defense mobilization and economic recovery, had little impact or influence.

The creation of the TNEC reflected long-term and short-term worries about business concentration and monopoly power as well as concern about the performance of the U.S. economy in the 1930s. A belief that excessive business concentration harmed the economy and gave big business too much political power was an important issue for many Progressive-era reformers, especially Louis Brandeis. With the Great Depression and the election of FDR, Brandeis and his followers argued for a renewal of anti-trust policy. Instead, the "First New Deal" of 1933 turned to the National Recovery Administration (NRA) and the suspension of anti-trust laws in an effort to achieve recovery by means of planning and controls worked out with business. But the NRA was unsuccessful and was declared unconstitutional in 1935. Anti-monopoly advocates inveighed against the NRA for permitting cartel-like arrangements that kept prices high and fixed production limits to the detriment of expansion and recovery.

Proponents of anti-trust policy had more influence in the mid-1930s, beginning with the "Second New Deal" of 1935. The Public Utilities Holding Company Act was designed to eliminate or reduce the sprawling conglomerates that dominated the electrical power industry. New Deal tax proposals, though watered down by Congress, had anti-trust dimensions, including the graduated corporate income tax in the 1935 Revenue Act and the undistributed profits tax in the 1936 Revenue Act. Legislation in 1936 and 1937 sought to protect small retailers from the economic power of chain stores.

Anti-trust policy did not, however, become central to New Deal efforts, even though some liberals continued to blame the ongoing economic troubles on the deleterious effects of economic concentration.

Then in the late summer and fall of 1937, the recession of 1937 and 1938 struck. Sending economic indexes down more sharply, though not more deeply, than at the onset of the Great Depression, the "Roosevelt Recession" set off a policy debate in the administration. Although there were proponents of balancing the federal budget and of moderating tax, regulatory, and other policies that upset businessmen, the principal debate involved spending and anti-trust factions. Led by Leon Henderson, the anti-monopoly position held that business concentration and monopoly behavior had constricted production and pegged prices too high; the result was diminished investment, production, employment, and income that had prolonged the Depression and triggered the 1937 and 1938 recession. Spending advocates, led by Marriner Eccles and Harry Hopkins, maintained that federal deficits had underwritten the moderate expansion between 1933 and 1936 and that when FDR had turned to more restrictive fiscal policy the economy had tumbled again. In their view, a return to spending could fire the economy.

But the anti-trust and spending approaches were not mutually exclusive. Indeed, Leon Henderson was a leading proponent of both positions. In April 1938, Roosevelt announced two new policy initiatives. In the middle of the month, he said that he would embark upon a renewed spending policy, especially on relief. Then on April 29, he sent Congress a message recommending a "thorough study of the concentration of economic power in American industry."

Anti-monopoly policy had important supporters in Congress, among progressive Republicans as well as among Democrats. On June 14, 1938, Congress passed legislation creating the Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC), and Roosevelt signed it on June 16. But where Roosevelt had anticipated that an administration committee would carry out the study, Congress stipulated that half of the committee would come from the execu-

tive branch, with the other half from Congress. Six members of the TNEC represented the administration, among them Thurman Arnold, who in 1938 also began his service as the activist new head of the Justice Department's Anti-Trust Division. From Congress, the TNEC included three senators, with Wyoming Democratic senator Joseph O'Mahoney serving as committee chairman, and three congressmen, with Texas representative Hatton Summers the committee vice-chairman. Two Republicans, one from the Senate and one from the House, were named to the committee. Leon Henderson served as executive secretary. Congress also gave the TNEC a broad charge going beyond studying economic concentration, to include "the effect of the existing tax, patent, and other government policies upon competition, price levels, unemployment, profits, and consumption."

The TNEC began its hearings in late 1938. The committee heard testimony from 552 witnesses, who provided a variety of information and recommendations. Some of the witnesses argued for stepping up anti-trust policy, in order to break up the monopolies that they thought kept the economy from expanding to full production and full employment. Others called for accepting economic concentration, on the grounds that it was inevitable and had its positive aspects, but said that more stringent and effective regulatory policy should be implemented in order to reduce the harmful impact of concentrated economic power.

The most noted and influential testimony came in the spring of 1939 when proponents of compensatory deficit spending, led by Harvard economist Alvin H. Hansen, came before the TNEC. By that time, Keynesian ideas as adapted and disseminated by Hansen and others, had become more widely accepted, and more economists and New Deal officials had become persuaded of the potential of compensatory fiscal policy. And the better performance of the economy following the 1938 spending decision seemed to corroborate the potential of a spending policy to stimulate the economy. The testimony on behalf of fiscal policy as the path toward recovery thus came at an especially opportune time—all the more as the economy continued to turn upward as defense spending increased in 1939 and 1940.

The TNEC worked on, hearing from more witnesses and conducting studies of the U.S. economy. Ultimately dozens of volumes of testimony and economic analysis were published, providing important information and insights. But increasingly the TNEC became peripheral. The economy was recovering, the advocates of Keynesian fiscal policy grew in numbers and influence, and anti-trust efforts seemed divisive and an impediment to economic mobilization as big business began to convert to war production. After expanding the Justice Department's anti-trust efforts, Thurman Arnold encountered increasing opposition by 1941.

When the TNEC issued its final reports and recommendations in 1941, they attracted little attention. Except for helping to focus attention on Keynesian fiscal policy, the hearings had changed few minds. Reflecting the wide-ranging nature of the testimony and investigation, the recommendations lacked consistency and often clarity and seemed irrelevant to the new priorities of defense mobilization. The hearings and reports did provide an extraordinary array of viewpoints and information, but ultimately that had nothing like the impact envisioned in the spring of 1938. And the economic recovery of the war years, produced by the spending that underwrote mobilization, confirmed the triumph of Keynesianism over anti-monopoly policy.

See Also: KEYNESIAN ECONOMICS; NATIONAL RECOVERY ADMINISTRATION (NRA); PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT.

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JOHN W. JEFFRIES

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA)

The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) arose as a World War I footnote. In 1916, as part of war preparedness, Congress authorized President Woodrow Wilson to build munitions-grade nitrate plants and a hydroelectric support facility on the Tennessee River at Muscle Shoals, Alabama. After the war the project sparked a furious national debate over public ownership of productive capacity. The Republican administrations of the 1920s were adamantly opposed to government-run power and nitrate production, now being used for fertilizer instead of explosives. However, two factors kept the project in the public domain: no entity made an acceptable offer to take the facilities private, and progressive legislators, led by the venerable Nebraska senator, George Norris, felt the project was an important symbol of government responsibility. For years, Norris and other members of Congress kept Muscle Shoals from being dismantled while the facilities continued producing fertilizers and electricity for the area surrounding the renamed Wilson Dam.

By the early 1930s the debate began to tilt in favor of public ownership, or at least strong public regulation. During the 1920s, private utilities poisoned their own wells by establishing distant holding companies that drained profits from local companies whose stock they owned. Moreover, the holding companies kept gas, electric, and telephone rates steady or increased them when millions could barely pay the pre-Depression rates. Meanwhile, progressive politicians, including governors Franklin D. Roosevelt in New York and Philip La Follette in Wisconsin, established powerful state utility regulatory commissions. In other areas, especially the northwestern United States and Canada, public power companies were proving that government could produce electricity as efficiently as private companies—and almost always more cheaply.

BEGINNINGS

The 1932 Democratic platform was silent on public ownership, but the party's candidate was not. In September, in Portland, Oregon, Roosevelt



The Hiawasse Dam in North Carolina, under construction by the TVA in the late 1930s. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

insisted that the government was justified in going into the power business when private utilities were inefficient or practiced exorbitant pricing. Furthermore, government utilities could provide a “yardstick,” a competitive price comparison, for the private utilities. In Montgomery, Alabama, right before inauguration, the president-elect suggested that Muscle Shoals could provide such a yardstick and serve as an instrument of planning and social development for the economically devastated region.

With little hesitation, Congress approved the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) on May 18, 1933. The act established an agency whose purpose was to build hydroelectric dams on the Tennessee River to achieve the unified development of industry, agriculture, flood control, and conservation throughout the entire watershed. As important, at least for President Roosevelt, was the production of low-cost electricity to act as a “yardstick” by which electricity rates could be judged throughout the nation. The president immediately deemed it “a corpora-

tion clothed with the power of government, but possessed of the flexibility and initiative of a private enterprise.” He set about appointing three men to the governing board, each with special talents related to TVA’s multiple mission. First, he asked Arthur E. Morgan, president of Antioch College in Ohio and an experienced dam builder, to assume the chair. At Morgan’s suggestion Roosevelt appointed Harcourt Morgan (no relation), president of the University of Tennessee and distinguished agriculturist, and David E. Lilienthal, utilities lawyer and charismatic leader of the Wisconsin Public Service Commission.

In spite of Roosevelt’s support and the caliber of his appointments, TVA immediately faced serious problems that threatened its existence. First, the directors had no clearly specified goals—the TVA Act was basically hortatory and thematic, calling for such vague objectives as planning, conservation, and natural resource development. And Roosevelt, typically, issued no clear directives. In late 1933, presidential advisor Rexford Tugwell told the



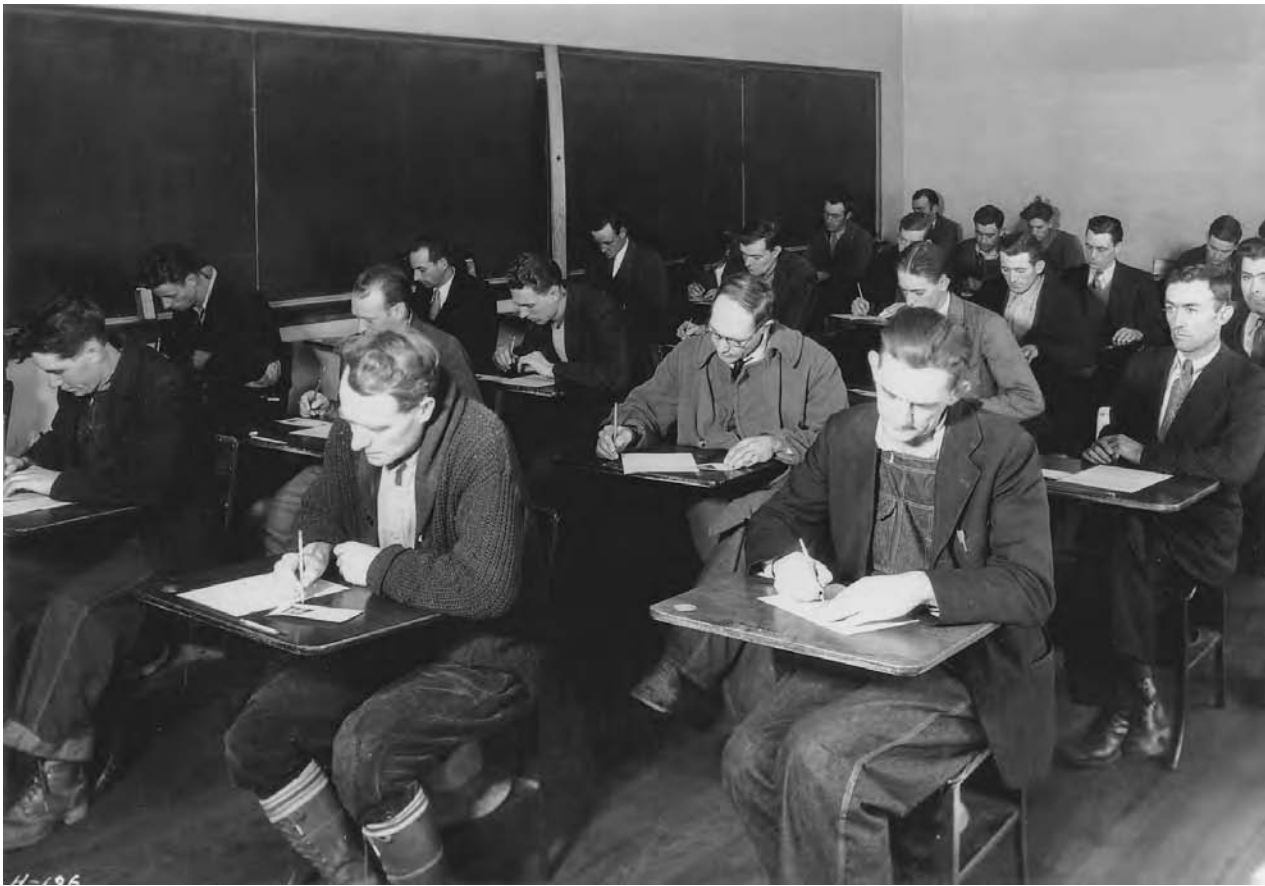
A young couple in Lauderdale county, Alabama, prepares dinner on an electric stove in 1942 after the TVA provided electricity to the area. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

three directors that he had no idea what the president wanted. Roosevelt told a delighted but puzzled Senator Norris that the TVA was “neither fish nor fowl, but, whatever it is, it will taste awfully good to the people of the Tennessee Valley.” Second, the act was silent on administrative structure except for a three-person board with a chair nominated by the president. The act said nothing about the chair’s powers, which meant that all three directors had equal authority. In other circumstances, a multiple executive might have been feasible. This board, however, had three directors of strong character and very different visions. The third challenge was the hostility of the private utilities. Days after the directors settled in, the powerful Commonwealth & Southern (C&S) holding company, with extensive interests in Tennessee, Georgia, Missis-

sippi, and Alabama, began an assault on TVA’s then modest power program.

INITIAL STRUGGLES AND TRAVAILS

Wendell Willkie, the energetic president of C&S, suggested that TVA should limit its power program to selling its production to private companies at the source (initially, and until 1936 only at Wilson Dam). Chairman Morgan thought this a reasonable compromise—the utilities would continue to transmit, market their product, and make their profits. Meanwhile, TVA could peacefully proceed with its other programs. Lilienthal saw it very differently, and thus began an acrimonious feud between the two directors until Roosevelt fired Morgan in March 1938.



Unemployed laborers hoping to become TVA employees take the TVA examination at a high school in Clinton, Tennessee, in 1933. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Fresh from three bruising years on the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, Lilienthal was in no mood to compromise with the utilities. In the first place, selling power at the source would deny TVA the ability to provide a “yardstick” that could force private utilities to lower their prices in the face of lower TVA rates. And much like Roosevelt, Lilienthal felt that each community should be free to choose its own power provider. For six years, the battle raged. Three federal suits challenged TVA’s constitutional right to produce and distribute electricity. At points, lower courts enjoined TVA from building facilities and distributing power. In each case, however, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that TVA had a right not only to produce power but also to distribute and market it. In August 1939, in the face of the last Supreme Court decision and over-

whelming demand for TVA power, the weary Willkie sold all C&S valley holdings to TVA.

The Morgan-Lilienthal feud was fueled by more than power policies, however. Arthur Morgan was a rigid crusader who disdained political intrigue. He was also a bona fide utopian who believed that TVA could make the Tennessee Valley into a new Jerusalem, a model of social and moral betterment. In his zealotry, he alienated powerful political figures, including the third board member, Harcourt Morgan. Lilienthal, on the other hand, was a consummate pragmatist. For him public power was the key to success, as was the careful accommodation of valley interests. To that end Harcourt Morgan and Lilienthal decided that all TVA agriculture programs—test demonstration farms, erosion control, fertilizer development and distri-



Laborers weed seedlings at a TVA tree nursery near Alabama's Muscle Shoals region in 1942. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

bution—should cooperate with the region's land grant colleges and that Harcourt Morgan should control these programs. Thus, Lilienthal and Harcourt Morgan formed an unshakable alliance; for five years Chairman Morgan was constantly frustrated by two-to-one votes against him. The feud ultimately took a fierce psychological toll: both Arthur Morgan and Lilienthal suffered crushing periods of depression and paranoia. The impact on Morgan was more severe, however, and by 1938, his irrational behavior forced the president to remove him from the board.

THE TVA IDEA—REALITY AND MYTH

It was obvious that TVA was a unique creation, harnessing human and natural resources in search

of unified social and economic development. The brilliant rhetoric of Roosevelt, Norris, and especially Lilienthal, only enhanced its aura. As Norman Wengert observed, "TVA differs considerably from most federal agencies in that an explicit body of doctrine—ideology if you will—has developed around its purpose." Historically, this ideology has embraced five principles: unified development, decentralized administration, citizen participation in TVA decisions, social responsibility, and policy making free of political considerations. To be sure, as in all ideologies, reality and rhetoric are part and parcel of each of these tenets.

With its innovative dams combining flood control, navigation, and power production, TVA exemplified unified and coordinated development. Also,

dam building and agricultural reform were integrally related: Without containing endemic soil erosion, the reservoirs would silt up and become useless for any purpose. The idea of freeing TVA from Washington political intrigue, allowing authorities in the Tennessee Valley to make fundamental policy, was the heart of decentralized administration. Historically, TVA boards have been highly sensitive to regional concerns. TVA has always affirmed the mantra of citizen participation. Typically, participation has manifested itself in programs like the early demonstration test farm experiments, whereby farmers passed on progressive farming practices to each other. Other examples include citizen involvement in home energy conservation projects or in the development of local utility boards. Rarely, however, has participation manifested itself literally, with citizens actually deciding important policy decisions.

No doubt, the notion of social responsibility has been more than rhetorical. In the 1930s, TVA was staffed by thousands of men and women who believed they could make a profound difference in the midst of the Depression. In a region where labor unions were rare, the first board insisted that the blue-collar work force organize into an independent union. In addition, TVA is well known for its job training, education, and community and economic development efforts. Finally, political neutrality has been a strong tradition. TVA's peerless merit system more than once crossed swords with local politicians who were accustomed to patronage systems of public employment. Moreover, there is nary an instance where dams or other facilities were built because of political pressures.

On the other hand, these principles mask other aspects of TVA reality. Lilienthal's success in expanding the power program and the insatiable demand for power during World War II resulted in a significant erosion of the rest of TVA's programs and the goal of multiple purpose development. One critic noted that after the war, TVA became nothing more than the largest public utility in the country. Moreover, the authority's later massive expansion into nuclear power and the construction of environmentally questionable coal plants and dams was disastrous. These power decisions nearly bankrupted

TVA and led to widespread accusations of pollution and environmental abuses.

There was also many a slip twixt cup and lip in the commitment to decentralized administration and citizen participation, the grassroots administration and democracy articulated by Lilienthal in his rhetorical masterpiece, *TVA: Democracy on the March* (1944). Without a doubt, TVA enjoyed an independence unmatched by other agencies; its merit and auditing systems, for example, were autonomous from Washington, as were the labor relations programs. Nevertheless, it was still bound to congressional purse strings, and often obligated to play partisan political games. Furthermore, there is no intrinsic virtue in decentralized authority—one only has to look at what decentralized authority meant for African-American citizens in the South before the 1960s. Likewise, grassroots participation never meant that valley citizens actually shaped public policy. Indeed, TVA's comprehensive power and flood control system belied meaningful citizen participation. Dams had to be built according to system requirements regardless of the feelings of individual communities along the river. Likewise, thousands of valley citizens had little chance to participate in decisions that resulted in the flooding of their rich river bottom farms and their relocation to less desirable sites. In the 1970s the decision to build the Tellico Dam on the Little Tennessee River drew enormous public opposition, but to no avail.

TVA's reputation for social responsibility has also been suspect. The early policy of hiring black workers in proportion to their numbers in the population was overshadowed by the fact that only one African American was appointed to a managerial-technical position in the 1930s. Likewise, the agriculture programs favored medium and large farmers and ignored small or tenant farmers and black agriculturists. Finally, by the 1970s TVA had a well-deserved reputation for environmental arrogance as it threatened endangered species and created serious air pollution. It is ironic that these lapses are functions of TVA's peculiar conceptualization of political neutrality as the avoidance of partisan influence in the form of, for example, patronage hiring or dam building because of political pressure. What TVA has failed to acknowledge is that acced-

ing to the racial biases of the valley or serving only the more powerful elements of the agricultural community were just as political as bending to party influences. So, too, was proceeding with projects justified by intra-authority rationale but bereft of public approval.

ASSESSMENT

TVA's history has been marred by questionable and wrongheaded policies and programs of the sort discussed above. Too often, the rhetoric of the TVA idea masked the reality of actions taken by the authority in spite of constituent interests. Furthermore, William Chandler in *The Myth of TVA* (1983) makes a strong case that TVA's economic impact has been less than the rhetoric suggests. Certainly TVA was very different in later decades from what was envisioned in 1933; the multipurpose vision had given way to a clear central focus on power.

Nevertheless, on the whole TVA has had a positive impact in American life. It was an important symbol of constructive government action and of the idea that the public weal should vigorously challenge a negligent private will. TVA quickly provided universal electrification to the least electrified region of the country. It sold electricity as cheaply as anywhere in the United States and provided an effective "yardstick" for utilities across the nation. Taming the Tennessee River stopped the devastating floods that hindered economic development and provided the means for eliminating the scourge of malaria in the valley. Also, the dams, and later the coal-fired plants, were significant in enabling the development of one of the largest aluminum production facilities in the world in Alcoa, Tennessee, and for providing crucial power needs both during and after World War II for the atomic energy industry in and around Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Finally, TVA reservoirs stimulated the development of a strong recreational industry throughout the region.

TVA's other great legacy was the example it set for others. True, no other showcase authorities arose in the United States. Lilienthal argued for a Columbia River Authority, but the Department of the Interior controlled most of the power production in the Northwest and resisted the establish-

ment of a new agency. Other efforts to establish authorities in the Arkansas and Missouri river basins were thwarted by President Roosevelt's waning support because of war concerns, private utility resistance, and fear in the states that independent authorities would reduce state power. Nevertheless, TVA provided other inspirations. TVA's success in rural electrification was a model for the Rural Electrification Administration, which had a national mandate. In addition, the TVA model was important in the development of smaller authorities, such as the Lower Colorado River Authority, which provides power, flood control, and agricultural support for hundreds of thousands of people in central Texas.

Perhaps as important, TVA has been a worldwide inspiration. In *TVA: Democracy on the March*, Lilienthal quotes the late U.S. Supreme Court justice, William O. Douglas, who reported after travels abroad, "Everywhere I went, people asked, 'Why can't we have a TVA?'" For more than seventy years, thousands of foreign visitors have come to the Tennessee Valley to learn about river development. And over the years, TVA has inspired unified river development in several nations including the Cauca River Valley in Columbia, the Papaloapan Basin in Mexico, the Khuzistan region in Iran, and the Damodar Valley in India.

For all the controversy and for all the times TVA's policies seemed to run counter to its high flown principles, it has remained a great example of public service for the Tennessee Valley, the nation, and the world. George Will perhaps expressed it best in *Newsweek* (April 25, 1988) where he talked about the value of public works: "The Tennessee Valley Authority and the Interstate Highway System were not just good in themselves. They were good for the morale of government, which periodically needs some inspiring successes."

See Also: NORRIS, GEORGE; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE.

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STEVEN M. NEUSE

TERA. See TEMPORARY EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION, NEW YORK.

THOMAS, NORMAN

Socialist Party leader Norman Mattoon Thomas (November 20, 1884–December 19, 1968) was born

in Marion, Ohio, to a family of Presbyterian ministers. Thomas was educated at Princeton University in New Jersey and Union Theological Seminary in New York. An adherent to Social Gospel theology, Thomas worked in a settlement house in New York City and in 1911 he received a pastorate in East Harlem. World War I turned Thomas into a pacifist. In 1918, endorsing the political left's opposition to business profiteering and government repression, Thomas resigned his church and joined the Socialist Party, quickly becoming one of its leading spokesmen. Thomas emerged as the heir to Eugene V. Debs's "American" brand of socialism, somewhat distant from its European immigrant roots, espousing gradual democratic change and rejecting the absolutist and revolutionary dogma of the American Communist Party and others.

In the 1920s Thomas produced numerous books, articles, and speeches attacking that decade's alliance of business and government and recommending central economic planning and the nationalization of industries and utilities. He ran for the mayoralty of New York and for other offices, and in 1926 he succeeded Debs as leader of the U.S. Socialist Party. In 1928 he mounted the first of six consecutive campaigns as the party's candidate for the presidency.

As the Great Depression began, Thomas advocated national, state, and municipal reform. Condemning the limited relief efforts of Herbert Hoover and New York Governor Franklin Roosevelt, he called for labor legislation, complete rights for unions, full social security, and government-sponsored worker retraining. Thomas's City Affairs Committee attacked Tammany Hall, whose mismanagement of New York City had created financial near-ruin and ineffective relief programs. Although his articulate criticism helped to topple Tammany mayor Jimmy Walker, Thomas gained few political advantages. In 1932 he won only 884,781 votes for president, finishing a distant third behind Roosevelt and Hoover. This, however, was also by far his best nationwide showing; in 1944 he would receive less than one-tenth as much support.

This statistic underscores the drastic decline of socialism under Thomas's leadership, paradoxically occurring during capitalism's darkest years. A diffi-

dent political manager, he allowed his party to dissolve into bitterly opposed factions and to lose much support in New York to the antiradical new American Labor Party. Thomas's cerebral style won little mass support for his cause, although he vigorously supported labor organizing and even suffered a beating in Arkansas while helping to organize the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. He criticized the New Deal but grudgingly admired its "socialistic" aspects. Thomas deplored Roosevelt's political opportunism but could not counter his popular rhetoric (or that of more demagogic New Deal critics such as Huey Long).

The Socialist Party dwindled even further in the late 1930s when Thomas, still a pacifist, passionately opposed U.S. war preparedness measures. Labeled an isolationist, Thomas and his party became further relegated to the political fringe. Throughout the 1930s—and for decades beyond—Norman Thomas was the genteel, articulate tribune of the doomed cause of American socialism, at a time when ideological passions overtook the political left and Roosevelt's centrism proved far more decisive.

See Also: SOCIALIST PARTY.

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BURTON W. PERETTI

THOMAS AMENDMENT

The Thomas Amendment, named for its sponsor, Oklahoma Democrat Elmer Thomas, was signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on May 12, 1933, and included as a compromise amendment to the Farm Bill of 1933 (the Agricultural Adjustment Act). The amendment joined monetary inflation to complement the less familiar policy of crop reduction under the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

The omnibus amendment included all of the principal features of other inflation proposals was the brainchild of Senator Thomas, leader of the inflationary bloc in Congress. By exploiting monetary inflation, long touted as a economic remedy since the days of nineteenth-century Populism, Thomas could mobilize a clear majority by bringing inflationists (politicians who zealously sought to stimulate an economic boom by devaluing the dollar) into a powerful coalition with natural allies in the farm belt and political allies in the mining industry (namely, silver) of the West. The silver bloc would use their leverage as an "entering wedge," a tactic that eventually led to the Silver Purchase Act of 1934.

In its final form the Thomas Amendment (also called the Inflation Act) gave the president unprecedented discretionary power over monetary policy. It permitted the president to authorize the Federal Reserve to unleash the full power of capitalism on the Treasury by placing U.S. securities on the open market and allowing Federal Reserve banks to hold up to \$3 billion in U.S. Treasury bills and other government bonds acquired directly from the Treasury. The president could even authorize the secretary of the Treasury to put up to \$3 billion into circulation to retire government bonds. Roosevelt never used his power to increase the amount of money in circulation, nor did he ever exploit the power to sell government securities directly to Federal Reserve banks. One provision allowed the president to alter the gold value of the dollar by not more than 50 percent, thereby decreasing debt by devaluing the dollar. Roosevelt eventually used this measure to fix the value of gold at \$35—\$15 below the value permitted by the legislation. Other provisions empowered the president to remonetize silver, to reestablish bimetallism (the practice of using gold and silver jointly as a monetary standard), and to accept a maximum of \$200 million in silver from foreign governments in payment of debts.

There has been considerable debate whether Thomas's original construction included mandatory inflationary measures that were "thoroughly amended" to permissive inflationary measures by the White House. As one specialist has shown, neither Thomas's version nor the White House version

contained any language calling for mandatory inflation. It was, however, mandatory for the president to accept the inflation rider or risk congressional passage of radical monetary policy that sidestepped White House involvement altogether. The president had no choice but to surrender to pressure politics. Responding to the mounting inflationary trend, he persuaded Thomas to introduce a version of the bill in which the legislative body delegated authority over monetary policy to the executive branch, giving Roosevelt the "broad executive power," for which he had asked Congress, in his inaugural address, to combat the national crisis.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT;
MONETARY POLICY.

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GREGORY BAGGETT

THOMPSON, DOROTHY

Dorothy Thompson (July 9, 1893–January 30, 1961) was one of the most influential female journalists of her time. Her work reached wide audiences through radio broadcasts, her column "For the Re-

cord" in the *New York Herald Tribune*, which appeared for twenty-one straight years, and her work as a bureau chief in Berlin for the *Philadelphia Public Ledger*.

After her graduation from Syracuse University in 1914, Thompson was unable to find a job in journalism. She turned her energies to the Women's State Suffrage Party in New York, conducting public relations work. In 1919, she traveled to Europe, and through her interviews of prominent Zionist leaders secured a reporter's position with the Jewish Correspondence Bureau. This began her lifelong commitment to writing stories relevant to social justice issues and her striking track record of interviewing some of the most newsworthy people of the 1920s and 1930s, including Sigmund Freud, Gustav Stresemann, Leon Trotsky, Mustafa Kemal, and Adolf Hitler.

In 1931, when Thompson was the Philadelphia Public Ledger's bureau chief in Berlin, she interviewed Hitler. She became an outspoken critic of Hitler and his policies, and in 1934, following the publication of her book, *I Saw Hitler!*, the Gestapo gave her twenty-four hours to leave Germany. Her expulsion brought her to American public attention, and she used this fame to continue to critique and warn about Hitler's regime. In 1938, she organized a nationwide campaign to raise awareness and funds for the defense of Herschel Grynszpan, the Polish youth whose assassination of a German diplomat played a role in a massive pogrom in Germany known as Kristallnacht.

Throughout the Third Reich (1933–1945), Thompson remained a vocal critic of Germany's government and consistently called attention to the problems faced by Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi persecution. In 1939, *Time* magazine named her and Eleanor Roosevelt as America's most influential women. Thompson was the inspiration for Katherine Hepburn's character, Tess Harding, in the 1942 film *Woman of the Year*.

See Also: ANTI-SEMITISM; KRISTALLNACHT.

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Laura J. Hilton

TNEC. See TEMPORARY NATIONAL ECONOMIC COMMITTEE.

TOWNSEND, FRANCIS. See TOWNSEND PLAN.

TOWNSEND PLAN

The Townsend Plan was a scheme of old-age pensions devised by Dr. Francis E. Townsend in an effort to alleviate the desperate economic circumstances of the elderly in America and to stimulate a general economic recovery during the Great Depression. The Townsend Plan was one of many utopian social panaceas that emerged during the early 1930s, and it played a major role in third party politics during the election of 1936. Although the plan never had a serious chance of being written into law, it did focus people's attention on the pension problem facing the nation and helped generate momentum for the passage of the Roosevelt administration's Social Security Act of 1935.

Townsend frequently recounted the story of how one evening late in 1933 as he was looking out the rear window of his home in Long Beach, California, he saw three old women picking through garbage for food. That incident compelled the 66-year-old doctor to devote the remaining years of his life to working for adequate pensions for the aged. Apocryphal or not, the story embodied the profound concern Townsend harbored for the elderly, with whom he had been working as assistant director of the city health office, where he observed the distress inflicted on old people by the economic crisis. Only twenty-eight states had any kind of pension plan in operation by the early 1930s, and all of them were woefully inadequate. Three had already gone bankrupt, and the others ranged from Montana's monthly allowance of \$7.28 to Maryland's

payment of less than \$30. Approximately 7.5 million Americans (6 percent of the population) were sixty-five or older, many of them destitute and on government relief.

Francis Townsend was born on January 13, 1867, and grew up in a family of seven on a farm near Fairbury, Illinois. His parents, George and Sarah Ann Townsend, were poor but deeply religious. Seeking more fertile soil to farm, they moved to Nebraska, where Francis completed his secondary schooling. After a brief, unsuccessful effort to take advantage of the southern California land boom, he attempted homesteading in Kansas, worked as an itinerant laborer in Colorado, and tried his luck as a salesman back in Kansas. In 1899, he enrolled in Omaha Medical College, graduating four years later and starting a medical practice in the Black Hills of South Dakota. When the United States entered World War I, Townsend, at the age of fifty, joined the Army medical corps. An attack of acute peritonitis after the war led him to move his family in 1919 to Long Beach in search of more healthful conditions. For the next fourteen years his practice languished, and with the onset of the Depression, most of his savings disappeared. The plight of the elderly that became his crusade was thus one with which he could deeply identify on a personal level.

After losing his political post in the Long Beach health service, Townsend conceived a plan that would provide adequate pensions for elderly people like himself. It called for a \$150 monthly benefit (later raised to \$200) paid by the federal government to every citizen over the age of sixty. The money to pay for the plan would be raised by a 2 percent tax on all wholesale and retail transactions. In order to receive the pension, people over sixty who held jobs would be required to quit them to open up opportunities for the unemployed. Townsend decided that recipients would also have to spend their stipends within thirty days as a means of stimulating the economy. Thus, he spoke about the velocity of money as it circulated from hand to hand and began emphasizing the revolving aspect of the plan.

After proposing his idea in the People's Forum column of the local Long Beach newspaper in Sep-



A driver in Columbus, Kansas, expresses support for the Townsend Plan prior to the 1936 election. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

tember 1933 and advertising for canvassers to obtain endorsements, the doctor was inundated with volunteers. Robert Earl Clements, a young real estate broker, signed on as promoter and fund-raiser, and on New Year's Day 1934 the two opened the first headquarters for their new Old Age Revolving Pensions, Ltd. In short order, the Townsend movement emerged as a political force to be reckoned with. By September, their office in Long Beach was averaging two thousand letters a day from interested people, and within a year more than a thousand

Townsend clubs were functioning. By 1936, a presidential election year, the organization claimed to have more than three and a half million members, and it obtained more than twenty million signatures on petitions calling for congressional approval of the Townsend Plan. Clements proved to be a genius at organization, utilizing everything from card parties and quilting bees to box suppers and raffles to draw people out to meetings. Revenues from Townsend license plates, tire covers, buttons, badges, banners, and other novelties stoked the or-

ganization's national treasury. A weekly newspaper kept members up to date with news of the organization's activities. The movement was more than a lobbying group; it was a social movement that welded its membership into a unit much like a church or a political ideology.

Americans, who during the previous half century had experienced the transition from a rural-agrarian economy to an urban-industrial one, found comfort in the Townsend movement's insistence that they deserved appreciation and financial reward for the contribution they had made to the national welfare. Townsend appealed to the hurt pride of people who felt they had been cast aside by a system that did not value the sacrifice and hard work they had exhibited over a lifetime of labor. His program, while expensive and radical in its reliance upon governmental expenditures to solve a social problem, was not anticapitalist but rather fundamentally conservative in its approach. Club meetings featured patriotic songs, flag saluting, religious trappings, and traditional symbols. The leader of the movement was a gaunt, white-haired, soft-spoken man in his sixties whose appearance and demeanor oozed traditional values and ways of living. Most of the people who joined the movement were old stock Americans. It was especially strong among Protestants of British origin, and middle-class people dominated its ranks. Few wealthy businessmen joined, nor were there many professional men or unskilled factory workers. At the outset, the organization was especially strong in California and the West, many of whose residents were displaced Midwesterners. Later, the movement gained strength in the Northwest and the Midwest.

The Roosevelt administration was quick to take note of the movement's growth, and work on a Social Security bill in 1934 and 1935 accelerated as a result. Final passage of the act in August of 1935 did nothing to slow the Townsend movement, however, since its followers considered the pensions contemplated under the new law to be totally inadequate. Conversely, academic economists who scrutinized the Townsend Plan's details judged its assumptions to be fatally flawed and warned that its implementation would have disastrous effects on the economy. Calculating that the plan would

cost one and a half times all local, state, and federal governmental expenditures in 1932, economists deemed it a cruel economic joke on the populace. Paul Douglas estimated that obtaining the necessary revenues to finance the plan would require as much as a 75 percent increase in retail prices and that workers' real income might be cut by as much as half. Administration officials, including relief director Harry Hopkins and Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, turned their guns on weaknesses in both the pension and tax provisions of the plan. Oklahoma Representative Phillip Ferguson called it a racket, and Senator Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee termed it a wild-eyed scheme for looting the federal treasury. In response, Dr. Townsend turned against the New Deal, likening some of its actions to Mussolini's fascism. In hearings before a House subcommittee chaired by Missouri Democrat C. Jasper Bell in the spring of 1936, Townsend was made to look foolish and walked out of the proceedings before they finished.

The stage was set for a move into third party politics by the summer, and Townsend joined with Father Charles E. Coughlin, the Detroit radio priest, in the establishment of the Union Party in June 1936. Although participating at the national convention forming the party in Cleveland and in the campaign of the party's presidential nominee, Congressman William Lemke of North Dakota, Townsend remained lukewarm toward the enterprise, even calling on followers to vote for Republican candidate Alf Landon in the fourteen states where the Union Party failed to get its name on the ballot.

After the dismal showing of the Lemke candidacy in November 1936, and the dismantling of the Union Party afterwards, Townsend continued to push for more adequate pensions for the elderly. In the 1938 off-year elections, he rallied his followers against the New Deal, calling it a snare and a delusion. Two years later he worked for Republican presidential nominee Wendell Willkie. In 1948, Townsend backed the quixotic candidacy of former Vice President Henry Wallace. Townsend continued to demand more adequate old-age pensions until his death in Los Angeles on September 1, 1960.

See Also: ELDERLY, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON THE; ELECTION OF 1936; SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; UNION PARTY.

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JOHN E. MILLER

TRANSIENTS

Americans became accustomed to seeing transients during the Depression. They were cut from different molds—some young, some old, many male, some female, some with families, many without, some African American, many white from varied ethnic backgrounds. Transients were the unemployed who knocked at backdoors and asked for handouts in return for doing odd jobs, the teenagers who jumped on boxcars and rode the rails, the hollow-faced families who tried to exchange beloved dogs or cats for gasoline so they could keep on going in worn-out cars held together by baling wire. All were hoping for better lives elsewhere.

With an estimated ten million individuals jobless in 1932, it is not surprising that hundreds of thousands moved from place to place in search of work or simply struck out on their own to keep from being extra burdens on already overburdened families. Adolescents sought adventure as they hopped freight trains to get away from home, but they soon confronted the realities of begging for their next meals and being run out of towns by local officials. Although the kindhearted sometimes helped them on their way with coffee and sandwiches, transients typically received little welcome even in communities that operated public or private shelters for the homeless. In many areas law enforcement officials claimed transients violated local laws against vagrancy and refused to let them stay within city limits.



This transient twenty-year-old man, photographed on a freight car between Bakersfield and Fresno, California, in 1940, claimed to have been riding the rails for two years. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

Some transients ended up in “jungles,” camps populated by the destitute on the fringes of incorporated areas. There the unemployed came in contact with hobos, tramps, and derelicts who had lived for years on the fringes of society. Hobos were long-term wanderers willing to work in exchange for food and shelter, while tramps simply sought handouts, and derelicts were alcoholics unfit to work even if they wanted to. Unlike the hobos, who preferred temporary labor and life on the road, transients wanted to settle down, but Depression conditions conspired to blur the distinctions between them and social outcasts who lived marginal existences.

Communities hard-pressed to take care of their own residents had no enthusiasm for newcomers. Indeed, the very word *transient* came to have an un-



This transient laborer was photographed in 1939 in a camp near Harlingen, Texas, where he lived with two other men. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

favorable connotation synonymous with *undesirable*. Animosity against transients came to a head in California, a magnet for the Okies, farmers unable to scratch livings from the drought-stricken southwestern Plains states. In 1936 the police chief of Los Angeles ordered 125 policemen to patrol the state's borders with Arizona and Oregon to deter transients from entering. Previously, in an effort to hold down welfare costs, the city had deported trainloads of Mexican-Americans, totaling nearly thirteen thousand, to Mexico (although many later returned).

In the case of the Okies, the Los Angeles police chief's efforts, which led to a suit by the American Civil Liberties Union in defense of migration, proved futile. By 1938 some 300,000 families, mainly from Oklahoma and neighboring Dust Bowl states, had entered California in three years in spite

of resentment from native residents. Many of the transients, although they dreamed of acquiring their own farmlands, become part of California's force of migrant workers, following the crops to eke out a seasonal living on a few dollars a day.

EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM

The relatively new profession of social work, which attempted to ameliorate the plight of the transients and other Depression victims, produced one of the first credible estimates of the number of transients. The National Committee on Care of Transient and Homeless (NCCTH), a private group composed of social workers, sociologists, and citizens, surveyed persons in shelters in January 1933 and counted 370,000. Since many other individuals were sleeping in alleyways and other places, the total number of homeless was estimated to be



By January 1934 a total of forty states and the District of Columbia had established a network of camps, centers, and rooming houses to take care of transients. These men dined in a transient camp, formerly a lumber camp, at Hagerman Lake, Michigan, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

1,225,000, of whom about half were thought to be transients.

NCCTH pushed hard for federal help for transients, which Congress authorized in 1933 as part of a relief fund of \$500,000,000 to be given out by the newly created Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). States, which were required to allocate matching funds, acted quickly to submit plans for transient relief to FERA. By January 1934 a total of forty states and the District of Columbia had established a network of camps, centers, and rooming houses to take care of transients, many of whom received a cash benefit of one dollar per

week. Free medical care also was provided, in part because some transients were carriers of tuberculosis and other diseases.

Federal transient relief was phased out in 1935 when the New Deal changed its approach from direct assistance to work relief. At its peak the price tag for the transient program, which aided some 300,000 persons, was \$5,000,000 per month. In subsequent years transients tended to be a neglected group in terms of government aid. Some federally-funded camps for migrant workers, however, were set up.

At the instigation of Representative John H. Tolan of California, in 1940 the U.S. House Select Committee to Investigate the Interstate Migration of Destitute Citizens held a series of lengthy hearings around the country. Bertha McCall, executive director of Travelers Aid, which had absorbed the NCCTH, testified to the lack of accurate statistics on the number of actual transients, which was due in part to the difficulty of distinguishing them from hobos and bums. McCall gave a figure of about 400,000 transients known to her organization.

Many of the five hundred witnesses who came before the committee, whose hearings generated 4,245 pages of printed testimony, pleaded for federal help for transients. Yet they also argued that transients should not be set apart from the rest of the population, contending that general relief should be available throughout the nation for all needy persons, whether settled or not. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt appeared as a witness, reporting on deplorable living conditions that she had seen while visiting migrant camps in California, Texas, and Florida. She said society benefited from some movement by persons seeking employment, but that steps should be taken so that people could live decently.

Before the committee had finished its work, the approach of World War II changed the picture. Defense plants opened their doors, drawing in the unemployed. Congress extended the term of the committee but changed its name to the House Committee Investigating National Defense Migration. A new set of issues confronted those traveling to seek employment, but the days of countless numbers of unemployed transients were over. They left in their wake many touching stories of individuals who managed to survive painful circumstances.

TEENAGE TRANSIENTS

Sociologist Thomas Minehan, who spent two years on the road studying rootless juveniles in the early 1930s, estimated that 10 percent of the adolescents he encountered were girls, usually dressed in male clothing and often traveling with a group of boys. Frequently, the women exchanged sexual favors for food, protection, and transportation in railroad boxcars. Riding the rails offered a dangerous

form of adventure, with transients facing the possibility of being injured or killed in accidents while trying to elude railroad police looking for trespassers.

Lack of sanitation coupled with exposure and a poor diet led to weakness and disease for transients, regardless of their mode of transportation. Women and African Americans faced extra perils. Their sex and their race made them particularly vulnerable to harassment.

When another sociologist, Herman Schubert, surveyed transients in 1935 in New York state, he found African Americans from fifteen to twenty-four years old likely to be on the road longer than whites. In interviews with nearly three thousand youths, about one-fourth of whom were African American, he discovered that the median time for the whites to have traveled was three months, while the comparable figure for the African Americans was six months. The difference reflected prejudice that made it more difficult for African Americans than for whites to either settle down or return to their homes.

For some, however, riding the rails and other manifestations of the transient life remained lifelong memories of bittersweet excitement. Among the juvenile transients of the 1930s was Eric Sevareid, later to become a noted broadcast journalist. As quoted in T. H. Watkins's *The Hungry Years* (1999), Sevareid remembered with some fondness years later how he had joined a polyglot substratum of all races. He described Americans of varied ages who roamed restlessly, eating out of cans, sleeping in "jungles," eager to leave one place for another, content only to be on the move, lulled to momentary comfort by the clicking of the rails and the sight of telephone poles going by.

In spite of its hardships, life as a transient served as a way of growing up for a generation of American youth, who had little option except to become part of a vast army of the homeless. Forced to shift for themselves, they developed strategies of coping that testified to spiritual resiliency in the midst of desperation. Another transient adolescent told Minehan that he was eating better than he had been at home and was free of friction with his father who was out of work. The transient's life, hard as

it was, offered one way of living through the Depression.

See Also: BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA; HOMELESSNESS; MIGRATION; MIGRATORY WORKERS.

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MAURINE H. BEASLEY

TRANSPORTATION

A comprehensive transportation system is necessary to any developed country because it allows for the efficient movement of people and goods from one location to another. A nation's economic strength and military power are directly related to the efficiency of the nation's transportation system because it promotes domestic and international trade and provides access to valuable natural resources. Thus, when the United States slumped economically because of the Great Depression, the construction and improvement of its transportation systems were important for the country's eventual recovery. The spending and work relief programs initiated by the New Deal to help alleviate the Depression had among their targeted benefits a significant improvement in the nation's transportation system.

From 1933 to 1939, the Public Works Administration (PWA), administered by Harold Ickes, provided the money and supervision for federal agencies and local governments to construct roads, dams, airports, bridges, subways, tunnels, and harbors. The PWA also lent money to states and municipalities for similar projects. About one-third of all PWA funds were allotted for transportation projects, with the greatest amount—over \$750 million—going for highways and roads. For example, the PWA lent \$80 million to the Pennsylvania Railroad so it could electrify its New York to Washington route. The state of Oregon used PWA funds to build the Oregon Coastal Highway. Some of the PWA's other major projects included the Lincoln Tunnel under the Hudson River, the Skyline Drive in Virginia, and the Overseas Highway from Miami to Key West in Florida. In addition, the PWA helped to install streetlights, traffic signals, and other transportation-related equipment throughout the country.

From 1935 to 1943 the Works Progress Administration (in 1939 it was renamed the Work Projects Administration, WPA), headed by Harry Hopkins, was one of the primary New Deal programs that addressed the nation's transportation needs. According to writer Edward Robb Ellis, quoted in T. H. Watkins's *The Great Depression*, the WPA, "built

651,087 miles of highways, roads and streets; constructed, repaired or improved 124,031 bridges; erected 125,110 public buildings; created 8,192 parks; built or improved 853 airports." Some of its more notable projects were New York City's LaGuardia Airport and Chicago's Lake Shore Drive.

Transportation projects during the Great Depression provided much-needed jobs for unemployed workers across the country. In the process, New Deal construction made major contributions toward significantly improving the nation's infrastructure for a modern system of transportation. The roads, bridges, airports, and other transportation-related facilities that were built by the PWA, the WPA, and other New Deal agencies during the Depression helped prepare the country for World War II and for its role as the world's leading industrialized nation.

See Also: PUBLIC WORKS ADMINISTRATION (PWA); WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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WILLIAM ARTHUR ATKINS

TUGWELL, REXFORD G.

Rexford Guy Tugwell (July 10, 1891–July 21, 1979) was a professional economist who joined Franklin D. Roosevelt's Brains Trust in 1932. Tugwell re-

mained with the New Deal in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as assistant and undersecretary, and as director of the Resettlement Administration. He left the administration in 1936 to become vice president of the American Molasses Company. Thereafter, Tugwell served as chairman of the New York City Planning Commission (1938–1941) and governor of Puerto Rico (1941–1946). He returned to academe in 1947, finishing his career at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, California.

The son of Charles Tugwell, a successful businessman and banker, and Dessie Rexford, Tugwell was born in Sinclairville, New York, and grew up in Wilson, New York. He received his bachelor's degree in economics in 1915, his master's degree in 1916, and his Ph.D. in 1922 at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1914 Tugwell married Florence Arnold and they had two girls. Later, in the 1930s, he married Grace Falke, with whom he had two sons. Although he tried farming, Tugwell was too much of an academic to stay in that occupation. In the 1920s, he taught at Columbia University, where he quickly ascended the academic ladder as a professor of economics. In 1928 Tugwell made his first foray into politics when he advised Governor Alfred E. Smith during Smith's presidential campaign. In 1927, Tugwell made a trip to the Soviet Union as a member of a trade delegation, a trip that would haunt him throughout his academic and New Deal career. As a result of this trip, Tugwell became identified with radical ideas, socialist/communist solutions, and the political far left. Some reporters even referred to him as "Rex the Red."

During the 1920s, Tugwell wrote prolifically. Teaching a relatively light schedule, he devoted his energies to research and writing on a wide variety of topics including the growing problems in the American economy, planned obsolescence, the American agricultural system, and Herbert Hoover's failed attempts at economic recovery after the Great Depression began. Tugwell consistently argued that American business had to do more in dispersing America's abundance, that the U.S. economy needed to adopt a more rational approach to economic affairs through planning, and that Amer-



Rexford Tugwell (right) discusses land conditions with a farmer in the Texas Panhandle in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

ican agriculture needed to address the issue of overproduction through such measures as domestic allotment. Tugwell's two most important works, which crystallize his ideas in the 1920s, were *Industry's Coming of Age* (1927) and *The Industrial Discipline and the Governmental Arts* (1933). Another Columbia professor, Raymond Moley, introduced Tugwell to Franklin Roosevelt, and, thereupon, assured Tugwell's entrance into the Brains Trust.

Designed to help educate Roosevelt for the 1932 campaign, the Brains Trust, consisting of Raymond Moley, Rexford Tugwell, and Adolf Berle, worked closely with the presidential candidate, informing him of the intricacies of economic issues, updating him on the most current solutions being

offered on the Great Depression, and writing speeches for him. Although often frustrated with Roosevelt's inclination to politic, Tugwell did work with the presidential Democratic hopeful, especially in the area of agricultural relief and domestic allotment. Once Roosevelt received the Democratic nomination, Tugwell's role in the inner circle continued in a more limited fashion until Roosevelt's victory in November 1932.

During the interregnum, Tugwell worked on a number of problems, particularly the upcoming London Economic Conference. After inauguration day, Tugwell decided to stay with Roosevelt in the Department of Agriculture as assistant and later under-secretary of agriculture, helping Henry Wal-



Rexford Tugwell (standing) inspects the foundations of houses under construction at the Greenbelt project in Maryland in 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

lace with the day-to-day administrative details. Very much devoted to the president, Tugwell also served in a number of other capacities during his New Deal tenure: coordinating USDA reorganization, conservation, relief efforts; implementing Puerto Rican sugar quotas; and serving as general apologist for the New Deal. It was, however, Tugwell's involvement in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) that not only most interested Tugwell, but also got him into serious trouble. Not a firm supporter of AAA director George Peek, Tugwell was active in blocking Peek's marketing efforts and eventually contributed to Peek's resignation. Although Tugwell saw Peek's resignation as somewhat of a victory, it proved to be a hollow one. With the succession of Chester Davis, the AAA became more committed to domestic allotment. Davis, moreover, was not fond of anyone who dis-

agreed with him, and he acted to dismiss Jerome Frank and other so-called liberals in the AAA Legal Division who overstepped their authority in dealing with southern landlords. The famous AAA purge was a direct affront to Tugwell, who immediately offered to resign. Roosevelt refused his resignation and put Tugwell in charge of the newly-formed Resettlement Administration (RA). Although Tugwell only served one year as director of the RA, his accomplishments were extensive as he worked to resettle farmers to better lands while implementing such visionary programs as the famous "greenbelt" towns. By 1936, however, "Tugwell, Rex" or "Rex the Red," as he was not so affectionately known to his critics, became too much of a burden for Roosevelt. At the instigation of James Farley, Roosevelt accepted Tugwell's resignation.

Receiving a cold shoulder from Columbia and other academic institutions, Tugwell entered the business world as a vice-president for the American Molasses Company, owned and operated by his friend Charles Taussig. Shortly thereafter, Tugwell left the company and accepted the chairmanship of the New York City Planning Commission under Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia. By the 1939 to 1940 period, Tugwell had become so committed to the concept of planning in the American economy that he believed a "fourth power" or branch of the American government needed to be created to implement planning. Although Tugwell actually did a fine job in New York, he ran head-on into New York's Robert Moses, who eventually was able to limit Tugwell's effectiveness. Harold Ickes, the secretary of the Department of the Interior in Roosevelt's cabinet and a friend of Tugwell, intervened and offered Tugwell the opportunity to study Puerto Rican land holdings in 1940. Tugwell's study was so impressive that Ickes recommended to the president that Tugwell be appointed governor of the island. Roosevelt agreed and Tugwell served as governor from 1941 to 1946. Working closely with Luis Munoz Marin and the Populares Party, Tugwell helped sustain a political makeover in the island republic.

After 1946, Tugwell was much more in demand in academics. Initially moving from university to university, he eventually settled at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Bar-

bara. From then until his death in 1979, Tugwell wrote a remarkable number of books, articles, book reviews, and seminar papers. He focused his attention on four specific themes: the atomic bomb, Franklin D. Roosevelt, a new American constitution, and planning. Writing almost compulsively throughout his life, Tugwell longed for a future when another Franklin D. Roosevelt would appear and the United States would achieve its potential to alleviate poverty and suffering and become the land of abundance that Tugwell always envisioned. In the end, despite all the attacks made on him, Rexford G. Tugwell remained an individual who deeply believed in America's potential.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); BRAIN(S) TRUST; GREENBELT TOWNS; RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION (RA).

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MICHAEL V. NAMORATO

TULLY, GRACE

Grace Tully (August 9, 1900–June 15, 1984) served Franklin Delano Roosevelt as one of his closest personal secretaries from 1928 until his death in 1944. Throughout this period, Tully shared the workload of the president's primary secretary, Marguerite (Missy) LeHand, until LeHand suffered a stroke in 1941, and Tully was elevated to the preeminent secretarial position.

A native of New Jersey, Tully worked as a secretary for the Archdiocese of New York until the

Democratic National Committee hired her to assist Eleanor Roosevelt, who was busily preparing for the 1928 presidential campaign. That same year Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to the New York governorship, and Tully accepted an offer to work for him in Albany. By 1932 Tully had established herself as a devoted employee and an important member of the Roosevelt inner circle, but health problems prevented her from moving to Washington, D.C., and joining the rest of "the team" until early 1934.

Once she moved to Washington, Tully had virtually unfettered access to Roosevelt that few others in Depression-era Washington enjoyed. Tommy Corcoran, an influential presidential adviser, once remarked that anyone who wanted to see the president, "except Missy and Grace," had to clear it with the White House appointments secretary (Caro, p. 670). Tully's entrée to the Oval Office made her an important figure at a time when the president had been granted immense authority to dispense patronage as the result of New Deal legislation. Securing time with Roosevelt to discuss the direction of that patronage was nearly impossible, but for many Washington operatives a quick word with the president could be arranged through Tully's intervention.

In addition to her secretarial duties, Tully frequently participated in White House social events, including Roosevelt's late-afternoon cocktail parties, and she often accompanied him on trips to Hyde Park and Camp David (then called Shangri-La), where one of the outbuildings came to be called the Grace Tully Cabin. She was present in Warm Springs, Georgia, the day that Roosevelt died in April 1945, and she was one of the first people to rush into the room upon hearing of the president's collapse.

Roosevelt's death did not bring an end to Tully's time in Washington, and she went on to work for senators Lyndon Johnson and Mike Mansfield before retiring.

See Also: LEHAND, MARGUERITE (MISSY).

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Grace Tully with Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1942. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

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CHRISTOPHER BRICK

TUSKEGEE SYPHILIS PROJECT

The Tuskegee syphilis study of “untreated syphilis in the male Negro” became the longest-running

nontherapeutic and racist research study in American history. Approximately 399 African-American men with syphilis and 201 without the disease who served as controls were followed, but deliberately not treated for their illness, in several counties surrounding Tuskegee, Alabama, between 1932 and 1972. The men, however, did not know they were participating in a study being run by the United States Public Health Service (PHS). They were told they were being treated for “bad blood,” a local term used to cover venereal diseases, as well as anemia and other ailments.

In 1932, syphilis was only one of many problems that plagued the black population in Tuskegee and the surrounding Macon County. “Cash money” was often hard to come by, and many fam-

ilies were sharecroppers who were in perpetual debt. One survivor of the Tuskegee study who lived about twenty miles outside of town recalled, for example, that during the 1930s he could not drive his car because he did not have cash to pay for licensing tags.

In the heart of Alabama's "black belt," serious malnutrition, inadequate housing, illness, and illiteracy were widespread, especially as the Depression deepened. Illnesses were borne or cured with the help of local folk healers. People occasionally sought treatment from doctors, but physician visits to rural homes were uncommon and expensive. In a 1932 survey of 612 black families, only 258 of the families had seen a physician during the year. Despite the existence of both a black-run U.S. Veteran's Administration hospital and the John A. Andrew Hospital at Tuskegee Institute, the historically black college founded by Booker T. Washington, it was difficult for people living in the country to come to town or pay for clinic visits.

The syphilis study started as part of the Rosenwald Foundation's work to improve educational and health conditions for black southerners. The foundation, in conjunction with the PHS, began a survey and treatment program on syphilis in six southern counties in 1929. The highest rates of syphilis were found in Macon County, where few people had been treated.

When the funds for the surveys and treatment program ran out, several of the PHS researchers realized that the area around Macon County would serve as a "perfect" laboratory to study untreated syphilis. In 1932 there were medicines available, but they required a long period of treatment. Medical wisdom at the time also assumed that patients who had survived to the disease's latent or tertiary stage probably could not be helped by the then known treatments. It was also thought that African Americans were more prone to cardiovascular complications from the disease and that whites were more likely to develop neurological symptoms. The researchers hoped to show whether racial differences existed.

The study of untreated syphilis began in 1932. It was only supposed to last six to twelve months. Physicians and nurses from the PHS, the local

health department, and Tuskegee Institute selected and followed the men. They were given aspirin, iron pills, and tonics, and were told that they were being treated. Spinal taps were ordered to monitor the progress of their disease; the men were told these were "back shots." Autopsies were needed to examine syphilis's effect on the body more definitively. In order to obtain permission for autopsy the families were promised money for burials. In 1936, the first of what would become the pattern for twelve other reports on the study was published in a respected and widely read medical journal. The findings made clear that the lack of treatment had shortened many of the men's lives.

As the study progressed during the 1940s, penicillin became recognized as a certain cure for syphilis, although it would probably not have helped the men with advanced cases of the disease. The study continued throughout the 1960s, through the civil rights era, and even after more formal ethical canons were promulgated that would have made such a study unthinkable.

In 1972 a horrified investigator revealed the story of the Tuskegee syphilis study to a reporter. When newspapers reported the story, a huge public outcry erupted, followed by congressional hearings, a federal investigation, and a lawsuit that provided some compensation to the men and their families. No one was ever prosecuted for their role in the study. In 1997, President Bill Clinton apologized to the six remaining survivors, their families, and the entire African-American community. The Tuskegee syphilis study remains a monument to racialized assumptions about disease and to unethical behavior in research.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HEALTH AND NUTRITION; RACE AND ETHNIC RELATIONS.

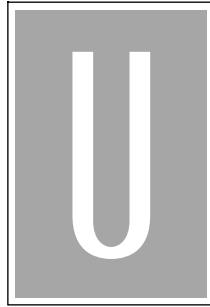
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SUSAN M. REVERBY

TVA. *See* TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY.



UAW. *See* UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS.

UFL. *See* UNITED FARMERS' LEAGUE.

UMWA. *See* UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA.

UNEMPLOYED COUNCILS

Unemployed Councils were grassroots organizations of unemployed workers created in the early 1930s to protest mass unemployment and inadequate relief. The first councils were established by the American Communist Party's Trade Union Unity League, an organization created in the 1920s to promote radical unionism. In March 1930 the Trade Union Unity League organized highly successful mass demonstrations to protest unemployment and demand government relief. In July of that year a national conference sponsored by the Trade Union Unity League declared the formation of the "unemployed councils of the USA."

From 1930 to 1935 the councils organized numerous conferences, demonstrations, and national

"hunger marches." These actions often combined demands for aid ("work for wages") with calls for an end to the capitalist system. In late 1931 the councils were separated from the Trade Union Unity League and placed under the direction of Herbert Benjamin, a veteran Communist Party functionary.

The frequent national protests and conventions sponsored by the councils during these years were small, but they spawned local organizations that had an important impact on relief policy. By mid 1931 thousands of Americans were receiving aid from large relief organizations with local offices in urban neighborhoods. Relief aid was inadequate, and workers were often subjected to degrading investigations by social workers. Taking advantage of these conditions, local unemployed councils helped clients apply for aid, demonstrated at relief offices, and sent delegations to demand more adequate relief from local officials.

The unemployed councils' most successful tactics were eviction protests. These were a response to the fact that local relief agencies were too financially strapped to provide rent until a recipient was faced with eviction. Relief recipients were often awakened by landlords, accompanied by police, moving their furniture out of apartments when the rent had not been paid. Local councils of the unemployed would mobilize neighbors to forcibly stop



A group of unemployed miners from the Scott's Run area of West Virginia attend a meeting of the local unemployed council in 1937. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

the evictions and even move furniture back into the apartments when the police had left the scene. Violent rent protests generated a good deal of publicity (and support) for the councils.

The success of the councils in 1931 attracted more moderate socialists less inclined to demand that recruits follow the "party line." A Chicago-based Workers Committee on Unemployment, led by the socialist Karl Borders, recruited twice as many local workers as the Communist leagues by the end of 1932. In Seattle, the Unemployed Citizens League played an important role in local relief administration. Radicals led by the independent socialist A. J. Muste organized Leagues of the Unemployed in the cities and small towns of Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia.

The advent of the New Deal in 1933 transformed the grassroots movement of the unemployed. Local relief agencies were more willing to negotiate with organizations of the unemployed, and Socialist and Communist organizations focused more of their attention on national campaigns for unemployment insurance. The work relief programs of the New Deal stimulated new protests and organization efforts that resembled the growing union movement.

In early 1935 the various Socialist organizations and the Communist-dominated councils united to create the Workers Alliance of America. Most councils of the unemployed were disbanded and absorbed by the alliance. This development was, in part, consistent with the new Communist Party line, which stressed a "united front" (or Popular

Front) of all leftists against the “fascist threat.” This development also reflected the fact that the organized unemployed, now focusing on Works Progress Administration projects, had become an influential interest group in the New Deal “broker state.”

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY; HUNGER MARCHES.

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JEFF SINGLETON

UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF

The Great Depression was an economic catastrophe without comparison in American history. Within a few years, between 1929 and 1933, an economy that had appeared functional and highly dynamic collapsed, throwing millions out of work. Although wage cuts, underemployment, and economic instability were common experiences, unemployment was the paradigmatic crisis of the Depression, with effects that spread through the entire economy. The fact that many of the people who lost their jobs and were unable to get new ones were, by and large, highly productive people in the middle of their working lives, more often than not the sole breadwinner for a family, created an acute sense of desperation in the country at large.

Unemployment levels reached their height in 1933, when one-quarter of the nation's work force—thirteen million people—was unemployed. To give a sense of the rapidity of the change, unemployment rates had been remarkably low throughout the 1920s, falling to 1.6 percent in 1926 and up to only 3.2 percent in 1929. For unemployment to climb so rapidly to 25 percent in only a few years was an unprecedented and shocking experience. Even more dramatic was the fact that high levels of unemployment persisted throughout the decade, never falling below 14.3 percent (1937). The high rates of unemployment also reduced wages for workers who were lucky enough to keep their jobs, and many workers worked on part-time, reduced schedules. No region of the country was immune to the crisis. The coal fields of Kentucky and West Virginia, the rural towns of the South, the cities of Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and Philadelphia—all were affected by the disappearance of work.

The expansion of the 1920s had hidden a deep layer of poverty in the United States, and many people worked in substandard jobs for substandard wages throughout the boom. Studies done in the early 1940s showed that among people on unemployment relief in the late 1930s, about 14 percent had actually lost their jobs at their usual occupation prior to the crash of 1929. Of the men on relief in nine cities, including Detroit, 20 percent had been unemployed prior to the Depression. In addition, much of the deepest poverty in the United States was not a product of unemployment but of the depression in farming areas, for example among sharecroppers and tenant farmers in the Deep South. Nonetheless, there is no question that the conditions of people who were poor during the boom only worsened during the 1930s, and unemployment was a major part of the crisis.

Unemployment did not affect every demographic group equally. It fell most cruelly on young, old, uneducated, unskilled, and rural workers, especially blacks, Mexican-Americans, and immigrants. Workers under twenty and over sixty were more than twice as likely to be out of work. One-fifth of the people on unemployment rolls was black, twice their proportion in the overall popula-



Unemployed men wait in line outside the State Employment Service office in Memphis, Tennessee, in June 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

tion. Thousands of immigrants, finding that the United States was no longer paved with bricks of gold, returned to their home countries, and in 1931, 100,000 Americans set off to find work in the Soviet Union. (Not all immigrants were eager to leave the United States; about 400,000 Mexican immigrants were deported to their home country over the decade.)

But in some ways what is most striking about the Depression is that the people affected by it were not only the marginal workers, or workers who labored under the stresses of racism and sexism in good economic times and who were usually the last hired and first fired. Instead, the “typical” unem-

ployed worker, according to studies of the day, was a white male in his late thirties, the head of a family and the sole breadwinner, who had never completed elementary school and typically worked as an unskilled laborer in the manufacturing or mechanical industries. He was out of a job for an average of two years. Heavy industry was hit especially hard throughout the Depression, with such companies as Ford laying off two-thirds of their workers by 1933 and General Electric and Westinghouse each laying off more than half. The Depression had an acute impact upon people in the mainstream of the labor market, men and women who had likely never expected or anticipated that their adult lives would be marked by such a crisis.



Unemployed single women hold a job-demand parade in New York City in 1933. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

For working women, who were concentrated in the service sector, the Depression, though traumatic, was different than for men. Women were more likely to lose their jobs early in the Depression, but they were also more likely to find employment again later in the decade because they benefited from the long-term trend towards greater employment in services over the course of the twentieth century. In many families, women became the primary breadwinners, a development that transformed relationships within the home.

Much of the social policy of the New Deal was aimed at alleviating the crisis of unemployment in the Great Depression. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided direct cash relief to

families in dire need. The Civil Works Administration was the first major work-relief program, along with the Civilian Conservation Corps. By February 1934 these programs employed 22.2 percent of the population, a high for any point in American history. Beginning in 1935, the Roosevelt administration cut back on general relief in favor of work-relief programs, especially the Works Progress Administration. In some ways, this reflected the fact that the crisis of the Depression was not simply one of unemployment and poverty for individuals. It was one of a lost decade of social investment and productive capacity, and while federal investments in public works could help to make up for this somewhat, to a great extent the decade was simply lost forever.



Men wait in line to apply for unemployment compensation at the State Employment Service office in San Francisco in this 1938 photograph by Dorothea Lange. If eligible, these men could receive six to fifteen dollars per week for up to sixteen weeks. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

See Also: CIVILIAN CONSERVATION CORPS (CCC);
CIVIL WORKS ADMINISTRATION (CWA);
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE.

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KIM PHILLIPS-FEIN

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The Social Security Act of 1935, commonly associated with the nation's old-age pension system, also created a national system of unemployment compensation—a guarantee of income for temporarily unemployed workers. At the time of the act's passage, this provision seemed more of a historic milestone than did the old-age insurance provision, which is now synonymous with the term *Social Security*.

To most Americans on the eve of the Depression, the idea of unemployment insurance was an unwelcome European import—a “dole” that undermined the work ethic and the fiscal stability of the nation. This view reflected the fact that policies to assist unemployed workers were a European invention. In the early decades of the twentieth century a number of countries in continental Europe began to augment union-sponsored out-of-work plans with tax funds. But when the Depression struck, it was England's pioneering program that was the most closely associated with the term *unemployment insurance*.

The British unemployment system, passed in 1911, created a large central fund financed initially by “contributions” from employees and employers, although the government also subsidized the program with general tax revenues. Thus the policy looked more like “insurance” than traditional relief, a fact that was constantly emphasized by its proponents. Between 1911 and 1930, ten other countries in Europe adopted compulsory unemployment insurance programs.

The British precedent generated much enthusiasm among American reformers. A key center of support for unemployment insurance was the University of Wisconsin in Madison, where economics professor John R. Commons developed a uniquely “American” version of unemployment insurance. Commons's “Wisconsin plan” focused more on preventing unemployment than on creating funds to assist the jobless. Commons proposed an unemployment tax on employers, with the rates adjusted for “experience” and the funds channeled into individual “reserves.” Employers with healthy employment records would pay less than those who tend-



Unemployed miners, photographed by Arthur Rothstein in 1939, pass the day loitering near a bank in Herrin, Illinois.

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COLLECTION

ed constantly to lay off and then rehire workers at various points in the business cycle. The goal was to encourage stable employment and avoid what were perceived as European-style doles from large central funds.

Commons's plan was, in part, a response to the strong opposition in the United States to European-style social insurance in the 1920s. The British system, which experienced a constant financing crisis throughout the 1920s, seemed to prove that government-mandated insurance proposals would quickly evolve into doles. Although numerous commissions were organized to study the problem,

no state had established unemployment insurance prior to the 1930s.

The Great Depression turned the tide in favor of unemployment insurance. Insurance plans organized by private enterprises collapsed, and local private charity and public relief were inadequate substitutes for a national unemployment policy. The federal government was soon forced to take up the unemployment relief burden. By the time Franklin D. Roosevelt was inaugurated, Washington was financing the bulk of aid to the unemployed through local welfare agencies. There now seemed to exist a national "dole" more insidious than any European import.

Roosevelt voiced his support for state-level unemployment insurance in 1931, and the policy was endorsed by the Democratic platform for the 1932 presidential elections. In the early months of the New Deal several proposals for unemployment insurance surfaced, but none received sustained congressional attention. Then, in early 1934, Senator Robert F. Wagner and Representative David J. Lewis of Maryland introduced a bill that would profoundly shape the Social Security Act of 1935.

The Wagner-Lewis bill proposed a policy that became known as a *tax-offset plan*. A federal tax of 5 percent on employers' payrolls would be levied to finance benefits for the unemployed. If states passed their own unemployment insurance laws, employers would receive a credit against the federal tax. In short, the federal tax was a mechanism to encourage state-operated unemployment insurance systems. This formula was introduced, in part, out of fear that the Supreme Court would find a strictly federal program unconstitutional.

Roosevelt, however, disliked certain aspects of the Wagner-Lewis plan. He believed that employees, as well as employers, should pay into this "insurance" system. Furthermore, the New Deal was considering other related social reforms, such as an old-age pension plan and a public employment policy to replace relief. Thus, in June 1934 Roosevelt proposed a broad Committee on Economic Security to study the "great task of furthering the security of the citizen and his family through social insurance."

Although the Committee on Economic Security was designed, in part, to resolve conflicts over un-

employment insurance, it temporarily intensified them. The Depression had increased support for reform but also generated sharp divisions among reformers themselves. While many supported the Wisconsin plan, which focused on individual employer reserves, others believed that this approach would provide inadequate benefits. They supported what became known as the "Ohio plan," which advocated state-wide "pooled funds." Still other members of the Committee on Economic Security advocated a national system operated by the federal government.

The debates over the unemployment provisions of the social security legislation dominated the committee's work in late 1934. In the end, these conflicts were resolved by adopting a version of the Wagner-Lewis tax-offset approach. The Committee on Economic Security proposed a federal tax (3 percent of payroll by 1938) to be reduced by up to 90 percent if a state system was established. The proposal mandated that one-third of the tax would finance a state "pooled" fund (Ohio plan), but also that federal credits would be given to state plans that created employer reserves based on experience (Wisconsin plan).

National unemployment insurance became federal law with the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935. In the final legislation, Congress stuck to the basic tax-offset formula, but modified the Committee on Economic Security proposal on significant points. For example, the requirement that one percent of payroll be earmarked for "pooled funds" was eliminated, a defeat for the proponents of the Ohio plan. Congress also weakened the ability of federal officials to influence procedures for the selection of personnel. Finally, the federal law excluded employers of agricultural workers from the tax.

Over the years, the system has been expanded to include workers not originally covered. The "American plan" of individual reserves, championed by the Wisconsin reformers, proved impractical. All states adopted the approach of creating pooled funds along with an "experience rating" of employer contributions, in which employers with good employment records were rewarded with lower payments into the system.

Numerous policy experts have criticized the state-level unemployment compensation system as inefficient, but such critiques have not generated significant political debate. Ironically, unemployment insurance, one of the most controversial policy issues in the years that preceded the Social Security Act, has generally avoided the public controversies that have marked other provisions of the 1935 law.

See Also: SOCIAL SECURITY ACT; UNEMPLOYMENT, LEVELS OF.

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JEFF SINGLETON

UNION PARTY

The Union Party was an incongruous and short-lived alliance of left-leaning opponents of the Roosevelt administration whose presidential candidate, Congressman William Lemke of North Dakota, received less than 2 percent of the vote in the 1936 election, leading to the swift demise of the party. Its futility in the wake of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's huge landslide victory that year demonstrated the continuing popularity of the president after one term in office and underscored the weakness of the leaders and organizations that had voiced criticisms of him and his administration's policies.

Lemke, a graduate of Yale law school and no country hick, nevertheless projected something of a rough image as an outspoken champion of agrarian dissidents through his advocacy of farm mortgage relief, better lending conditions for farmers,

and currency inflation. Disappointed with the president's failure to back him firmly on these issues, he readily accepted the opportunity to make a presidential run on a third party ticket when it was offered to him in June 1936. The prime mover in the establishment of the Union Party was Father Charles E. Coughlin, the Detroit radio priest whose National Union for Social Justice (NUSJ), established soon after the 1934 election, focused its attention on money and banking issues. In addition, a shaky alliance was formed with followers of Shreveport minister Gerald L. K. Smith, who had inherited some of Senator Huey Long's following after the latter fell victim to an assassin's bullet in September 1935, and Dr. Francis E. Townsend, an advocate of old-age pensions. Coughlin's support was concentrated among Irish and German Catholic workers in urban areas of the Northeast and Midwest, Smith's greatest strength was in the deep South and southern Midwest, and Townsend's following—probably the largest of the three—was heaviest initially in the far West.

The national convention that officially founded the Union Party in Cleveland in mid-July was anything but the "love feast" it was billed as. Coughlin, Smith, and Townsend were more interested in promoting the interests of themselves and their own organizations than in advancing the candidacies of Lemke and his running mate, Thomas O'Brien, a Boston Irish Catholic lawyer and Harvard law school graduate. The new party's platform endorsed neither the Townsend old-age pension plan nor Long's proposals for sharing the wealth, and half of the principles of Coughlin's NUSJ were omitted too. In general, the Union Party was a strange combination of progressive and conservative ideas.

Lemke hoped to capture 6 percent of the popular vote and enough electoral votes to throw the election into the House of Representatives. He was the first presidential candidate to travel extensively by plane, but he could not overcome the internal divisions and bickering within the hastily-formed party and failed to attract much press coverage for his campaign. In November, the party mustered only 892,000 votes, registering its strongest showing in Lemke's home state, where it captured 13

percent of the vote, and doing no better than 7 percent in any other states. After North Dakota, the Union Party received its greatest support in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Oregon.

See Also: COUGHLIN, CHARLES; ELECTION OF 1936; SMITH, GERALD L. K.; TOWNSEND PLAN.

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JOHN E. MILLER

UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS (UAW)

The United Automobile Workers of America (UAW) was the largest and most politically important trade union that emerged out of the labor insurgency of the 1930s. Between the spring of 1933 and the summer of 1935 an episodic series of plant specific strikes demonstrated that automobile workers sought some form of collective organization. Under sponsorship of the American Federation of Labor, the UAW held its first convention in 1935. But the union's real founding took place the next year when it elected its own officers and linked together key local unions at Studebaker and Bendix in South Bend, Toledo Auto-Lite, White Motor in Cleveland, Chrysler in Detroit, and a skilled-trades group centered in the same city. The UAW was an industrial union, seeking to represent all workers in a single factory or firm. It therefore affiliated with the new Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO).

After a dramatic, six-week sit-down strike that shut down the heart of General Motors production in Flint, Michigan, the UAW won union recognition at GM, then the nation's largest corporation. This February 1937 victory paved the way for U.S. Steel's

equally important recognition of the CIO's Steel Workers Organizing Committee in March. In addition, the GM victory inaugurated a wave of strikes in Detroit and other Midwestern cities. Auto-workers occupied Chrysler's huge production complex at Dodge Main and briefly shut down scores of auto industry supplier plants in March and April 1937. When Detroit police began to arrest pickets and sit-downers, the UAW stanchd the tactic by putting more than 100,000 workers in Cadillac Square. But the sharp recession that began in the fall of 1937 put an end to this initial burst of shop-floor militancy. It would therefore take almost four difficult years to organize the Ford Motor Company, an intransigent union foe. By 1943 the UAW had organized more than a million workers in the auto, aircraft, and agricultural equipment industries. It would remain the nation's largest union for the next two decades.

The UAW was a uniquely democratic and militant union for three reasons. First, under conditions of mass production, supervisors and unionists fought bitterly and continuously over the pace of production, the distribution of work, and the extent to which seniority would govern job security. An alert, aggressive cadre of shop stewards and committeemen enforced the contract and contested managerial authority, especially at companies like Studebaker, Packard, Briggs, Chrysler, and Ford, after it was finally organized in 1941. Second, the UAW enrolled hundreds of thousands of Poles, Hungarians, Slavs, Italians, African Americans, and white Appalachian migrants for whom unionism represented a doorway to an engaged sense of American citizenship. At Ford's gigantic River Rouge complex, for example, the foundry building became a cockpit of racial militancy for thousands of black workers and the incubator for a generation of Michigan civil rights leaders. Finally, the founders and officers of the UAW were a notably factional and ideological cohort, among which Socialists, Communists, Catholic corporatists, and Roosevelt liberals fought for power and office.

Homer Martin, who served as union president from 1936 until 1939, was a former Protestant minister whose maladroit leadership nearly wrecked the union after the 1937–1938 recession gave man-



UAW officials (left to right) Walter Reuther, R. J. Thomas, Richard Frankensteen, and George Addes in Detroit, Michigan, in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

agers the upper hand. Although once a socialist, Martin mistrusted shop militancy and the urban, ethnic radicals who now formed the union cadre. He was opposed by a fractious coalition that briefly united a “right-wing” Socialist-Catholic grouping led by Walter Reuther with a Communist-backed caucus that looked to Secretary-Treasurer George Addes and Vice-President Richard Frankensteen for leadership. Martin was eliminated in early 1939, but to avoid another factional bloodbath, CIO officials imposed Chrysler unionist R. J. Thomas as the new UAW president. He straddled a complex set of internal union rivalries for six tumultuous years until Reuther won the UAW presidency in 1946 and his anti-Communist caucus, which nevertheless embodied the radicalism of many shop militants

and progressive unionists, took full control of the UAW the next year. Reuther served as president until 1970, when he died in an airplane crash.

During the late 1930s and 1940s the UAW established the template that defined much of modern U.S. unionism. In bargaining with the big three auto corporations, the union raised and equalized wages between plants, regions, and occupations. It established a grievance arbitration system that limited the foreman’s right to hire, fire, and discipline, and it won for its members a wide array of health and pension “fringe benefits” when it became clear that the unions and their liberal allies could not expand the U.S. welfare state. The real income of automobile workers more than doubled between 1937 and 1973.



Auto workers guard window entrances in Fisher body plant number three during a six-week sit-down strike that shut down the heart of General Motors production in Flint, Michigan, in January and February 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

Politically, the UAW was a liberal presence in national Democratic politics and in those states, such as Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, Illinois, New York, Iowa, California, and Indiana, where it had a large membership. In 1937 the UAW sought to put a labor slate in Detroit's city hall, and until 1948 many in the UAW leadership had supported formation of a labor-based third party. But after Harry Truman's unexpected reelection, the UAW sought a liberal "realignment" of the Democrats. The union pushed for aggressive Keynesian fiscal policies to lower unemployment, it fought for an expanded welfare state, and favored détente with the Soviets.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO);

ORGANIZED LABOR; REUTHER, WALTER; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STRIKES.

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NELSON LICHTENSTEIN

UNITED FARMERS' LEAGUE (UFL)

The United Farmers' League (UFL) was a radical farmers' group that first sprang up in the Dakotas during the 1920s. It was one of several such groups, some of which came to eclipse the UFL in history.

The UFL was the brainchild of a Norway native named Alfred Knuston. Born in 1880, Knuston entered the United States at age nineteen. He was a carpenter by trade and a radical by political orientation. By 1915, he was affiliated with the Non-Partisan League, an agrarian radical group. A wave of anti-left sentiments during the 1920s basically destroyed the League, but a similar group called the Farm Labor Party emerged from its ashes during the early to mid 1920s. The name change appears to indicate that Knuston was attempting to link agrarian and industrial interests. Such a linkage and its viability or lack thereof has always been something of a contentious point in radical political theory. Indeed, the attempt to make such a link was the goal of a Soviet program known as the Red Peasant International.

Knuston reformed the Farm Labor Party into the United Farmers' Educational League (UFEL), which was established in Bismarck, North Dakota, in 1925. The organization began publishing a periodical, *United Farmer*, in March 1926. In 1929, the UFEL became the UFL. The UFL/UFEL was radical, but not explicitly Communist. For example, as the UFEL, the organization praised the Red Peasant International, but did not formally ally itself with it.

In a handful of places, the UFL served as an alternative to the radical and better known Farm Holiday Association. Members of the UFL engaged in activities similar to those of the Farm Holiday Association. They interfered in foreclosure auctions, for example, either through outright riots or the use of "penny auctions," wherein members of the League or friends of the farmer would crowd an auction and bid only a pittance. Sometimes, the mere threat or possibility of UFL action was known to forestall foreclosure and force the bank to renegotiate with the farmer. That the UFL and the organizations that spawned it could have achieved even the modest political and economic successes that they did in relatively conservative territory is a testimony to

how bad the situation was, and to the political skills of Knutson and the UFL membership.

The UFL supported Franklin Roosevelt in the 1932 presidential election. Ironically, Roosevelt's activities, particularly the enactment of massive public works projects and the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), made the UFL irrelevant, and first its influence and then the organization itself slowly faded out of existence. In the end, farmers mainly wanted a better deal than they had been getting. They were not radicals at heart; radicalism was merely a means to an end. By 1938, the Dakotas had so returned to their conservative ways that they were ready to elect Republicans again.

See Also: AGRICULTURE; FARMERS' HOLIDAY ASSOCIATION (FHA).

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STEVEN KO CZAK

UNITED MINE WORKERS OF AMERICA (UMWA)

Once the largest union in both the nation and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) fell on hard times during the 1920s and in the early years of the

Great Depression. Claiming nearly 500,000 members in 1920, the union consisted of barely 100,000 dues-paying members by 1929 and even fewer by 1932, most of whom were concentrated in the last remaining unionized field, southern Illinois, itself wracked by internal union conflict. Elsewhere in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and the West, coal operators broke the union. In southern Appalachian coal fields the UMWA had rarely enjoyed success. All this changed with the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 and the coming of the New Deal. Almost overnight the coal miners seemed to organize themselves, as one union organizer reported from West Virginia. In every coal field miners seemed to believe that their "president" wanted them to unionize; whether they took that president to be Roosevelt or John L. Lewis, their union leader, remained unclear.

By mid-summer 1933 the nation's coal fields had been largely re-unionized, with even the anti-labor bastions in the South crumbling before the UMWA offensive. Coal operators and UMWA officials were among the first group to develop an approved industrial code under the New Deal National Recovery Administration (NRA). Employers saw the UMWA as a means to limit destructive competition in the market for coal by equalizing wages and operating costs, a goal consonant with the aims of the early New Deal. In the case of coal, then, public officials, employers, and union leaders all read from the same text. Once again the UMWA, as it had been before and during World War I, became a power in the labor movement and the land, and its president, John L. Lewis, the most prominent and powerful of labor leaders.

The success of his union, one that he ran almost as a tyrant, and the pro-labor policies of many in the Roosevelt administration, led Lewis to grow even more ambitious. Not satisfied with having won a union shop in all the coal mines, save those owned and operated by the steel industry (the so-called captive mines), Lewis sought to expand the power of the labor movement by organizing workers in the non-union mass-production industries. When his fellow labor barons in the AFL refused to follow Lewis's lead, he joined with several other union leaders in 1935 to form the Committee for In-

dustrial Organization (CIO). Using the ample financial resources of the UMWA, Lewis hired staff for the new committee, as well as organizers to recruit among workers in the automobile, rubber, steel, and other mass-production industries. For nearly six years after its founding in 1935 through its incarnation as the independent Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1938, the CIO survived largely on donations of cash from the UMWA. The UMWA also provided the bulk of the funds labor generated through Labor's Non-Partisan League, which Lewis established to back Roosevelt's bid for reelection in 1936. Hence, it would be no exaggeration to suggest that the UMWA deserved credit for the unionization of the mass-production industries in the 1930s; without its resources and its president, there would have been no CIO, no CIO alliance with Roosevelt, and likely no union victories over General Motors and U.S. Steel in 1937.

The UMWA did more than benefit other unions and their members during the 1930s. It also had enormous success in improving the material circumstances of its own members. Not only did the union organize nearly all the nation's employed coal miners; by the end of the 1930s it had also eliminated the wage differential between northern and southern mines and between white workers and black workers in the South. Few other institutions did as much to raise the standards of southern workers, black and white. Along with higher and more equal wages came the union shop and seniority principles that combined to generate greater job security for miners. On the eve of World War II—indeed on December 6, 1941—the UMWA won the union shop for miners in the captive coal mines, making the industry the most thoroughly unionized in the nation.

If, at first, the coal miners had unionized themselves, they nevertheless remained deferential and obedient to a leadership that ran the union in autocratic fashion. As president of the union, Lewis brooked neither criticism nor opposition. Critics and opponents he ridiculed or repressed. Not even Roosevelt could escape Lewis's wrath in 1940 when the labor leader endorsed Wendell Willkie, the Republican candidate for president, instead of the Democrat who had refused to defer sufficiently to

Lewis. Yet, however much UMWA members disagreed with their leader's choice in 1940, they continued to shower Lewis with respect, plaudits, and exceptional loyalty. For a time, at least from 1941 to 1950, such loyalty paid off in higher wages, a generous retirement program, and an excellent union-built, company-financed health and welfare system. Thereafter, however, the UMWA experienced a cycle of stagnation and rapid decline reminiscent of the 1920s and the early Great Depression years.

See Also: AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR (AFL); COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO); ORGANIZED LABOR; STRIKES.

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MELVYN DUBOFSKY

UNITED STATES HOUSING AUTHORITY (USHA)

On February 24, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt ordered the consolidation of more than a dozen federal housing agencies into the National Housing Agency. The United States Housing Authority (USHA), the agency that had overseen the nation's controversial, federally subsidized, low-income public housing program since the passage of the United States Housing Act in 1937, was abolished

and its activities were transferred to the National Housing Agency's Federal Public Housing Authority.

The USHA was the second agency to administer the public housing program started under the Federal Emergency Administration of Public Works in 1933 with the primary goal of aiding the economic recovery of the construction industry. Under the terms of the United States Housing Act, popularly known as the Wagner-Steagall Act, the USHA loaned funds to public housing authorities formed by local governments for the construction and operation of public housing developments. Local public housing authorities were required to meet the USHA's design and construction standards, resident selection policies, and management procedures. Ownership of USHA-aided public housing developments rested with the sponsoring local public housing authorities, not the federal government.

The USHA and the public housing program were supported by representatives of secular and nonsecular social work and civic organizations, architectural and planning agencies, and labor unions who believed that the private housing market had failed to provide an adequate supply of housing for persons of low to moderate income. Under the leadership of Administrator Nathan Straus, a former New York City social worker, the USHA offered down-on-their-luck, wage-earning families a temporary escape from the slums so they could recover both their finances and dignity. The Wilmington, North Carolina Housing Authority, for example, demonstrated that public housing worked as intended by publicizing the case of Benjamin Jenkins, a fertilizer factory worker. After living in the city's (racially segregated) USHA-subsidized New Brooklyn Homes for a brief time, Jenkins and his wife purchased a home in a nearby neighborhood.

The most outspoken opponents of public housing were home-building, real estate, and banking interests who saw the USHA as a threat to the private residential construction industry and the cherished ideal of home ownership. Homeowners from neighborhoods or areas targeted for public housing who were convinced that real estate values would decline frequently joined campaigns to stop public housing.



Louisiana Site 1-1 in New Orleans during the 1930s before the U.S. Housing Authority razed the old buildings and began a housing construction project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

The USHA staff worked with officials from local public housing authorities to create the local support necessary to build public housing and raze the equivalent number of substandard housing units. Their task was aided by the policy whereby existing racial patterns determined whether the housing would be designated as “white,” “Negro” or “mixed occupancy.” The USHA furthered racial segregation and at the same time, worked to empower residents in small ways. Classes, health clinics, childcare centers, and newly created resident councils were intended to combine with architecture and planning to foster community identity. The severe construction cost restrictions added to the Wagner-Steagall Act by the opponents of public housing had their desired effect: The USHA and local housing authorities were forced to decrease

the size of dwelling units and eliminate nonessentials such as closet doors; increase overall project density; and trim community facilities that were supposed to help integrate the developments into the larger urban fabric.

In the months prior to the implementation of the 1942 housing reorganization plan, the USHA was the subject of bitter partisan attacks that ultimately led to the resignation of Administrator Straus. At the heart of these political battles was the future of public housing. Congressional opponents were determined that the public housing program would not benefit from the appropriation of funds for the construction of housing for civilians employed by the armed forces or defense contractors under the National Defense Housing Act of October 1940. Straus unsuccessfully maintained that the



Louisiana Site 1-1 in New Orleans in 1940 after completion of the U.S. Housing Authority project. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

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United States should continue building housing for impoverished families and at the same time, erect housing for defense workers.

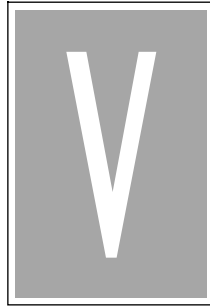
During the five brief years of its existence, the USHA helped thousands of families escape the slums—at least temporarily. Attitudes and beliefs concerning public housing and the men, women, and children who reside there hardened during this time, and continue to influence legislation and public policy regarding housing, urban development, poverty, and homelessness today.

See Also: BAUER, CATHERINE; HOUSING; WAGNER, ROBERT F.

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KRISTIN M. SZYLWIAN



VALUES, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression precipitated a significant, albeit not lasting, change in the predominant values in the United States. To understand the nature of this shift in values, it is first necessary to examine what “traditional American values” had been and what had happened to them earlier in the twentieth century, particularly in the 1920s.

TRADITIONAL VALUES AND THE MODERN ECONOMY

It is a commonplace that Americans are a very individualistic people. This is certainly true in many respects, but leaving it at that is misleading. There had always been a strong strain of community operating alongside American individualism. From John Winthrop’s shipboard sermon, “A Modell of Christian Charity,” to his fellow Puritans before their arrival in Massachusetts in 1630 (“Wee must beare one anothers burthens. We must not looke onely on our owne things, but allsoe on the things of our brethren”) to Herbert Hoover’s 1922 book *American Individualism*, which stressed the idea of voluntary cooperation rather than “rugged individualism,” Americans had been urged to think of others as well as themselves. The American ideal—though certainly not always the practice—had been

what might be termed “cooperative individualism.” The insightful French observer of American practices, Alexis de Tocqueville, had seen in the 1830s that American democracy tended to produce an emphasis on conformity that counteracted the self-centered acquisitive individualism that other aspects of the American experience, such as the abundance of resources, encouraged.

The values that Winthrop had called for in 1630 and Tocqueville had observed in the 1830s enjoyed a revival under the impact of the Depression in the 1930s. Such cooperative values had to be resuscitated, rather than continued, because changes in the economy had gone a long way toward undermining them. This was true not only of the value placed on community, but also of such other long-established American values as frugality and deferred gratification. Americans had traditionally been future-oriented, confident in the progressive view that today’s sacrifices would be rewarded by a better future for their children and grandchildren.

Such values were fine for the first three hundred or so years after the initial English settlement in North America, but during the twentieth century the demand for mass consumption to soak up the products of mass production necessitated a reversal of many time-honored values. Most traditional values had to be jettisoned if people were to be persuaded to buy more and more, indulge themselves,

go into debt to consume, and stop thinking about tomorrow. The ironic subversives who directed the attack on traditional values were the putatively conservative leaders of business and industry. Their agents were advertisers, who, beginning at an extraordinary level in the 1920s, used their considerable persuasive skills to woo Americans away from the values preached by Benjamin Franklin into a self-centered, highly individualistic, live-for-the-moment life oriented toward the consumption of products purchased in the marketplace.

THE AMORAL MARKETPLACE VERSUS REVIVED TRADITIONAL VALUES

Having been beguiled by the sirens of the good life as measured by the accumulation of things, large numbers of Americans in the 1920s went into debt to purchase such consumer goods as automobiles, radios, and household appliances. A debtor tends to move away from a future orientation and concentrate on the present. Yet most of the Americans who were won over to the consumption ethic in the 1920s had been brought up on the traditional values, to which much lip service was still being paid, even as the reality was that they were being abandoned. Many Americans were, therefore, not entirely comfortable with the new practices.

The Depression caused Americans who had bought into the radical new values based on consumption to step back and reconsider them. The collapse of an economy based on consumption and hyper-individualism was seen by many as chastisement for having allowed themselves to be enticed away from the older ways that, deep down, they still believed were right. Tennessee Williams nicely captured this feeling when he had the narrator of his 1945 play, *The Glass Menagerie*, refer to the 1930s as a time when middle-class Americans, whose "eyes had failed them, or they had failed their eyes," in the 1920s "were having their fingers pressed forcibly down on the fiery Braille alphabet of a dissolving economy."

A major aspect of the modern view of the world as a marketplace that had been gaining so much ground in the 1920s is that morality has and should have no bearing on the operation of the economy, which is viewed as a constant struggle among un-

connected individuals pursuing their own self-interest. This outlook was quite different from the traditional one, in which the common good was seen as the foremost goal and economic decisions were supposed to be made in light of moral considerations. (Of course this ideal often had failed to be matched by reality, but it had remained the ideal.) After the marketplace economy fell apart in 1929 and the years following, growing numbers of Americans appear to have abandoned their flirtation with the idea of an amoral economy and turned back to the traditional values that took account of the social consequences of individual actions.

Viewed from the perspective of the next century, what is most striking about the shift in values in the 1930s is that the decade stands out as the only time in the twentieth century during which the seemingly inexorable thrust of the modern world toward the acquisitive individualism and present-mindedness—and concomitant social disintegration—dictated by the consumption-based economy was temporarily reversed. In reaction to the disaster into which the abandonment of older values seemed to have led them, large numbers of Americans turned against greed and excessive individualism and returned more to such ideals as prudence, deferred gratification, future-orientation, cooperation, and community—ideals that had fallen into disuse in the prosperous 1920s.

CHANGING VIEWS OF SMALL-TOWN LIFE AND COMMUNITY

Among the more striking changes in values evident during the Depression was a turnaround in the viewpoint on small communities expressed in the culture. Small towns had often been castigated in the 1920s, for example, in the novels of Sinclair Lewis. After the collapse, however, there was a growing trend toward appreciation of the sense of place and belonging associated with such communities (although usually not in a completely uncritical way). This movement in attitudes is evident in the films of Frank Capra and John Ford, in Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town* (1938), the 1939 film classics *The Wizard of Oz* and *Gone with the Wind*, and Norman Rockwell's paintings of scenes of small-town life that appeared in the *Saturday Eve-*

ning Post, among many other cultural products of the era.

Others of the decade's altered values were also reflected in the popular culture of the Depression years. The gangster film genre that became so popular often (as in the 1930 film *Little Caesar*) linked greedy gangsters with businessmen and suggested in ways subtle and not-so-subtle that the latter—men who had often been revered in the twenties—were little more than greedy criminals themselves. And the whole range of social values and cooperation can be seen in John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939). "Use' ta be the fambly was fust," Ma Joad says of those people who feel obliged to help. "It ain't so now. It's anybody. Worse off we get, the more we got to do."

A RENEWED RESPECT FOR VALUES ASSOCIATED WITH WOMEN

One of the paradoxes of the Depression era is that at the same time that many men felt that their manhood was threatened by unemployment and their inability to fulfill the traditional male role of provider, there was a decided move away from the highly competitive, every-man-for-himself economic system, which was generally perceived as being essentially masculine. The emphasis on community, sharing, cooperation, interdependence, and compassion that was evident in so many quarters during the Depression has generally been seen as a more female approach to the world.

A possible explanation for the willingness of men during the Depression to accept values associated with women is that their loss of position put them in the accustomed place of women in society: dominated, powerless—on the bottom. While the feeling that he was in this position was likely to threaten a man's self image as a "real man," it was also likely to produce a general outlook more suited to such a diminished status in society. In any case, the putatively more male approach that had held sway in the twenties had been discredited, so another set of values would seem to be worth a try.

CHANGING VALUES AND THE NEW DEAL

One of the major reasons for the popularity of Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal was that

their outlook and policies seemed to match the resurgent values of cooperative individualism that were so widely re-embraced by Americans during the Depression years.

Having bought into the promises that a free market from which government restraints were lifted would produce the common good and having experienced instead what might be termed the "common bad" of the Depression, many Americans were ready to accept the re-imposition of limits. The New Deal did just that. In his first inaugural address in March 1933, Franklin Roosevelt castigated "a generation of self-seekers" and pledged to restore "ancient truths" by applying "social values more noble than mere monetary profit." The American people, the new president declared, "now realize as we have never realized before our interdependence with each other."

On all these counts and many more, Roosevelt was giving voice to the values that had made a comeback among the American people. In his speech accepting the 1936 Democratic presidential nomination, Roosevelt captured the resurgent values of the Depression years and his government's embrace of them in a single sentence: "Better the occasional faults of a Government that lives in a spirit of charity than the consistent omissions of a Government caught in the ice of its own indifference."

VALUES AFTER THE DEPRESSION

The revived values of a more cooperative individualism that took hold under the impact of the Great Depression and the accompanying rejection of consumption-based acquisitive individualism did not long survive a return to prosperity. The modern world's—and especially modern America's—rush toward the social disintegration demanded by the consumption-based marketplace economy accelerated in the post-World War II years. In those years, little has stood in the way of the rapid advance of the present-minded, self-indulgent consumerism that characterized most of the twentieth century. Remnants of the values of the Great Depression and the government programs and policies that reflected them have provided most of the few checks

that still exist on the all-conquering marketplace values of the modern world.

See Also: CONSUMERISM; INDIVIDUALISM.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

VANN, ROBERT

Pittsburgh Courier publisher Robert Lee Vann (August 27, 1879–October 24, 1940) served as special assistant attorney general to Franklin D. Roosevelt from 1933 to 1936. Vann was born in rural Ahoskie, North Carolina. After graduating as valedictorian from Walters Training School in 1901, he attended Virginia Union University's Wayland Academy, graduating in 1903. He then received a scholarship to Western University of Pennsylvania at Pittsburgh (now the University of Pittsburgh), where he served as the editor-in-chief of the campus newspaper. Vann graduated in 1906 and entered the university's law school. He was admitted to the Pennsylvania bar and opened a small firm, specializing in criminal law, in 1909.

In 1910 Vann became legal counsel, treasurer, and editor for the *Pittsburgh Courier*, a newspaper founded three years earlier by Edwin Harelston. Vann's ingenuity in advertising, distribution, reporting, and coverage attracted a devoted readership and increased the paper's circulation from 3,000 in 1910 to 150,000 by the mid 1930s, and 250,000 by the end of the Depression.

Vann's growing stature as *Courier* editor invigorated his struggling law practice, and enhanced his

reputation as a successful criminal attorney, compassionate civic leader, and savvy businessman. Vann's reputation also boosted his standing within the white-dominated Pennsylvania Republican Party. After his 1917 election as mayor of Pittsburgh, E. V. Babcock appointed Vann as assistant city solicitor, a position that whetted Vann's appetite for future political appointments. However, a series of political disappointments in the 1920s and early 1930s—his dismissal as city solicitor, two failed county judgeship election attempts, an unappreciative Republican Party, and white Republicans' refusal to address issues facing black America—soured Vann's commitment to the Republican Party. In 1932, he abandoned the party, denounced its blatant racism, campaigned for Roosevelt, and used his newspaper as a vehicle for cultural consciousness, political change, and social protest. Vann's hard work paid off when a small yet significant shift in African-American votes helped elect Roosevelt in November 1932.

The Roosevelt administration appointed Vann as special assistant attorney general on Negro affairs in 1933. A confident Vann immediately recommended African Americans for federal posts. His suggested appointees included: the National Urban League's Eugene Kinkle Jones as advisor of Negro affairs in the Department of Commerce; social worker Lawrence A. Oxley, as head of Negro labor for the Department of Labor; and economist Robert Weaver as associate advisor on the status of African-Americans in the Department of the Interior.

Regrettably, Vann's enthusiasm soon waned as he realized his limitations inside the Justice Department. He routinely met hostility from office staffers, and received mundane tasks that hardly challenged his intellect. He mainly worked in the Land Division, examining titles for the Resettlement Administration and reforestation program. Only on rare occasions did Vann receive purposeful reprieves from his duties. He chaired two committees during his short stay in Washington: The Negro Advisory Committee of the Advisory and Planning Council for the Department of Commerce, and the Interdepartmental Group Concerned with the Special Problems of Negroes. While both committees at-

tempted to eradicate racism from government agencies and other institutions, discrimination, in the end, prevailed. Vann was especially troubled by the nonchalant attitude of New Dealers regarding African-American issues. He felt that the Democrats, the administration, and Roosevelt were uncommitted and unconcerned about improving the status of African Americans.

To make matters worse, many Washingtonians considered Vann an anachronism in the Roosevelt administration. Most Washington insiders separated Vann from the up-and-coming intellectuals generally referred to as the Black Cabinet. New Dealers considered Vann an outdated career politician or a political patronage appointee rewarded for his loyalty to the Democratic Party. Robert Weaver, Charles Hamilton Houston, Ralph Bunche, William H. Hastie, and Mary McLeod Bethune, however, were prominent government advisors brought into the fold for their potential ability to influence social policy, and for their expertise and academic training in education, the social sciences, and law. These men and women were intellectuals, not politicians with direct ties to the Democratic Party. Vann, on

the other hand, had little or no influence in the Justice Department. He found himself in Washington because of patronage politics, and his loyalty to the National Democratic Party. A frustrated and humiliated Vann left his post in 1936.

In his final years, Vann continued to enhance the reputation and quality of the *Courier*. He also endorsed Democrats in local, state, and national elections. But he realized that neither political party cared much about improving the quality of life for African Americans. A disillusioned Vann died in 1940 of complications from abdominal cancer.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD.

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BERNADETTE PRUITT



WAGNER, ROBERT F.

Robert F. Wagner (June 8, 1877–May 4, 1953), the United States senator widely regarded as the “legislative pilot of the New Deal” and the “architect of social justice in America,” was born in Nastatten, Germany, the youngest of seven children. Immigrating with his parents to the highly Teutonic Yorkville section of New York City at the age of nine, he worked his way through the City College of New York and New York Law School, graduating from the latter with honors in 1900. While practicing law among the people of his neighborhood, Wagner became increasingly involved in ward-level politics, where he soon drew favorable attention from the Tammany Hall leadership of the local Democratic Party. Elected to the state assembly in 1904 and to the state senate in 1908, he became the latter body’s youngest ever president pro tempore in 1911, teaming with his assembly counterpart, Alfred E. Smith, to head the commission investigating the horrific Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire that year. Based upon that experience, Wagner and Smith sponsored fifty-six factory health and safety laws, as well as numerous other progressive measures. Widowed with a young son (future New York City mayor Robert F. Wagner, Jr.) in 1919, he accepted an appointment to the state supreme court, where he gained an impressive reputation as a

champion of labor unions, consumers, renters, and government regulation of the economy.

Elected to the United States Senate in 1926, Wagner soon established himself as an outspoken critic of the Republican administrations of Calvin Coolidge and Herbert Hoover. In March 1928, he gained national attention through the introduction of his “Three Bills,” which provided for more accurate government gathering of unemployment statistics, the establishment of an effective system of public employment agencies, and the creation of a federal employment stabilization board that would oversee counter-cyclical government spending on public works projects. Although the Three Bills were tabled by the Republican Congress, they provided a preview of the greatly revised role that the federal government would come to play during the New Deal. Wagner also pushed for the abolition of “yellow-dog” contracts (by which employees were required to pledge they would not join a union), national unemployment insurance, and federal farm relief. When the Great Depression struck in 1929, Wagner joined with such progressive lawmakers as Robert M. La Follette, Jr., George W. Norris, David I. Walsh, Edward P. Costigan, and Fiorello La Guardia in advocating numerous measures to combat unemployment and to aid workers and farmers. In 1933, philosopher John Dewey, head of the People’s Lobby and the Joint Committee on Unem-

ployment, identified Wagner as “the key man in Congress.”

With the advent of the New Deal, Wagner consistently pressured Congress and the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration to intervene more directly into the socioeconomic order on behalf of those most disadvantaged by the Depression. He was instrumental in adding Section 7a to the National Industrial Recovery Act, giving workers a voice in formulating and implementing the law’s “codes of fair competition.” Two years later, he succeeded in enacting the National Labor Relations Act that still bears his name, guaranteeing “the exercise by workers of full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of their choosing, for the purpose of negotiating the terms and conditions of their employment or other mutual aid or protection.” He also was a major force behind the eventual passage of the Social Security Act of 1935, and he crusaded for public housing, national healthcare, veteran’s benefits, and federal anti-lynching legislation. Forced to resign from the Senate in 1949 due to deteriorating health, he lived in relative seclusion until his death. In his obituary, the *New York Times* lauded Wagner’s “deep-seated humanitarianism” and “sympathy for those handicapped in the race for life.” Pick any law designed to help the common people, the *Times* proclaimed, “and the chances are that Bob Wagner’s name is attached to it.”

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING; LABOR’S NON-PARTISAN LEAGUE; NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS ACT OF 1935 (WAGNER ACT); NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD (NLRB).

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JOHN D. BUENKER

WALLACE, HENRY A.

Henry Agard Wallace (October 7, 1888–November 18, 1965) served as the nation’s secretary of agriculture throughout much of the Great Depression. He used his office to promote change in the country’s agricultural system with the goal of restoring profitability to the farm business and holding the large American farm population on the land.

Born on an Iowa farm, Wallace came from a well-known family in agricultural circles. His grandfather Henry (Uncle Henry) Wallace, his father Henry C. (Harry) Wallace, and his uncle John Wallace founded a successful farm journal, *Wallaces’ Farmer*, in 1895. Uncle Henry served on President Theodore Roosevelt’s Country Life Commission in 1908 and 1909, and Harry became the U.S. secretary of agriculture in 1921. Hoping to modernize farming, improve the lives of farm people, and encourage them to remain farmers, the Wallaces contributed in large ways to the development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the country’s agricultural colleges.

After graduating from Iowa State College in 1910, Henry A. Wallace had gone to work for *Wallaces’ Farmer*. When his father moved to Washington, Henry replaced him as editor and carried forward the family’s program on behalf of farming and farmers. He championed the further development of the USDA and of agricultural colleges as research and educational agencies, and he joined his father in an ultimately unsuccessful fight for “Equality for Agriculture.” This initiative proposed the establishment of a government corporation that would market farm products, raise farm prices, and thereby convince farmers that they need not move to the city. In 1926, the editor also founded a private corporation, the Hi-Bred Corn Company, designed to develop hybrid corn seed and persuade farmers to use it.

In the 1928 presidential contest, Wallace actively opposed Herbert Hoover. To Wallace, Hoover appeared determined to make the United States an industrial nation. The process, Wallace feared, would drastically shrink the farm population, deprive the United States of its capacity to feed itself,



Henry A. Wallace, in his garden in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

and rob it of other contributions that, Wallace assumed, only farm people could make.

DEPRESSION-ERA SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

After the Great Depression changed American politics, Wallace moved to a higher post, becoming President Franklin D. Roosevelt's secretary of agriculture. Wallace was a logical choice because he had great prestige in farm circles, was one of Hoover's prominent critics, and had helped to persuade Iowa farmers to desert the Republican Party. Having become restless in the job he had held for many years, Wallace welcomed the new opportunity.

Roosevelt's first term. When he moved to Washington in March 1933, Wallace confronted grim conditions in rural America, for the Depression had hit

farmers extremely hard. The producers of grain and cotton had not participated in the economic boom of the 1920s, and after 1929 farm prices had dropped even more than the prices of goods farmers needed to buy. Some farm owners lost their farms, and many renters, sharecroppers, and wage laborers lost their places on the land. Farm people demanded change; some even employed violent means to express their discontent, and moderates warned of a revolutionary upheaval.

The new secretary brought the leaders of farm organizations to Washington and persuaded them to back legislation that would give him the power to experiment with a variety of proposed solutions to the farm crisis. He favored one of them: the Voluntary Domestic Allotment Plan, which would pay farmers to cut back on the acreage devoted to raising several crops, including wheat and cotton. The

argument was one Wallace had made since the early 1920s, that industrial corporations managed their production levels in ways that made their operations profitable, and farmers should do the same. Farmers, however, were only small operators; they were not corporate giants, and thus they needed help from a government agency if they were to manage their production successfully. The agency should not merely try to convince farmers to curtail production, as the Hoover administration had done, quite unsuccessfully. Instead, it should use the federal government's taxing and spending powers to persuade farmers to change. Roosevelt accepted the idea, Congress responded with a broad Agricultural Adjustment Act, and Wallace established the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) in May 1933 to implement the legislation.

Wallace promoted other ideas for the protection and improvement of American agriculture, most of which served to enlarge the federal government. Two of his efforts focused on soil conservation. In 1935, he took over a soil erosion program from the Interior Department and established the Soil Conservation Service to develop and administer the program. Because he promoted long-range agricultural planning, he was prepared when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1936 that the Agricultural Adjustment Act violated the U.S. Constitution. In response, Wallace championed passage of legislation that empowered the AAA to pay farmers to shift acres from soil-depleting crops, like wheat and cotton, to soil-building ones, such as clover.

Wallace also successfully resisted a proposal championed by the National Farmers Union, which called upon the federal government to guarantee farmers a price for their products that would more than cover their production costs. The aim was to hold all farmers on the land, but Wallace regarded it as unrealistic. His aim was to protect farmers who could succeed if they received fair prices. In response, the Farmers Union demanded Wallace's removal from office, but failed to get it.

Roosevelt's second term. By 1936, most farmers approved of Wallace's efforts on their behalf. At least they liked the money that came from Washington and the higher prices they obtained in the market.

Thus, they rewarded the president with their votes in the election that year. Support for Roosevelt came from farmers in the Midwest, who had customarily voted Republican, as well as farmers in the South, who had traditionally supported Democrats.

During Roosevelt's second term, Wallace continued his efforts to make farming more profitable and to hold commercial farmers on the land. He also moved in a direction new to him when he championed programs that focused on the poorest people in farm communities. As recently as 1935 Wallace had ousted lawyers from the AAA after they pushed a scheme to make southern sharecroppers more secure, but beginning in 1937 he supported a new agency, the Farm Security Administration (FSA), that had a similar aim. The FSA tried to help tenant farmers become farm owners and to improve conditions for sharecroppers and migratory farm workers.

Although many Americans at the time were concerned about such people, Wallace concluded before the end of the 1930s that Congress would not appropriate the funds required to make a meaningful difference in the lives of the poorest folks in the land. Thus, he turned to industrialization and a high-wage economy as solutions to their problems and as a means of improving the lot of more prosperous farm people at the same time. Industrial development and high wages, Wallace now believed, could draw people out of depressed rural conditions and enlarge markets for those who continued to farm.

VICE PRESIDENT DURING ROOSEVELT'S THIRD TERM

Wallace's success as secretary and the broadening of his point of view enabled him to move higher in American politics and government. By the late 1930s, his admirers favored him as Roosevelt's successor, seeing him as the leader who could maintain the New Deal's momentum. However, the leaders of the American Farm Bureau Federation had become unhappy with Wallace; to them, Wallace seemed to have become more interested in the rural poor and in urban workers than in substantial commercial farmers. The Farmers Union, on the other hand, which had new leadership and advo-

cated a political alliance between farmers and wage earners, had moved to Wallace's side. Roosevelt's decision to run for a third term ended Wallace's bid for the White House, but the president insisted that Democrats nominate this former Republican for the vice presidency, and they did.

Wallace's service as vice president shifted his focus away from agriculture but did not lead him to the presidency. Pressured by Robert Hannegan, the chair of the Democratic National Committee, and other prominent democrats, Roosevelt deserted him in 1944; the Democrats nominated Harry Truman for the vice presidency, and he, not Wallace, succeeded Roosevelt. After a year and a half as secretary of commerce in the Roosevelt-Truman administration, Wallace broke with Truman over foreign policy and was forced to resign. Running on a third-party ticket, he challenged Truman in 1948 and finished fourth in a field of four. The outcome destroyed his political career.

Living his last years on a farm in Westchester County, New York, Wallace devoted much of his attention to his lifetime passion for plant breeding. The corporation he had founded in 1926 had become a huge success, while other developments he had promoted in agriculture, including the enlarged role of the federal government, continued to have his support. Although the now enormous productivity of American farmers pleased him, one feature of rural life troubled him: The American farm population had become alarmingly small.

See Also: AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ADMINISTRATION (AAA); AGRICULTURE; ELECTION OF 1940; FARM POLICY.

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RICHARD S. KIRKENDALL

WASHINGTON COMMONWEALTH FEDERATION (WCF)

The Washington Commonwealth Federation (WCF) was established in Seattle, Washington, on June 8, 1935, to improve economic and political conditions in the city and the state. In addition to its public service functions, the WCF served as a liberal Seattle wing of the Democratic Party.

In response to the Great Depression, in August 1931 Seattle liberals, radicals, reformers, socialists, unionists, and unemployed workers organized into a self-help group, which they called the Unem-

ployed Citizens' League (UCL). Members began to organize relief measures for unemployed workers, such as harvesting crops, cutting fuel wood, and fishing. One of the UCL's first political activities was to support the campaign of John F. Dore, who was elected Seattle's mayor in 1932. However, Communist Party members began to gain influence in the UCL, damaging the group's credibility.

In 1934, the UCL's non-Communist members broadened the organization's goals in order to attract new members and distance it from Communist Party. It changed its name to Commonwealth Builders, Inc. (CBI), and began working with state and federal Democratic Party members. In 1935 CBI reorganized in order to develop a statewide employment campaign based on the notion of "production for use" instead of "production for profit." The plan was to reopen abandoned factories and farms, and distribute products through publicly owned stores, where workers could exchange scrip for goods. The new organization—the Washington Commonwealth Federation—began with Cyrus Woodward as president and Howard Costigan as executive secretary. Its goals included labor rights, farm policies, consumer protection, social security, and public health and housing. Over the next ten years the WCF was instrumental in the passage of important social policy for Washington residents.

In 1936, WCF members gained control of the state Democratic Party. Critics, however, charged that the WCF was affiliated with the Communist Party because some WCF members were also Communist Party members, and the organization's influence waned as a consequence. WCF membership dwindled when fuller employment developed as the buildup for World War II brought contracts and money into Seattle and the Puget Sound region for the construction of ships, airplanes, and tanks. The WCF disbanded in 1945, with its leaders claiming the organization had fulfilled "its historical and anti-Fascist role."

See Also: COMMUNIST PARTY.

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WILLIAM ARTHUR ATKINS

WCF. *See* WASHINGTON COMMONWEALTH FEDERATION.

WEAVER, ROBERT CLIFTON

Robert Clifton Weaver (December 29, 1907–July 17, 1997), New Deal race relations adviser, was born and raised in the black middle class of Washington, D.C. Weaver attended Harvard University on a scholarship, where he came to know fellow African-American students Ralph Bunche, John P. Davis, and William H. Hastie. In 1933, during the New Deal's first "100 Days," Weaver and Davis formed the Joint Committee on National Recovery to represent the needs of black people at congressional hearings. In November 1933 Weaver was chosen to assist Clark H. Foreman, then race relations adviser to Secretary of Interior Harold L. Ickes. Two years later, Weaver succeeded Foreman as Ickes's adviser in both the Department of the Interior and the Public Works Administration (PWA). In 1938, Weaver joined the newly created United States Housing Authority and from 1940 to 1944 he served in a number of capacities with federal agencies.

With Mary McLeod Bethune, Weaver was one of the most influential members of the Black Cabinet, an informal group of African Americans appointed in the Roosevelt era as racial advisers to federal departments and newly established agencies. Weaver's importance as an advocate for African Americans derived from his expertise in black

housing and labor issues, his academic and personal qualities, and his belief in the New Deal's significance as an agency for change. Although he helped force integration of the Interior Department's lunchroom facilities in the 1930s, he was not a political or civil rights activist like Bethune or Davis. Focusing on jobs and housing, Weaver used statistics and analysis to influence federal policy and to expand public awareness of the "Negro problem."

Weaver saw New Deal reform as instrumental in transforming the condition of African Americans. The integration of blacks into the American economic system, through expanded federally financed employment and housing opportunities, would not only create necessary skills for blacks and facilitate their entry into a growing industrial society, it would also improve the climate for race relations. For Weaver, economic segregation reinforced the social and political separation of the races. The Depression had illuminated the depth of black destitution and the urgency for immediate black assistance. Only the federal government possessed the power necessary to modify social institutions and provide blacks and other minorities with the material and spiritual aid necessary to secure their ultimate integration into American life. At Weaver's urging, racial discrimination was not only prohibited in PWA labor contracts, but in 1934 Harold Ickes supported a quota system to assure black worker participation. Weaver had an equally important impact in gaining black inclusion in public housing programs begun in the late 1930s. He left the government in 1944 believing that his influence was limited but he never lost faith in the New Deal or in the government's critical role in improving the quality of black life. In 1966, when Lyndon Johnson appointed Weaver secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, he became the first African American to head a federal cabinet post.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; BLACK CABINET.

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JOHN B. KIRBY

WELFARE CAPITALISM

Welfare capitalism encompassed a wide range of private, firm-level social policies, including innovations in personnel management, employee representation, recreation, stock ownership, and cash benefits for retirement and unemployment and sickness. Benefits were most common and most expansive for "white collar" employees whose occupational status rested on loyalty to the corporation and mobility within it. In a limited fashion, benefits spread to small family-owned firms and company towns and then to large industrial concerns facing new challenges in labor and community relations. At the core of both the benefits provided and the often-onerous service provisions attached to them was the urgency of creating or recreating workers' dependence upon, and loyalty to, their employers. Employment benefits, and wages deferred to pensions, savings, or company stock, encouraged workers to equate their own economic future with the prosperity and good favor of their employers. "Many of you are now real 'partners' . . . because you have your share of the 'surplus profits,'" a 1920 circular of the Endicott-Johnson Shoe Company reminded employees, "your own selfish interest, now, demands that you protect this business" (Zahavi, 1988).

Welfare capitalism marked an important transition in labor relations. Many firm-level welfare policies (recreation, company housing, health and hygiene programs) reached back to late-nineteenth century or Progressive Era efforts to protect workers from the ravages of industrialization. Many policies (employee representation plans, stock ownership plans) tried to replicate or recapture the paternal re-

relationship between employer and employee common in older family firms. Moreover, many policies (private pensions, sickness insurance, unemployment insurance) anticipated the private and public social insurance programs that would become commonplace after the mid-1930s. In most cases, a given firm's welfare program reflected all of these diverse motives and methods.

It is easy to exaggerate the scope and impact of welfare capitalism. While employers dispensed platitudes about "industrial democracy" or "employee loyalty" quite liberally, few devoted substantial resources to such programs, and most abandoned them when deferred wages could not meet their costs. The most promising and important private welfare plans, in this respect, also proved the most fickle. Industrial pensions, for example, were found primarily in larger Northern non-union firms. Yet while nearly 80 percent of workers in these settings belonged to a private pension plan, barely 4 percent of male workers and 3 percent of female workers ever met the underlying service requirements. Through the 1920s and 1930s, employers used pension plans with some success to avert strikes and moderate labor turnover. Private pensions were, like most welfare capitalist plans, noncontributory and discretionary: Workers had no "vested" rights in company pension funds, and employers could change plan rules or terms at their whim. Employers also proceeded with little appreciation of the actuarial demands or real costs of their pension plans and began to abandon them in the late 1920s. Similarly, private unemployment plans were widely trumpeted but adopted by only a few maverick firms (including General Electric) and a few industries (including the garment trades in Rochester, New York, Chicago, and Cleveland) that hoped that they might regulate competition by compelling continuous employment and curtailing the freedom of "fly-by-night" contractors.

Welfare capitalism also drew clear distinctions according to the gender or race of its beneficiaries. This discrimination was especially pronounced in white collar work, in which the managerial ranks remained a white (even Anglo-Saxon) enclave and in which fringe benefits helped to distinguish mainly careers from the "pink collar" rank-and-file.

In the industrial economy, programs for male workers focussed on masculine diversions (sports) or "breadwinner" wage-based benefits. By contrast, programs for women (mostly safety and personnel policies) were concerned largely with ameliorating the burden of work in such a way as to challenge the social and political assumption that women needed to be protected from wage labor. Black workers also had little claim on welfare capitalism—in part because such programs were rare in the agricultural and industrial labor markets in which black labor was concentrated and in part because employers routinely excluded or segregated black employees.

For its part, organized labor understood employers' motives and the conditional and limited nature of benefits. Through the 1920s, unions consistently opposed the introduction of employer-initiated welfare plans and, when plans were introduced in union firms, fought to ensure that they would be administered equitably. Workers and their unions, for the most part, understood welfare capitalism to be part and parcel of the "open shop" offensive against organized labor. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) dismissed welfare capitalism as both an alternative to higher wages and an aspersion on the masculine independence of its members. The position taken by AFL unions, and CIO unions after 1935, was that employment benefits were bargainable rights; in the contest over worker loyalty, such benefits should be won by the union and not conferred by management.

Welfare capitalism was truncated and transformed by the Depression and the New Deal. Many firms, already retreating from their welfare commitments, abandoned them entirely after 1929. Some firms, seeking to retain the benefits of welfare capitalism, encouraged the state to socialize their costs, and many workers turned to the state as private benefits evaporated. These pressures contributed to the passage of the Social Security Act in 1935. While federal social insurance programs and the emergence of the CIO after 1935 displaced many of the older welfare capitalist plans, important elements persisted. Non-union firms and sectors continued to use private benefits to maintain the loyalty of employees. Employers continued to offer

benefits that supplemented either social security or collectively bargained benefits. Management continued to toy with New Era innovations in labor management, such as the company union. Yet many programs, most notably employment-based group insurance, remained at the core of the “private welfare state” (employment-based private health insurance and pensions) that emerged after the 1940s.

See Also: ORGANIZED LABOR.

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COLIN GORDON

WELLES, ORSON

George Orson Welles (May 6, 1915–October 9, 1985) was an American director and actor in film, theater, and radio. Born in Kenosha, Wisconsin, Welles was a precocious child, whose mother began reading Shakespeare to him when Orson

was two. At sixteen, traveling in Ireland, Welles was hired as an actor at the renowned Gate and Abbey theatres. When he returned to the United States, he acted on Broadway and soon began to direct plays. Welles’s uniquely modern productions gained acclaim, and he led his theater company into the new field of radio drama. His famously deep, melodic voice became the incarnation of *The Shadow*, and his version of H. G. Wells’s *The War of the Worlds*, broadcast in October 1938 and intended as a Halloween entertainment, was so realistic that it caused a panic—and brought Welles to the attention of Hollywood. RKO invited the then 25-year-old to direct a picture; the result was *Citizen Kane* (1941), considered one of the finest films ever made.

The New Deal’s Works Progress Administration (WPA) sought to provide appropriate work for artists, as well as laborers; the WPA’s theatrical arm was the Federal Theatre Project. Welles, then in his twenties, became the creative force behind New York’s Negro Theatre Project, and selected *Macbeth* as its first production. To deal with the issue of black dialect and black actors playing Shakespeare, he changed the play’s setting from Scotland to Haiti. The resulting “Voodoo Macbeth” combined *Macbeth*’s tragic elements with voodoo chants, dramatic lighting, and music scored by composer Virgil Thomson. Welles then headed the Federal Theatre Project’s classical wing, Project 891, for which he directed a variety of plays, from *Horse Eats Hat*, an eighteenth-century farce, to Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, in which he also starred. Welles continued to evolve a dramatic use of lighting, sometimes on an empty stage.

Although Project 891 was funded by the federal government, Welles mounted Marc Blitzstein’s controversial *The Cradle Will Rock*, a “sociological light opera” that condemned big industry corruption and championed the gallantry of struggling labor unions. When the government reduced funding to programs in 1937, WPA members went on strike and closed all federal theatres. Blitzstein and the opera’s cast stood in front of the theater, handing out leaflets protesting the government’s imminent action, which was a parallel to the opera itself. On the day of the sold-out first performance of *The*

Cradle Will Rock, the front doors of the theater were padlocked and federal guards were placed outside. Welles stood on a box and shouted to the waiting audience that the play would go on in the Venice Theatre, twenty blocks uptown, at no charge. Cheering, the crowd made its way north, doubling by the time it reached the Venice. Without funding to pay for an orchestra, they rented a battered upright piano. The Federal Theatre Project actors were not allowed to appear onstage at another theater, so they sat in the audience, standing when appropriate to sing their parts. The review in *Stage* magazine claimed "a great art became a living crusade."

Time magazine featured the 23-year-old Orson Welles on its May 9, 1938, cover for simultaneously directing plays, acting in his own and other productions, and being host, director and star of weekly radio dramas. With his direction of *Citizen Kane*, he added film to his repertoire. The parallels of *Citizen Kane* to the life of newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst caused Hollywood to turn against Welles, and he spent the next decade working in Europe. Only years later was *Citizen Kane* acknowledged as one of the most innovative, cinematically original films ever made. Despite his struggles in Hollywood, Welles managed to direct thirteen feature films, including *The Magnificent Ambersons*, *Macbeth*, and *Touch of Evil*. He also acted in dozens of films, including his small but memorable role as Harry Lime in *The Third Man*, in which he wrote much of his own dialogue.

See Also: CRADLE WILL ROCK, THE; FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP); HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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FRANK BRADY

WEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE AMERICAN

Commentators in the region claimed that the Depression came late to the West, the area extending from North Dakota to Texas, and west to the Pacific Coast. But the western economy, heavily dependent on agriculture and the production of a variety of natural resources, probably deteriorated as rapidly as the rest of the nation. By the end of 1930, the Depression was at hand. Agriculture had been in the doldrums throughout the 1920s, and the western Plains was suffering from a Dust Bowl preview. Oil prices collapsed as the East Texas field came into production. In 1930 Oregon's lumber production was off 60 percent from 1929, western mining had dropped by half, and construction had declined significantly in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Portland. By the winter of 1932 to 1933, urban unemployment in the West was between 30 and 40 percent. Hoovervilles sprouted in most cities; homeless families lived in caves along the Canadian River in Oklahoma City, and the squalor of the Hispanic barrio in Phoenix was described as appalling. Farmers were pushed into tenancy (60 percent of farmers in Oklahoma and 45 percent in North Dakota were tenants by the end of the 1930s), or they left the land for the city or better opportunities farther west.

HOOVER YEARS: RESPONSES

In their first responses to the Depression, westerners opted for cooperative individualism over rugged individualism, the ideal generally thought typical of the western outlook. Cooperative individualism, a tenet the West shared with President Herbert Hoover and much of the rest of the nation in the early 1930s, links the ideal of self-reliance with an assumption that those better off will offer charitable assistance to the truly needy. In the first years of the Depression, private institutions, especially the Community Chest, the Red Cross, and church-related groups, raised record amounts to meet the needs. In Los Angeles, Seattle, and Denver, self-help groups bartered work for food and other needs. Local governments responded reluctantly, first creating an employment committee to ponder

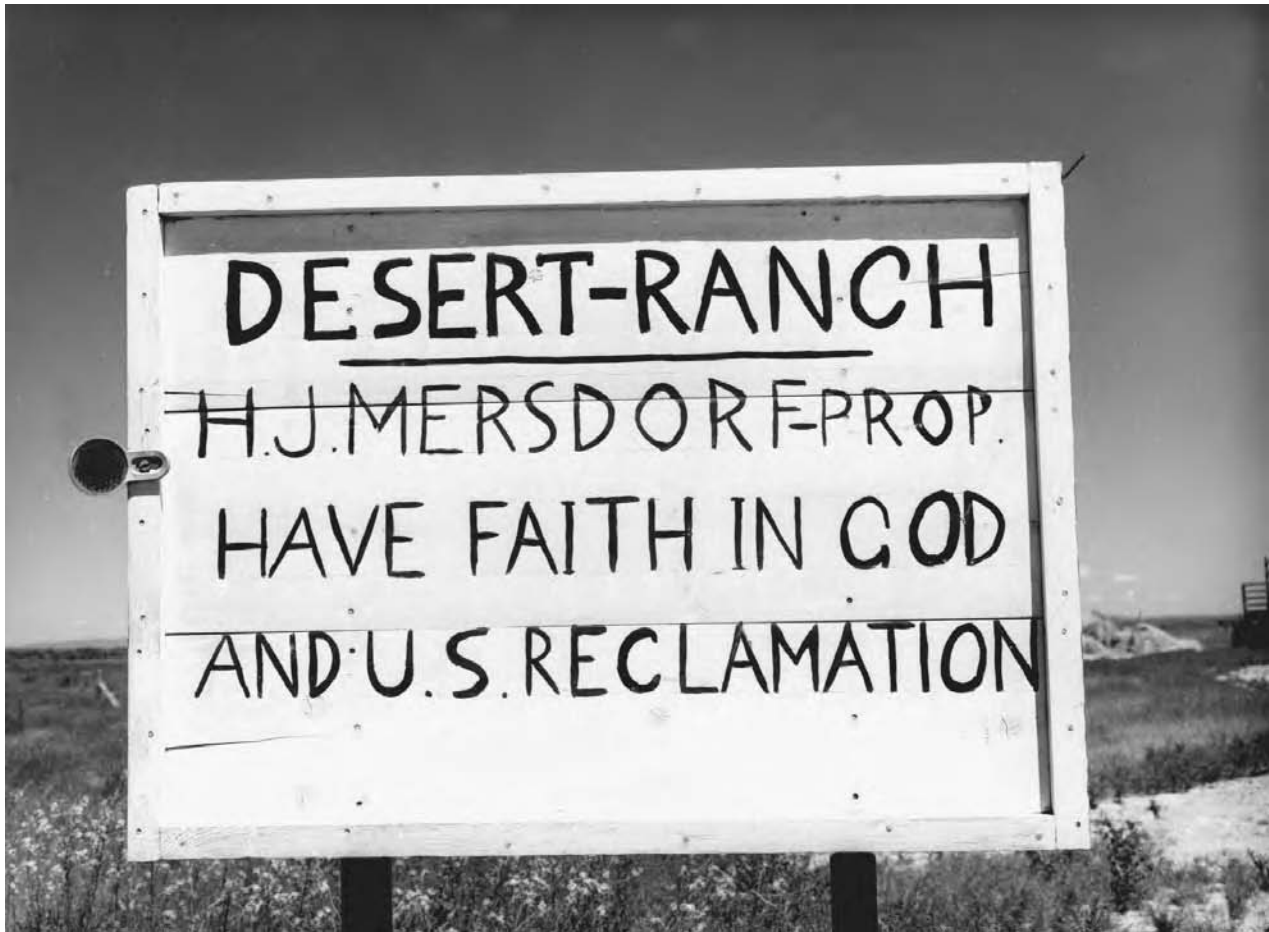


This camp for migrant agricultural and seasonal cannery workers (photographed in 1940) near Sacramento, California, was typical of migrant camps that appeared across the state during the Depression. Families at this camp paid approximately one dollar per month to rent space. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

the situation, then, after forcing contributions from municipal employees, making limited relief appropriations. Officials, especially in Denver and Oklahoma City, expressed concern that generous relief would only attract transients. Starting as early as spring 1931 in San Francisco and Los Angeles, voters in most large western cities endorsed bond issues to aid the unemployed. Once the cities and counties began dispensing relief they often blurred the lines between private and public responsibilities, funneling public relief funds through charitable agencies. Seattle made its self-help organization, the Unemployed Citizens' League, the basis

for city-administered relief, with politically tumultuous results.

By the end of the Hoover years, local efforts had collapsed. Municipal treasuries were depleted and tax relief organizations pressured officials to reduce spending. In the countryside, rabbit hunts provided for the needy in several western states; Texas farmers burned corn for heat; and throughout the Plains farm women tended larger gardens, raised more chicken and egg money, cooked Sunday dinners for others, and made their own soap to get by. Most states did accelerate public works projects to absorb a small portion of the jobless, though governors



This sign, photographed in 1941 on a ranch in Canyon County, Idaho, declared faith in federal land reclamation initiatives.

Water for this ranch was to be furnished by the Black Canyon irrigation project. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS

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Roland Hartley of Washington and Edwin Johnson of Colorado perceived virtually no state responsibility for the needy. Minorities were either short-changed on relief (Mexicans in Los Angeles), or tended to their own without outside help (the Friendly House in the Phoenix barrio and Asians all along the Pacific Coast).

Some found self-help and charity insufficient from the beginning. The Farm Holiday movement, active in the Plains states, Colorado, and New Mexico, demonstrated for suspension of foreclosures and tax relief. Governors William Langer of North Dakota and William Murray of Oklahoma declared foreclosure moratoriums. Marches of the unemployed occurred in the larger cities, but violence

was rare. The Bonus Expeditionary Force that went to Washington in 1932 seeking early payment of a bonus for veterans of World War I originated in Portland, and one of the largest contingents came from Los Angeles. By the end of 1932 cooperative individualism had collapsed. Property owners clamored for tax relief even as the need for unemployment relief funds was growing. Westerners welcomed the chance to vote for a New Deal. Every western state switched from Republican in 1928 to Democratic in the 1932 presidential election.

THE NEW DEAL AND RELIEF

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), as it provided direct relief (stipends with-



Thousands of migrant laborers traveled west in search of work during the 1930s. These carrot pullers in Coachella Valley, California, in 1937, were from Texas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Arkansas, and Mexico. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

out work in return), revived the severely underfunded relief effort, but stimulated controversy. Under FERA guidelines, states were to provide three dollars in relief for every federal dollar, but no western state came close to doing so; for example, FERA provided 87 percent of relief in Nebraska and 85 percent in Colorado. Ultimately, FERA director Harry Hopkins relented; if a state made a good-faith effort to match federal contributions, funding continued. Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah passed sales taxes; Colorado passed a gasoline excise tax; and other states similarly improvised or scrounged to find at least token matching funds. Still, problems

arose. In several states, FERA money seemed to be dispensed as patronage. Hopkins deprived the governors of North Dakota, Oklahoma, and Colorado of their control of relief due to non-cooperation with the agency. The Mormon Church in Utah was not comfortable with federal relief, although it did not prohibit its members from taking aid. Eventually, the church created a Church Security Program, in part to help its members avoid the dole.

The Franklin D. Roosevelt administration exited the direct relief business in 1935 by creating the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This too proved both a boon and a problem. The WPA be-



Former farmers and sharecroppers from the South and Midwest wait in line for semimonthly relief checks at Calipatria in Imperial Valley, California, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

came the largest employer in Nevada and funded millions of dollars of work in other states, but the agency was tinged by patronage accusations in New Mexico. In California, Arizona, and Colorado, growers criticized the WPA for not ousting Hispanic migrant laborers from the program so they would work in the fields at lower pay.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had a doubly beneficial impact on the West. Not only did it put the region's unemployed young men to work, it also brought thousands of new workers to the West, where many CCC projects were based. CCC workers planted trees on the Plains, helped construct Boulder Dam (Hoover Dam), and did forestry work throughout the Rockies and Cascades.

Hard-pressed cities gladly turned over relief responsibilities to these agencies and rejoiced at fed-

erally funded civic improvements: a bridge over the Missouri River in Omaha, dredging of the ship channel in Houston, a three-way underpass in downtown Dallas, as well as extensive road paving and sewer building throughout the major cities. Buoyed by the rising price of oil and the developing defense industry, the largest western cities by 1939 had emerged from Depression gloom and had devolved the major responsibility for their citizens' social welfare onto the federal government.

New Deal agencies that targeted farmers played crucial roles in the West. The Rural Electrification Administration began hooking up farms, the Farm Credit Administration refinanced mortgages, and the Bankhead-Jones Act of 1937 provided loans to tenant farmers trying to purchase land.

Minorities in the West were not forgotten, but they were not served especially well; still, many who obtained relief saw their standard of living rise. African Americans comprised less than 5 percent of the population in the West and tended to be segregated and ignored, but they were not barred from relief roles. The Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1934 classified Filipinos as aliens, making it difficult for them to obtain government aid. Both Filipinos and Mexican citizens in the United States were invited, and often compelled, to leave. Between 30 percent and 40 percent of the Mexican population was repatriated.

Few state officials shared the Roosevelt administration's penchant for planning or urgency for providing relief. Even "Little New Deals" under governors Culbert Olson in California and Ernest Marland in Oklahoma were less than dynamic. More typical were budget balancers like Alfred Landon in Kansas and Edwin Johnson in Colorado. Even though few states cooperated with Roosevelt, per capita federal expenditures were highest in the West. This was due, in part, to the region's small population, but it was also because the New Deal provided generous relief and recovery and funded several large region-transforming projects. The average expenditure for every citizen in the West was \$306, compared to \$224 in the Midwest, \$196 in the Northeast, and \$189 in the Southeast. The top fourteen states in per capita expenditure during the New Deal were western states.

AGRICULTURE

The New Deal probably made its greatest impact on the West in the area of agriculture. Farming, the backbone of the region's economy, was in desperate shape during the 1930s. Plummeting farm prices were to blame. Moreover, the Plains were parched by drought. From 1929 to 1939 the area suffered nine years of below-average rainfall, and by mid-decade it was afflicted with debilitating dust storms that lifted tons of dirt from the land. Heat, aridity, grasshopper plagues, and poor farming methods produced misery for farmers. In some counties as much as 80 percent of the population was on relief. The Roosevelt administration formed the Great Plains Drought Area Committee in 1936 to study the problem. Many of the Committee's recommendations were enacted: Some submarginal land was taken out of production, the Soil Conservation Service taught proper techniques, and various agencies worked at conserving or developing water supplies. Another of the more imaginative responses was the shelterbelt program, a pet idea of the president. The Forest Service, with WPA assistance, planted thousands of strips of trees in a zone stretching from Bismarck, North Dakota, to Amarillo, Texas, to moderate wind velocity on the farms they protected.

The two Agricultural Adjustment Administrations (AAA) took land out of production throughout the West. Because the drought was widespread, few of these plots would have been highly productive, but independent-minded western farmers initially balked at the idea of restrictions. Nonetheless, needing the money, they cooperated with the government. The New Deal aided ranchers as well. Both the AAA and the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation purchased livestock from farmers throughout the West. The Drought Relief Service subsidized farmers in almost every Dust Bowl county by buying cattle that would have died anyway.

Perhaps the closest the West came to embracing public planning for agriculture was the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, which effectively ended the Homestead Act by virtually closing the public domain to entry and reclassifying it as grazing land available on a fee basis. Though cattlemen from

Wyoming and other grazing states opposed it, they soon acknowledged the utility of land management and low fees.

INTERNAL MIGRATION: OKIES

Perhaps the best known story of the Depression-era West is the saga of internal migration. Beginning in the mid-1930s and peaking in 1937 and 1938, hundreds of thousands of Plains residents emigrated to California. The majority came from Oklahoma, Texas, and Arkansas, but they were known collectively as *Okies*. Others moved from the northern Plains to Oregon and Washington. Most were fleeing unworkable land both within and around the Dust Bowl of the western Great Plains. The most noticeable contingents became itinerant field workers, replacing Filipinos and Mexicans, in part because the Okies were more resistant to unionization. Nonetheless, the Associated Farmers, a powerful California growers' group, and the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing, and Allied Workers of America, a Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) union, clashed often in the late 1930s.

California welcomed the Okies as cheap labor, but rejected them as residents. Los Angeles briefly set up a "Bum Blockade" in 1936, and the state denied relief money to newly arrived migrants. Most of the migrants lived in squalor in California and Arizona, although the Resettlement Administration and its successor, the Farm Security Administration, created a few model camps. These two administrations also purchased submarginal lands from families, and relocated them on settlements throughout the western states, including Alaska. The program was only partially successful because most of the resettlement land was itself of inferior quality.

If Depression-era western residents contributed anything exceptional to the national culture it was stimulated by the Okies' experience. John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939), Dorothea Lange's photographs, Woody Guthrie's ballads, and Carey McWilliams's *Factories in the Fields* (1939) all indicted California agriculture and vividly portrayed the migrants' travails.

THE NEW DEAL AND WATER

Some members of the Department of Agriculture, including Rexford Tugwell, had sought thorough planning coupled with federal management for land use in the West, but the policies actually formulated by Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace were mainly responses to critical conditions. The Department of Interior, under Harold Ickes, came closer to creating a major decision-making role for the federal government in the West. Not only in grazing, but in water policy and Indian affairs, Ickes's Department of Interior, sometimes successfully and other times problematically, drew up grand and comprehensive plans for often reluctant westerners.

The Bureau of Reclamation and the Public Works Administration (PWA) designed or assisted on a number of critical water projects during and immediately after the Depression that transformed several sections of the region. The projects, which created jobs in the short run, provided flood control, irrigation to reclaim arid lands, recreational sites, and, above all, hydroelectric power for the West Coast and intermountain regions. As the Bureau of Reclamation and the PWA completed the Boulder Dam project, actually authorized in 1928, Ickes and his staff realized the myriad effects of such an enormous project. Out of this understanding came Parker Dam in California to provide electricity to Los Angeles and the All-American Canal to irrigate the Imperial and Coachella valleys. On the Columbia River, the Bonneville Dam enhanced navigation and the 450-foot-high Grand Coulee Dam furnished irrigation for the dry eastern half of Washington. Above all, the dams created megawatts of public hydroelectric power (administered by a federal agency, the Bonneville Power Administration) that contributed to the defense industry, as well as to post-World War II diversification in the Northwest. In Montana the multipurpose earthen Fort Peck Dam regulated the flow of the Missouri River. At the end of the Depression era, the ambitious Colorado-Big Thompson project got underway in Colorado. And despite real questions about whether the project was more for the benefit of small farmers (which the Bureau of Reclamation served) or agribusinesses, the Central Valley Project

in California, designed to supply more water to the San Joaquin Valley, got under way.

NATIVE AMERICANS

The Department of Interior's ideal of central planning surely affected Native Americans, who benefited from a variety of New Deal programs, especially the Indian Emergency Conservation Works Program—a separate CCC that allowed Native Americans to stay near their homes. The keystone to Indian policy was the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 (Wheeler-Howard Act). Commissioner of Indian Affairs John Collier believed Indian communalism could be an antidote for an exceedingly individualistic American society. In tune with this ideal, the act repealed allotment in severalty, restored surplus lands to the tribes, and encouraged purchase of already allotted lands to be added to tribal lands. Tribal bodies could be created and tribal corporations formed to obtain federal loans.

Despite the fact that this legislation restored tribal autonomy, not all Indian groups approved. Full-blooded Native Americans tended to oppose the measure, fearing they would lose their allotments. Others had accepted assimilation and saw no reason for change. Many felt the commissioner and his staff were trying to manipulate them, especially after local agents seemed to control the writing of the tribal constitutions. Ultimately, ninety-three tribes voted for incorporation, but, significantly, the Navajos declined, perhaps upset by an overly aggressive Indian Bureau livestock purchasing program. It appears the Indian Reorganization Act was a partial success, mainly limited by government planners too zealous in instructing Native Americans on how to preserve their own heritage.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The New Deal record was modest in the area of natural resources. Wallace and Ickes vied for control of the forests. Futilely dreaming of transforming the Department of Interior into the Department of Conservation, Secretary Ickes sought to capture the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service by showing Interior's skill in multiple use planning and sustained yield forestry in the O and C Lands, an expanse of forest in western Oregon

revested by the Oregon and California Railroad in 1916 and placed under Interior's control. Though he ultimately failed to expand his bureaucratic turf, Ickes was moderately successful expanding the forestland under his control through the Grazing Service and an enlargement of Olympic National Park in Washington.

The oil industry worked through much of the decade to prop up prices in the face of a petroleum glut. Ickes was again at the center of activity, advocating comprehensive federal regulation rather than the proration of production sought by the oil industry. After the Supreme Court abolished the National Recovery Administration and its regulations on production, several oil producing states negotiated the Interstate Oil and Gas Compact in 1935. This, along with the Connally Act to eliminate the transport of hot oil (oil produced in excess of the proration limits on each oil field), brought stability, and the oil industry became substantially self-regulating. The Silver Purchase Act of 1934, compelling the federal government to buy quantities of silver for possible monetization, was the most significant New Deal contribution to the mining industry. Though Roosevelt and, especially, Ickes saw the West as a land of resources to be carefully looked after and preserved, political realities in the end transformed this preservationist notion into, at best, more careful stewardship to produce later economic advantage for westerners.

DEPRESSION-ERA POLITICS IN THE WEST

Politics in the West largely followed national trends. Roosevelt swept the West in 1932 and 1936, then lost five states in 1940 (the Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas, and Colorado). Many Democrats whom Roosevelt had helped sweep into office were loyal to him. Other Democrats proved to be prickly opponents. Governors Johnson of Colorado, Murray of Oklahoma, and Charles Martin of Oregon were particularly hostile. Senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, a one-time Roosevelt supporter, broke with the president over the issue of adding justices to the Supreme Court. Part of the reason for intra-party opposition was that Democrats in the West were often conservative. Republicans, particularly those infused with a Progressive tradition, were

more liberal. Bronson Cutting of New Mexico, Edward Costigan of Colorado, and Nebraska's George Norris, all Republicans, were New Deal supporters.

The Washington and Oregon Commonwealth associations and North Dakota's Non-Partisan League generally shunned party affiliation, but seemed to find common cause with more progressive New Deal policies. With such a topsy-turvy political situation, it is no surprise that the Roosevelt coalition did not hold up well in the West, even though Roosevelt's programs found philosophical support among some opinion makers in the region. As the need for federal assistance lessened, traditional independent-mindedness reasserted itself, and westerners went back to voting for candidates rather than parties and to voting Republican more often.

Though not numerous, there were some who sought to go beyond the New Deal. In 1934, socialist Upton Sinclair waged a successful primary campaign to win the Democratic nomination for governor of California, but he lost the race to a conservative Republican when leading Democrats, including Roosevelt, sat out his End Poverty in California (EPIC) campaign. Dr. Francis Townsend's old age pension plan started in Long Beach, California. Even before organized labor benefited from the Wagner Act, union leader Harry Bridges organized one of the most significant Depression-era strikes among Pacific Coast dockworkers. Marked by violence, the action evolved into a four-day general strike in San Francisco in 1934. In the end, Bridges's International Longshoremen's Association gained recognition.

EVALUATIONS

The Great Depression in the West may have sapped cooperative individualism in the early years, but by World War II it was clear that some variety of individualism was active in the region. Westerners accepted the federal government as an agent of relief, whether it was outright relief, work relief, subsidies for farmers, or livestock purchases. But when New Dealers sought to plan or merely guide the western economy, the federal government was still seen as interfering. Federal planning affected the West in varying degrees: Some marginal land

was taken out of production; agronomy methods improved; grazing on federal land was fairly closely controlled; land allotments for Native Americans were halted; and forests were managed, perhaps better than before. But individual westerners, especially the more powerful ones, still had a good deal of autonomy in agriculture, lumber, oil, and mining. The greatest impact of central planning in the West occurred in water management, where only the federal government could afford to undertake the huge projects that changed the western half of the region. The hydroelectricity these projects produced prepared the West for diversification during the war years and beyond. Politically, the story was the same. Westerners demonstrated their gratefulness to President Roosevelt for his assistance, but they clung to their independent, mainly Republican, ways. The Depression in the West produced significant change, but could not be accurately described as a watershed.

See Also: BOULDER DAM; DUST BOWL; GRAND COULEE PROJECT; INDIAN NEW DEAL; MIDWEST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; NORTHEAST, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; OKIES; SHELTERBELT PROJECT; SOUTH, GREAT DEPRESSION IN THE; TAYLOR GRAZING ACT.

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WILLIAM H. MULLINS

WEST, MAE

Mae West (August 17, 1893–November 22, 1980) reigned during the 1930s as one of Hollywood's

most popular and controversial actresses. Born Mary Jane West in Brooklyn, New York, on August 17, 1893, West was raised in a poor family. A precocious child, she began performing with local stock companies. By 1910, she embarked on a professional career and for years bounced between vaudeville and burlesque with occasional Broadway engagements in between.

By the 1920s, West had developed a unique and bold performance style rooted in vaudeville, melodrama, drag performance, and African-American culture. In 1927, her fame grew with her appearance in *SEX*, a play she had authored. *SEX*'s frankness, combined with her attempt to stage another play about homosexuality, landed West a ten-day jail sentence. In 1928, she wrote and starred in the hit, *Diamond Lil*, the story of a former prostitute with a heart of gold. The image of the swaggering, hand on her hip, wise-cracking Lil became enmeshed with West's public persona.

West's film break came in 1932 when Paramount Studios, despite movie censors' ban on the actress, slipped her into a small part in *Night after Night*. Critics agreed: West was brilliant. Realizing her earning potential, the nearly bankrupt studio gave West complete creative control and proceeded with filming *Diamond Lil*. The result, *She Done Him Wrong* (1933), broke all box office records and revived Paramount. West's follow-up, *I'm No Angel* (1933) was equally successful. The actress became a national phenomenon. Her clever sayings, including "Come up and see me sometime" and "When I'm good, I'm very good, but when I'm bad I'm better," and Mae West look-alike contests swept the country.

Although Hollywood's most powerful woman, Mae West could not outsmart censors for long. They drastically sheared her fourth film, *Belle of the Nineties* (1934). West made only five more films during the decade, and with each one her character became blander and her audience dwindled. Nonetheless, she remained a presence and even found herself banished from radio after a saucy performance in an Adam and Eve skit in 1937.

Much of West's appeal rested in her ability to empower people struggling through the Great Depression. West played the underdog who tri-



Mae West, circa 1930s. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM AND THE SUN NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION

umphed through wit and guile. Her bold celebration of female sexuality empowered women. But her rags-to-riches story also spoke to Americans from all walks of life, giving them hope that they too could overcome adversity.

See Also: GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY.

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JILL WATTS

WEST, NATHANAEL

Nathanael West (October 17, 1903–December 22, 1940) may well have been the quintessential Depression-decade novelist. He published all four of his depressive short novels in the 1930s and then died, quickly and tragically. He was born Nathan Wallenstein Weinstein in New York City. A voracious reader, he was a surprisingly poor student and dropped out of high school. Using faked transcripts, he gained admission to two colleges, and, after some chicanery, managed to graduate from Brown University in Rhode Island. While at Brown, West wrote an early draft of his first novel, *The Dream Life of Balso Snell*. After graduation, he worked at a number of small Manhattan hotels as an assistant or night manager.

Working nights, he was able to spend his time reading and observing the seedier aspects of urban American life. He also spent time rewriting his earlier drafts of *The Dream Life of Balso Snell*. He told a friend that he considered this novel “a protest against the writing of books.” He then follows, he explains, the meanderings of “an American Babbitt. . . . through the anus of the Trojan horse, and [describes] his encounters there with various forms of deception, pretense, and illusion.” In 1931 West had five hundred copies of *The Dream Life of Balso Snell* privately printed by the avant-garde firm of Contact Editions. The author was listed as Nathanael West, marking Nathan Weinstein’s official name change. The novel received only two reviews, both written by friends.

In 1929, the writer S. J. Perelman, who had been a close college friend and was to become his brother-in-law, showed West a group of letters written to the lovelorn columnist of a Brooklyn newspaper. West saw immediately that the letters were cries for help. Deeply moved, he started transmuting his reactions to the letters into fiction. He worked on this second novel for four years, completing the final draft of *Miss Lonelyhearts* only in November 1932. In it, a young newspaperman, known only by his byline, Miss Lonelyhearts, devises replies to “Desperate,” “Brokenhearted,” “Sick-of-it-all,” and others of the lovelorn who write to him for advice. Despite a smattering of

generally favorable reviews, *Miss Lonelyhearts* garnered few readers and was quickly remaindered. West spent a few months in Hollywood in 1933, working as a junior writer at Columbia Pictures. About this time he conceived the idea of writing a novel about the dream capital’s “subterranean life.” He soon returned to New York, bitter and disenchanted with Hollywood. Other favorable reviews to *Miss Lonelyhearts* continued to appear, and to cash in on these positive reactions to his second novel, West quickly wrote *A Cool Million*. It was a savage attack on the Horatio Alger, rags-to-riches myth of capitalist America’s rugged individualism. But the manuscript was rejected by his previous publisher, Harcourt, Brace. Its editors considered it a disappointing fall from the level of *Miss Lonelyhearts*. Published instead by Covici-Friede in 1934, *A Cool Million* was savaged by most of the reviewers and, like its predecessor, was almost immediately remaindered.

West now found himself without viable options for making a living. So, despite his distaste for Hollywood, he returned there to be a scriptwriter at Republic Studios. Hollywood was now his real home, whether or not he wished to recognize it as such. But whereas novelists like F. Scott Fitzgerald, William Faulkner, and Aldous Huxley were working for studios such as MGM and Twentieth Century-Fox, West worked mostly at “Poverty Row” film factories like Republic. Only near the end of his life did he make it even to RKO and Universal. By then West had finally found his niche. In the end he derived more from his schlock Hollywood experiences than did those writers who were better situated. After all, he was researching and writing *The Day of the Locust* on a daily basis, so he was quite content and amused to grind “out the rather stupefying plots” his Republic, Universal, and RKO bosses demanded. Yet despite his professed negativism and his bitter disappointment over his new novel’s poor sales, West continued to work steadily and live comfortably. In 1939 he published *The Day of the Locust*, which he had finished between studio assignments. In this novel West’s Yale man observer-hero, Tod Hackett, finds himself involved with an array of the movie town’s castoffs. West hoped the novel would prove successful enough for him to leave Hollywood. It was not; in fact, it sold only

1,480 copies. However, the reviews were generally positive, even enthusiastic at times.

The decade of the 1930s had not proved especially kind to West, despite his having published four novels that established his literary reputation. But the 1940s seemed to hold promise of both greater personal happiness and literary success, for in 1939 he had met and fallen in love with a young widow with a sunny disposition and a son from her previous marriage. She was Eileen McKenney, the heroine of Ruth McKenney's *My Sister Eileen*, widely popular as a book and a movie. They married in April 1940, and West adopted her son. The newlyweds spent three happy months in Oregon hunting and fishing, but this blissful period was to be short-lived. On December 22, he and his wife were returning from a hunting trip in Mexico, when West, a notoriously poor driver, ran a stop sign near El Centro, California, and crashed their station wagon into another automobile. Eileen died on the spot, and West died an hour later on the way to the hospital. He was 37. Very likely West would find dark humor in his posthumous fame.

See Also: LITERATURE.

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BEN SIEGEL

WHEELER, BURTON K.

Burton Kendall Wheeler (February 27, 1882–January 7, 1975) was a United States senator from

Montana (1923–1947) best known for opposing U.S. entry into World War II. The youngest of ten children of Asa Wheeler, a Quaker shoemaker, and Mary Tyler, Wheeler was born in Hudson, Massachusetts and graduated from the University of Michigan Law School in 1905. He practiced law in Butte, Montana, and served one term as a Democrat in the Montana House of Representatives. President Woodrow Wilson in 1913 appointed him United States district attorney general for Montana.

In 1922, Wheeler was elected as a Democrat to the United States Senate. In 1924 he charged Attorney General Harry Daugherty with failing to prosecute those involved in the Teapot Dome scandal and directed a Senate inquiry into the scandal, causing President Calvin Coolidge to force Daugherty's resignation. In 1924, he ran unsuccessfully for vice president on the Progressive Party ticket headed by Senator Robert LaFollette of Wisconsin.

During President Franklin Roosevelt's first term, Wheeler backed most New Deal legislation. As Interstate Commerce Committee chairman, he led the successful floor battle in 1935 for the Public Utilities Holding Company Act. Wheeler considered the measure his toughest Senate battle because of resistance by the powerful utilities lobby.

In 1937 Wheeler protested Roosevelt's "court-packing" plan to enlarge the U.S. Supreme Court as an unconstitutional attempt to seize power. Roosevelt, hoping to give the Supreme Court a New Deal majority, personally sought to dissuade Wheeler, who rallied conservative Democrats to bury the president's proposal by fifty votes. The setback marked Roosevelt's worst legislative defeat to that point and sparked a resurgence of congressional power.

Wheeler helped lead isolationist resistance to Roosevelt's internationalist policies until the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. The powerful, sharp-tongued orator spoke at numerous America First Committee rallies in 1941 opposing U.S. aid to the Allies. In January 1941 he infuriated Roosevelt by denouncing the lend-lease bill aiding Great Britain as "the New Deal's triple-A foreign policy" and warning "it will plow under every fourth American boy." Wheeler ultimately supported the U.S. mili-

tary effort during World War II, but his influence declined dramatically. He lost his re-election bid in 1946 and spent the rest of his career practicing corporate law in Washington, D.C., in support of right-wing causes.

An adept legislative infighter, Wheeler usually criticized government programs rather than initiating or building them. The independent, fiesty politician seemed happiest in the opposition or on the offensive. His legislative skills, deal-making, arm-twisting abilities, and proficiency at stroking egos made him a leading Senate figure.

See Also: ISOLATIONISM; PUBLIC UTILITIES HOLDING COMPANY ACT; SUPREME COURT "PACKING" CONTROVERSY.

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DAVID L. PORTER

"WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?"

Of the many songs born out of labor strife in America's coal camps, Florence Reece's classic 1931 union song "Which Side Are You On?" is one of the best known. The struggle in Harlan County emerged from the depths of the economic crisis in the coal fields in the early 1930s, which produced successive wage cuts and layoffs for miners. In the battle of Evarts, strikers and mine guards fought a violent battle, leading to mass arrests and prosecutions of striking miners on criminal charges. The struggle in Harlan aroused people across the country in support of the right to organize, leading ultimately to the enactment of the Wagner Act's protections for union rights.

In the spring of 1931, citing the dangerous conditions in the mines and their low pay, the coal

miners of Harlan County, Kentucky, began a strike that was stridently opposed by the local Coal Operators' Association (COA). On one side of the conflict stood the forces of the COA and local law enforcement, led by the high sheriff of Harlan County, J. H. Blair. (In an interview with the writer John Dos Passos, Blair admitted that most of his deputies were mine guards who were still being paid by mine owners.) On the other side were the striking miners, who organized themselves under the tutelage of the National Miners' Union (NMU) and armed themselves against Blair's forces of so-called law and order.

Florence Reece became involved in the conflict when Sheriff Blair and his men broke into her family's cabin, ransacking it in their search for union literature, terrorizing her and her children, and lying in wait for her husband, Sam Reece, an NMU organizer. Luckily, Sam did not fall into Blair's trap, but Florence was moved to action. She tore a sheet from a wall calendar and, using the old Baptist tune "Lay the Lily Low," she wrote "Which Side Are You On?" The song opens by asking "all you poor workers" to listen to the good news that the union "has come in here to dwell." The chorus asks the dividing question: "Which side are you on?" Then the third verse lays out the two sides: "If you go to Harlan County / There is no neutral there / You'll either be a union man / Or a thug for J. H. Blair."

"Which Side Are You On" became an anthem of labor struggle, as the folk process transformed it in different ways. Pete Seeger and various workers organizing unions as part of the Congress of Industrial Organizations picked up the song as their own, changing lyrics to fit the situation at hand. Song leader Zilphia Horton and others at Highlander Folk School transmitted the song to new groups of southern workers who came there to learn about organizing. The song eventually passed over from the union movement to the black freedom movement. In 1961, Congress of Racial Equality leader James Farmer revised the words to fit the circumstances in the south during the Freedom Rides: Whenever members felt that other African Americans were betraying the cause of equality and freedom, CORE members sang, "Oh people can you stand it, / Tell me how you can. / Will you be an

Uncle Tom / Or will you be a man?" Reece's song moved from Harlan County to Mississippi, and then to Alabama, where Len Chandler created new verses for the voting rights march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965, satirizing people who feared to take a stand as well as the state's bigoted governor George Wallace and the Ku Klux Klan.

"Which Side Are You On?" has long outlasted Reece, who died at her home in Knoxville in 1986. It remains her lasting legacy to the world and a reminder of how the culture of struggle created during the Depression era continues to influence protest and social movements.

See Also: HARLAN COUNTY; MUSIC; ORGANIZED LABOR.

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MARK JACKSON
MICHAEL HONEY

WHITE, WALTER

Walter White (1893–1955), secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) between 1930 and 1955, was born in Atlanta, Georgia. According to his *New York Times* obituary (March 22, 1955), "Mr. White, the nearest approach to a national leader of American Negroes since Booker T. Washington, was a Negro by choice." The blonde-haired and blue-eyed White could "pass" for white, yet he chose not to do so. Central to his decision to identify himself as African American was his witnessing of the Atlanta race riot of 1906. After graduating from Atlanta University in 1916, White helped to found that city's branch of the NAACP; two years later, he moved to New York City to be the association's assistant secretary. Because of his complexion, his



Walter White, 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

first assignments were incognito investigations of lynchings and race riots; between 1918 and 1926 he investigated more than forty acts of mob violence.

Lynching increased dramatically with the onset of the Depression, rising from an average of ten recorded in the nation each year during the late 1920s to thirty in the first nine months of 1930 alone. Reacting to this steady growth, in January 1934 White and the NAACP decided to make passage of a federal antilynching law a priority. For the next five years, White led this effort by persistently lobbying senators and representatives to pass such legislation sponsored variously by Senators Edward Costigan, Robert Wagner, and Frederick Van Nuys, and Representative Joseph Gavagan. Working out of congressional sponsors' offices, White directed the legislative strategy and publicity campaign. Three times he marshaled majorities in the Senate, only

to have the bill defeated by a filibuster—or the threat of one—by southern senators.

White also made his presence felt in the White House. He and Eleanor Roosevelt became close friends, and she joined the NAACP board of directors after her husband's death in 1945. With her aid, White secured meetings with the president to plead the Negroes' case for antilynching legislation and equity in New Deal programs. Though White did persuade the president to denounce lynching, Roosevelt would not actively back an antilynching bill, and the Congress never passed one.

Under White's leadership, the NAACP developed a strategy to attack segregation in education. Beginning in 1934, association lawyers won important legal victories mandating that public universities admit black applicants on an equal basis to their professional programs and compelling public school systems to equalize black and white teachers' salaries. These were precedents for the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision declaring segregation in education unconstitutional.

Responding to rampant employment discrimination in defense industries and the labor movement's unwillingness to eliminate discrimination in its own ranks, White and A. Philip Randolph pressed the president to take corrective action. Threats of a mass march on Washington in June 1941 compelled Roosevelt to issue executive order 8802, which banned defense contractors from practicing racial discrimination.

See Also: NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE (NAACP); RACE RELATIONS.

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KENNETH R. JANKEN

WHITE, WILLIAM ALLEN

William Allen White (February, 10 1868–January 29, 1944), over a long career as a journalist, author, and political commentator, came to be widely respected as the embodiment, in the words of a *Life* profile, of “small-town simplicity and kindness and common sense.” Born in Emporia, Kansas, he attended the College of Emporia and the University of Kansas. In 1895 he purchased a daily newspaper, the *Emporia Gazette*, which he continued to publish even as he won a national audience for his many books and magazine articles. With Theodore Roosevelt and other reform-minded Republicans, White founded the Progressive Party in 1912. Though White returned to the Republican Party in 1916, he remained a pillar of its progressive-to-moderate wing.

White's reputation as spokesman for middle-class middle America deepened over the next decades, prompting H. L. Mencken to dub him the “Sage of Emporia.” He criticized presidents Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge for bowing to the interests of “benevolent plutocracy,” and supported fellow progressive Herbert Hoover in 1928. His support of the liberal values of free speech and opposition to the influence of the Ku Klux Klan in Kansas won the respect of big-city liberals. But they were mystified by his support of prohibition and loyalty to the Republican Party in the 1930s, after Franklin D. Roosevelt seized the banner of reform for the Democrats. White gave a mixed reception to the New Deal, supporting measures to regulate the economy and improve the lot of common Americans while repeatedly expressing reservations about concentration of power in the federal government. Yet White was largely consistent to the small-town values that had shaped his ideology. Like many former progressives, he warned that New Deal programs imposed a wasteful and distant bureaucracy upon everyday life. He also expressed misgivings that Roosevelt's charisma and appeals to class interests smacked of the totalitarianism sweeping much of the rest of the world. In 1936 he supported Kansas governor Alfred Landon for president, leading Roosevelt to thank him for his “support for three and a half years out of every four.”

White supported Roosevelt's efforts to counter American isolationism in the 1930s. In 1940 White headed the bipartisan Committee to Defend America by Aiding the Allies, which argued that military assistance to Britain would help stop German aggression without requiring outright American involvement. The committee's work helped secure the Lend-Lease Act in March 1941. During the last years before his death in 1944, White wrote his autobiography, which was posthumously awarded the Pulitzer Prize.

See Also: COMMUNICATIONS AND THE PRESS.

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SALLY F. GRIFFITH

WHITNEY, RICHARD. *See* SECURITIES REGULATION.

WILLIAMS, AUBREY

Aubrey Willis Williams (August 1890–March 1965) was deputy administrator of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) and deputy administrator of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) under Harry Hopkins, and also head of the National Youth Administration (NYA) throughout its existence. Born in Springville, Alabama, into a family impoverished by the Civil War, his formal education was minimal. At twenty-one he enrolled at Maryville College in Tennessee as a student for the ministry, before serving in World War I, first in the

French Foreign Legion and later, after U.S. intervention, with the U.S. Army. Already a committed social activist, he qualified as a social worker at the University of Cincinnati, then worked for a decade in Wisconsin before joining Harry Hopkins's team in the first days of the New Deal.

Williams was responsible for the day-to-day operations of both the FERA and WPA, as well as being in effective control of the NYA. He was tough, resourceful and outspoken, firmly located in the New Deal's left wing, determined to use his position to attack the United States's social and economic imbalances, and especially to further the cause of civil rights for black Americans. In particular he used the NYA to provide employment and training for the nation's disadvantaged young people. He made powerful enemies among the forces opposed to New Deal liberalism, and in 1943 they engineered the dismantling of the NYA in spite of its importance to the war effort.

With that, Williams left public office, never to return. In 1945 he returned to Montgomery, Alabama, where he edited a small newspaper, and for the rest of his life, worked as a courageous and increasingly isolated regional spokesperson for the coming civil rights revolution. As such, he was frequently investigated by Senator Joseph McCarthy's lieutenants in the 1950s. He lived long enough to take part in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s March on Washington in 1963.

See Also: BETHUNE, MARY MCLEOD; HOPKINS, HARRY; NATIONAL YOUTH ADMINISTRATION (NYA).

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JOHN A. SALMOND

WILLKIE, WENDELL

Wendell Lewis Willkie (February 8, 1892–October 8, 1944), whose grandparents came to America after the failure of the German democratic revolution of 1848, was the unsuccessful Republican candidate for president in 1940. Willkie was born and raised in rural Indiana, and before undertaking the study of law, he reflected on the progressive intellectual background of his upbringing in Elwood.

As a young attorney with the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in Akron, Ohio, and then as a junior partner in a prestigious local law firm with a specialty in utilities matters, he engaged in political affairs, speaking out for Woodrow Wilson and the League of Nations and leading a fight against surging Ku Klux Klan power. At the Democratic Party's 1924 national convention, Willkie participated in a futile floor battle to condemn the Klan. His leadership of the local bar association and experience in the utilities field led to an invitation to move to New York as a legal representative of Commonwealth and Southern, a newly formed holding company. Later, at the age of forty-one, and at the depth of the Great Depression, he took over as its president.

Willkie's corporate position clashed with the New Deal's Tennessee Valley Administration, bringing him into conflict with the federal government's efforts to provide cheap power to a vast backward area. Willkie's fight against such federal ownership ended when the Supreme Court upheld TVA. Commonwealth and Southern was paid an impressive \$78,600,000 for its facilities, a process that gave Willkie prominence that endeared him to anti-New Deal businessmen as the administration's most engaging critic.

Even before Willkie became a Republican in the fall of 1939, the concept of him as United States president was promoted by an alliance that included businessmen, bankers, electrical power interests, and influential editors and publishers. Hastily organized Willkie Clubs tried to prevent Franklin D. Roosevelt from winning an unprecedented third term. Such corporate and grassroots Republicanism aimed at sparing the party from entering the election as indifferent to European victims of Nazi Germany. While other GOP presidential candidates

held to a strong Midwestern sense of isolationism, Willkie feared that England was in imminent danger of invasion. With the announcement in January 1940 that Willkie had become a Republican and the news that spring that the Nazi blitzkrieg had rolled through France and the Low Countries and reached the English Channel, Willkie's popularity made quick gains. His promoters comprised a loosely organized so-called Eastern Establishment that came to dominate Republican presidential politics for the next twenty years.

At the Republican national convention, amid tumultuous nominating sessions energized by spectator galleries filled with Willkie boosters, "the darkest horse in the stable" won the nomination on the sixth ballot. His ranking in the Gallup poll had shot ahead of New York District Attorney Tom Dewey, a fact confirmed only after his victory at that enthusiastic Philadelphia convention. The candidate chose Senator Charles McNary of Oregon as his running-mate.

Leading a party dominated by anti-interventionists, Willkie wavered between backing aid for Great Britain and warning that Roosevelt's reelection would surely lead to young Americans dying in a European war, rhetoric he later dismissed as "a bit of campaign oratory." His key contribution to preparedness was the muting of political conflicts threatening to slow Roosevelt's efforts. In August, he offered a forthright endorsement of a selective service bill, which Congress approved the following month by a single vote. In early 1941, after the election, he testified in support of Roosevelt's efforts to help Great Britain via the Lend-Lease program, which fellow Republicans denounced as "the war dictatorship bill."

Failing to block a third term, losing by 449 to 82 in the electoral college (while picking up a Republican record of 22,321,000 popular votes to Roosevelt's 27,308,000), Willkie returned to New York City for a partnership in a law firm that gave him enough time to remain active politically. He undertook two overseas trips, the second on Roosevelt's behalf after Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, which resulted in a very popular book, *One World*, an anticolonialist view of the future. Willkie also fought in the courts for civil liberties and worked for

racial justice. Deserted by GOP conservatives, especially after losing a primary in Wisconsin during the spring of 1944, he received invitations to team up with Roosevelt, possibly to form a more liberal third party. Wary of being manipulated for political purposes by a shrewd president, Willkie decided to postpone his response until after the election, but he died on October 8, 1944, after a series of heart attacks at the age of 52.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1940; REPUBLICAN PARTY.

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HERBERT S. PARMET

WILSON, EDMUND

Edmund Wilson (May 8, 1895–June 12, 1972), journalist, critic, novelist, and historian, vigorously commented on American culture and society for five decades. He was born in Red Bank, New Jersey, and graduated from Princeton University in 1916. In World War I, he served in France with an army medical unit and in Germany on occupation duty. On his return to the United States in 1919, he became a magazine writer and editor, first at the monthly *Vanity Fair*, then at the liberal weekly *The New Republic*. In 1927, he completed his first novel, *I Thought of Daisy*, and in 1930 his first major book of criticism, *Axel's Castle*.

As the United States's economic crisis worsened after the 1929 crash, Wilson went on the road

to report what he saw as the breakdown of U.S. capitalism and the onset of class war. With such contemporaries as John dos Passos and Sherwood Anderson, he used vivid literary journalism to counter indifference or ignorance about the country's growing distress. His articles on Communist demonstrations in New York, Detroit's automobile factories, West Virginia coal mines, workers at the Hoover (Boulder) Dam, and suicides at "The Jumping-Off Place," San Diego, were collected in *The American Jitters: A Year of the Slump* (1932). Alfred Kazin wrote that the book caught "perfectly the revolutionary and unsettling impact of the 1930s" (Kazin 1962, p. 408). Wilson's subsequent Depression-era reporting—notably "Hull-House in 1932," a dark portrait of Chicago in the pit of the Depression—was republished in *Travels in Two Democracies* (1936).

In the early 1930s Wilson called himself a communist, but he avoided contact with the Communist Party. In 1935 he won a Guggenheim Fellowship for travel in the Soviet Union—the other "democracy" in *Two Democracies*. By the time he published his major historical work on the roots of *Marxism, To the Finland Station*, in 1940, he had become more skeptical of the Soviet system.

Wilson continued to produce scholarship, polemic, and criticism for the remainder of his life. Among the notable works of his later career were the novel *Memoirs of Hecate County* (1946), which censors declared obscene; *Apologies to the Iroquois* (1960), on Native American culture; *Patriotic Gore* (1962), analyzing the literature of the U.S. Civil War (1962); and, finally, the melancholy *Upstate* (1971). He considered himself primarily a journalist, and his Depression writings remained the most enduring example of that aspect of his work. As the critic Robert Cantwell commented, "The body of writing that . . . Wilson produced in the period of his pilgrimage is one of the major accomplishments of the American imagination" (Cantwell 1958).

See Also: LITERATURE.

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JAMES BOYLAN

WISCONSIN PROGRESSIVE PARTY

The Wisconsin Progressive Party provided a political vehicle for La Follette Progressives and their political allies between 1934 and 1946. The party emerged out of the peculiar political dynamics prevailing in the state after the 1932 election. Progressive Republicans in Wisconsin had frequently talked about starting a new party, and Senator Robert M. La Follette, Sr., had run for the presidency on a third party ticket in 1924. When his son Philip lost the governorship to conservative Democrat Albert Schmedeman in 1932, the state faction faced a difficult decision. Remaining in the party of Herbert Hoover was distasteful to many, but trying to operate within the Wisconsin Democratic Party, which was at least as conservative in orientation, held little appeal. Despite its inherent riskiness, launching a new party seemed to many to offer a better chance for winning elections while allowing the Progressives to remain doctrinally pure.

Senator Robert M. La Follette, Jr., remained hesitant, but when more radical movement spokesmen, such as former Congressman Thomas R. Amlie, threatened to go ahead without the La Follettes, Philip La Follette, more open to the idea from the beginning, became an active proponent of a new party. Taking the traditional name *Progressive*, rather than the *Farmer-Labor* label favored by the radicals, the new party succeeded spectacularly in the fall elections. Along with putting the La Follette brothers back in the Senate and the governorship, the Progressives elected seven of Wisconsin's ten congressmen and won healthy proportions in

both houses of the state legislature. Factionalism continued to split the Wisconsin Progressive Party during its brief existence. In November 1935 a group of advanced Progressives led by Amlie, State Federation of Labor leaders, and radical farm group spokesmen established a Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation, intended to promote the interests of their memberships and to move the party in a leftward direction. While cooperating with the new organization, Governor La Follette, who continued to be the real leader of the party as long as he remained in office, sought to deflect its influence and retain his freedom of action.

The election of 1936 witnessed the apex of party success. With the active cooperation of the Roosevelt administration, Phil La Follette won a third gubernatorial term and Progressives captured enough legislative seats to forge a working majority in that body. They legislated a "Little New Deal" for the state in 1937, and in April 1938 the governor attempted to expand his influence by launching a new national party, the National Progressives of America. It flopped and he lost his bid for reelection that fall, along with dozens of other progressives and liberals across the nation. The party rapidly declined. Its last spark of hope came with the election of Governor Orland Loomis in 1942, but he died before being inaugurated. With the disbanding of the party in 1946, most of its members went back into the Republican Party, but a group of its more advanced adherents became the core of a new liberalized state Democratic Party during the late 1940s and 1950s.

See Also: ELECTION OF 1936; LA FOLLETTE, PHILIP; LA FOLLETTE, ROBERT M., JR.

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Judy Garland as Dorothy Gale and Billie Burke as Glinda, the Good Witch of the North, in the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*.

THE KOBAL COLLECTION / MGM

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JOHN E. MILLER

WIZARD OF OZ, THE

MGM’s 1939 film adaptation of L. Frank Baum’s 1899 book, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, was to become perhaps Hollywood’s best-loved product, although it was not a huge box office success when it came out. The year 1939 is considered by many critics to have been the greatest in the studio era, with such classics as *Gone With the Wind*, *Stagecoach*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, and *Wuthering Heights*, along with a gaggle of near-greats, joining

Dorothy and her companions on the big screen that year. It was, however, the two color extravaganzas, *Oz* and *Gone with the Wind*, that became the most enduring movies in history.

The film has a much greater connection with the issues of the Depression era than is at first apparent. Harold Arlen and E. Y. “Yip” Harburg’s song “Over the Rainbow” perfectly captured the continuing and long-deferred hopes of a people about to enter their second decade of depression. Dorothy Gale (a 12-year-old played by Judy Garland at sixteen), along with her family, is mistreated by Almira Gulch, the evil woman who owns most of her Kansas county and plainly represents the greedy bankers and capitalists who were widely seen as oppressing ordinary Americans during the Depression. Dorothy yearns to escape the dreary

sepia world where such injustice prevails, to find “some place where there isn’t any trouble.” When a tornado carries Dorothy and her dog, Toto, to a magical land of blazing color, she finds herself seemingly in the land of every Depression victim’s dreams, over the rainbow.

The conflicting American values during the Great Depression are evident in the messages contained in *The Wizard of Oz*. For all the populism of the original story from the 1890s and the meshing of the emphasis on cooperative effort to defeat the Wicked Witch of the West, the take-away messages of *The Wizard of Oz* are largely conservative. First, the Wizard who promises everything (seen by some observers as representing Roosevelt and his big government programs) is in fact just the man behind the curtain creating illusions with smoke and mirrors. Second, the idea that people must look inside themselves to find the courage, brains, and heart to succeed was a clear reference to the need for self-reliance. Third, the hope that one’s problems will be solved and one’s “troubles melt like lemon drops” somewhere over the rainbow is an empty promise because, in truth, “there’s no place like home.” That closing line reflects the Depression era’s renewed emphasis on small town community values, evident in much of the decade’s popular culture. Those values will prevail, viewers are told, if they will look within themselves, cooperate voluntarily, and defeat the greed and evil represented by Margaret Hamilton in the dual role of Miss Gulch and the Wicked Witch.

See Also: HOLLYWOOD AND THE FILM INDUSTRY; VALUES, EFFECTS OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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ROBERT S. MCELVAINE

WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON

The Great Depression affected women and men in quite different ways. The economy of the period relied heavily on so-called “sex-typed” work, or work that employers typically assigned to one sex or the other. And the work most directly associated with males, especially manufacturing in heavy industries like steel production, faced the deepest levels of lay-offs during the Great Depression. Women primarily worked in service industries, and these jobs tended to continue during the 1930s. Clerical workers, teachers, nurses, telephone operators, and domestics largely found work. In many instances, employers lowered pay scales for women workers, or even, in the case of teachers, failed to pay their workers on time. But women’s wages remained a necessary component in family survival. In many Great Depression families, women were the only breadwinners.

An important corrective to a male-centered vision of the Great Depression is to note that while men’s employment rates declined during the period, women’s employment rates actually rose. In 1930, approximately 10.5 million women worked outside the home. By 1940, approximately 13 million women worked for wages outside the home. Even so, women’s work continued to be less than well regarded by American society. Critics, overlooking the sex-typing of most work opportunities for women, lambasted laboring women for robbing men of much-needed jobs. Even women’s colleges formally charged women not to pursue careers after graduation so that their places could be filled by men.

Federal law stood consistently with this conservative position regarding women workers. Laws in effect between 1932 and 1937 made it illegal for more than one person per family to find employment within the federal civil service. Despite the protestations of Eleanor Roosevelt, the New Deal program the Civilian Conservation Corps, developed in 1933, had a formal policy against hiring women. Many New Deal job programs cast women in traditional housekeeping roles. Camps operated by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration

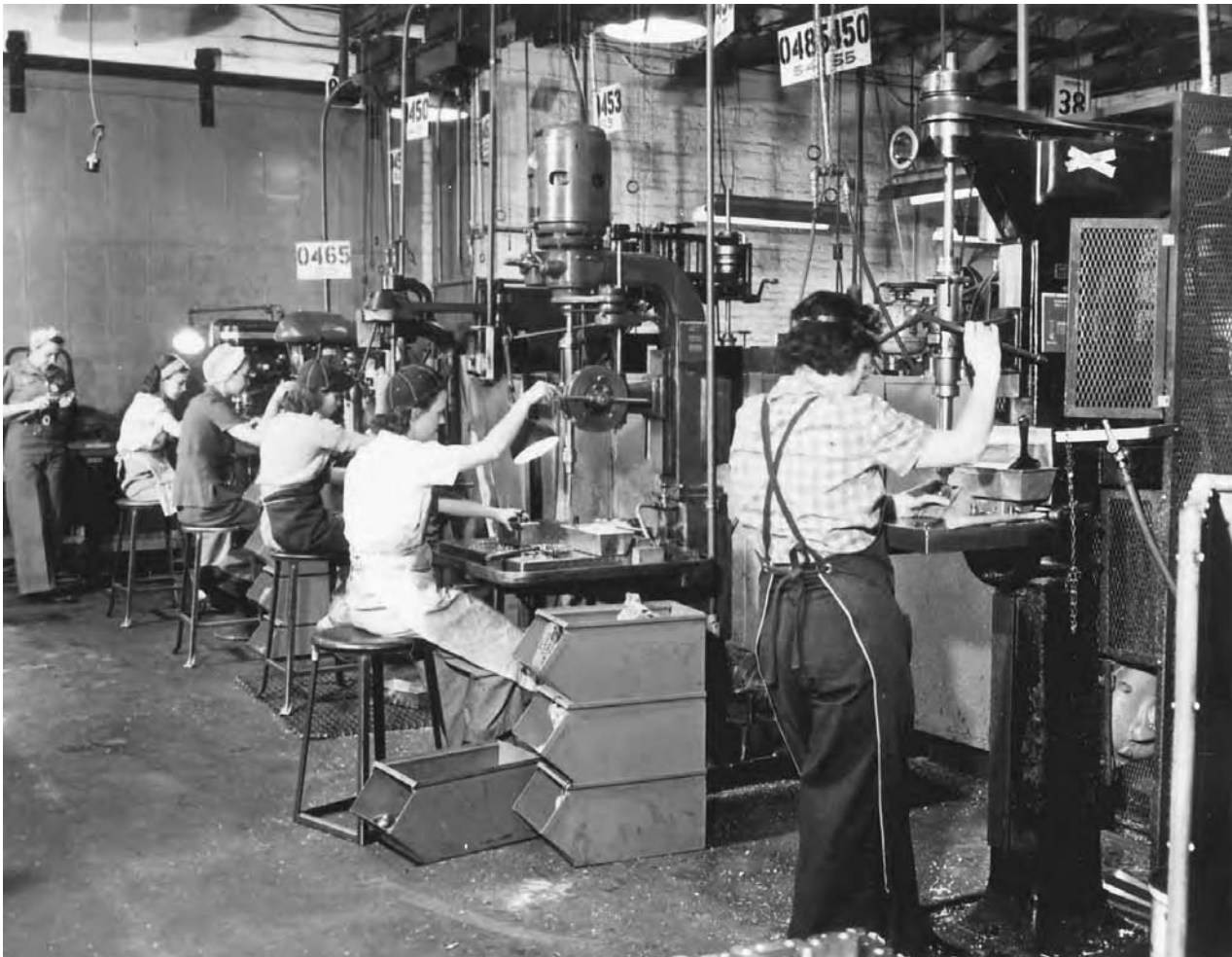


Many poor women from the South and Midwest took refuge in California during the Dust Bowl years. This destitute Oklahoma mother and her baby lived in a migrant tent camp in Imperial Valley, California, in 1937. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

(FERA) specifically for young women taught household skills. FERA work relief projects employed women in producing such goods as canned foods, clothes, and mattresses for distribution to needy families. Women were employed as housekeeping aides to families in need of household help. The housekeeping aides project kept to traditional racial stereotypes as well as gendered ones, as most of its employees were African-American women. Other federal agencies paid women much less than men or gave preferences to male job seekers over female ones.

Women of minority groups faced particular difficulties. Employers preferred white men, and then

white women, over black or Hispanic women in most instances. Relegated to domestic work and farm work through centuries of racism and misogyny in the job market, most African-American women found themselves left out of new laws passed to ensure worker safety. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, with its minimum wage and maximum hour provisions, did not apply to domestic or farm workers. Given the pressures of the economy, many women—white and black—were willing to work in domestic positions, but fewer households had the extra income to hire help. Many cities developed specific locations where prospective domestic workers would stand outside and



During the early 1940s thousands of American women began working in factories in support of the war effort. The swing shift of drill press operators at this West Coast airplane factory was composed entirely of women when this photograph was taken in

1942. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

wait for wealthier women to hire them for a day's work. Given that those seeking employment were most often black and given the low wages one would earn in such arrangements, the process and the area of town associated with it became known colloquially as a "slave market." The casual nature of the oral contract between employer and employee in this hiring system meant that many women were inadequately paid for their labors.

Women in professional careers lost gains made in earlier, more stable periods. Fewer women found positions in business in the Great Depression than in the 1920s. Losing ground in the traditional male

sphere, some men also entered into jobs heretofore relegated to women. This trend occurred even in the very female bastion of teaching. The teaching profession grew slightly less female during the Great Depression; women had constituted 85 percent of teachers in 1920, but by 1940 they constituted only 78 percent.

The federal law's refusal to champion women workers occurred even with the unprecedented presence of women of considerable power in Washington, D.C. Frances Perkins became the first female member of a presidential cabinet when she assumed the post of Secretary of Labor in 1933.



Residents gather for dinner at a FERA camp for unemployed women in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1934. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT

LIBRARY

Mary McLeod Bethune, head of the Division of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration and acting head of Roosevelt's informal group of black advisors or "black cabinet," became the highest-ranking African-American woman in government. Eleanor Roosevelt, first lady from 1933 to 1945, fought the public policies when it came to women on several fronts and led Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency more to the political left than it would have otherwise been. The New Deal did not outwardly target women's issues. Eleanor Roosevelt did, however, provide some moral support to American women in the troubled 1930s. Her newspaper column, "My Day," in national periodicals reached an eager audience. Although Eleanor Roosevelt was the mother of five children, the first lady was nonetheless not known for her housewifery skills initially. As a young mother Roosevelt had even once hung her daughter Anna outside her

bedroom window in a box with wire sides so that the child could nap in fresh air; the child's cries had significantly scared the neighbors. Yet during the Depression Eleanor Roosevelt inspired less-famous Americans with her earnest example, as when she served Franklin Roosevelt seven-cent meals in the White House.

American women found the task of homemaking increasingly challenging in the face of the sharp cuts in the family budget due to the nation's economic crisis. Women continued to supervise the feeding and clothing of their families during the period but needed increased creativity to complete these tasks. A common saying of the time explained how to stretch one's household dollar: "Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without." Although the 1920s had introduced more convenience goods into the mainstream kitchen, housewives in the



Many southern sharecropper families were beset by poverty in the 1930s, leaving mothers like this one, photographed in Washington County, Arkansas, in 1935, barely able to feed or clothe their children. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

Great Depression returned to money-saving techniques like canning fruits and vegetables. Women sewed more of the family's clothes. "Outwork," or performing labor for wages at home, became a popular way to add to the family income. For instance, many women opted to take in the laundry of others for a fee. Even with these creative choices, malnutrition and disease became the results of extended poverty for some families.

Relations between husbands and wives grew strained because of financial insecurity. The financial downturn disrupted the husband's traditional role as breadwinner added space for the family, leading to increasingly rancorous marriages. Tight budgets in families led to the end of simple pleasures like leisure-time activities and further added to stress. The rate of husbands deserting their families rose during the period. Couples delayed marriages or even decided not to marry at all given the financial constraints of setting up new households. Childbearing rates decreased, and more couples utilized contraception to limit family size. Extended families, including multiple generations, also decided to share housing to cut costs.

In the face of a collective mood that championed women's domestic ties and disparaged working women, the feminist ideals that had grown during earlier periods lost momentum. Already waning during the 1920s, feminist sentiments faltered further during the Great Depression due to the pressing economic concerns. Groups that had supported women's rights, including the radical National Women's Party and the educational body, the League of Women Voters (formed out of the former National American Woman Suffrage Association in 1920), remained in the political background during the 1930s. The momentum of feminism would not be rediscovered until the late 1960s. Women did, however, take part in labor's struggle to take advantage of the legal changes that made organizing workers more possible. Women become a vital part of the labor movement during the era of the Great Depression. For example, a particularly spirited group of women took part in the Women's Emergency Brigade of the United Autoworkers and helped support the lengthy sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan, that brought the General Motors Company to sign a contract with the union in 1937.

Delving into women's experiences in the Great Depression period leads us to a much broader understanding of the time. While men faced major unemployment, and the disruption of typical bread-winner roles, women maintained employment or even took on new paid labor in order to support their families. While feminism as a concept was not nourished during the economically tumultuous period, women around the nation did become politically and economically active because of the pressures of the time. The societal role of women came under increasing examination during the period, out of the impetus of such factors as the increased numbers of national female leaders, and the absence of substantial places for women in new deal legislation.

See Also: GENDER ROLES AND SEXUAL RELATIONS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; MEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON.

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LISA KRISOFF BOEHM

WOMEN'S EMERGENCY BRIGADE

The Flint Women's Emergency Brigade, formed on January 20, 1937, was a militant expression of the United Auto Workers (UAW) Women's Auxiliary movement. Reporting on the formation of the Brigade, the Associated Press quoted Brigade founder Genora Johnson: "We will form a line around the men, and if the police want to fire then they'll just have to fire into us." Starting with fifty members who were wives, mothers, and sisters of strikers, the Flint Brigade grew to 350. Brigades were also formed in Lansing and Detroit. The Brigade used military titles to show its readiness for combat. They wore colored berets and armbands with "EB" inscribed on them; the Flint Brigade's berets were red, Detroit's green, and Lansing's white. On February 1, 1937, the Flint Women's Emergency Brigade played a crucial role in a battle that enabled UAW members to seize control of the plant that produced all General Motors engines. The *New York Times* headline read "Women's Brigade Uses Heavy Clubs," and it accompanied a photograph of Brigade members with the long clubs they used to break factory windows to counter the teargassing of workers.

The first UAW Women's Auxiliary had been established in December 1936 during the sit-down strike at Detroit's Midland Steel Company. Its focus was the preparation of food for the strikers. The Flint Women's Auxiliary was formed after a New Year's Eve dance in front of Fisher Body Plant 2. It fed the strikers, staffed picket lines, and ran a first aid station, a speaker's bureau, and a daycare center.

Hundreds of members of the women's auxiliaries and women's brigades from several cities paraded in Flint on February 3, 1937, a day the UAW designated Women's Day. The women's militancy and support activities helped the strikers to victory. The UAW incorporated support for the women's auxiliaries into its formal structure at its convention in August 1937. Although the brigades received significant attention in the daily press and journalist Mary Heaton Vorse highlighted their story, they proved to be a temporary formation.

Although the UAW's male leadership appreciated women's support, it neglected women auto-workers. UAW Local 155 had established the Midland Women's Auxiliary as a vehicle to involve women workers whom it had neglected to consult prior to the strike. The pattern of neglecting women workers and suggesting they work with the auxiliary occurred frequently. Discrimination and the problems of women workers on the job went unchallenged. Although women workers organized at plants where they were numerous, they were not promoted into union leadership positions. The women's auxiliaries proved to be one of the few voices within the union that spoke out for the needs of women workers. As support organizations, however, they did not offer a challenge to the union's gender hierarchy. But the militancy and advocacy of female independence and strength that was articulated by participants in the women's brigades provided a germ of a radical feminism that would flower in a later period.

See Also: ORGANIZED LABOR; SIT-DOWN STRIKES; STRIKES; UNITED AUTOMOBILE WORKERS (UAW).

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MARTIN HALPERN

WOOD, GRANT. *See* AMERICAN SCENE, THE.

WOODWARD, ELLEN

Woodward, Ellen Sullivan (July 11, 1887–September 23, 1971), Works Progress Administration (WPA) administrator and Social Security Board member, was born in Oxford, Mississippi, to William Van Amberg Sullivan, later a U.S. congressman and senator, and Belle Murray Sullivan. She was educated in Oxford and Washington, D.C., and briefly attended Sans Souci, a South Carolina academy. In 1906 she married Albert Y. Woodward and became a community activist in Louisville, Mississippi, where she developed the humane and egalitarian outlook that characterized her work.

Her public career began in 1925 when Woodward succeeded her deceased husband in the Mississippi House of Representatives. At the term's end (1926), she became an official with the new Mississippi State Board of Development, where she became known in 1930 and 1932 to social work officials who were close to Harry Hopkins, soon to become the New Deal relief "czar." As a result, Hopkins named her late in 1933 the director of women's relief work in the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. She retained that post in the short-lived Civil Works Administration and then became an assistant administrator of the WPA in 1935, directing the new Women's and Professional Projects division.

Supported by first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, Woodward succeeded in placing 300,000 women household heads on work relief projects by the end of 1933. At the peak in February 1936, almost 500,000 women were at work, although Woodward never succeeded in achieving work for women on a basis equal to that afforded men on construction projects. More than half of women were on projects that produced goods, principally food and clothing, and provided community services, such as libraries, recreation, school lunchrooms, and health care never before available in many areas. In 1936 Woodward assumed direction of the Four Arts projects—Music, Art, Theatre, and Writers—that gave work to the white collar unemployed. It was congressional disenchantment with the Theatre and Writers' projects that led to investigation and Woodward's decision to resign in December 1938.

She then became one of the three members of the Social Security Board, where she was a strong advocate of stiff merit systems to thwart exploitation of Social Security programs by state politicians. When the Social Security Board was abolished in 1946, she became a director within the new Federal Security Agency and worked to expand United States influence in international welfare. She retired at the end of 1953 but remained in Washington where she died.

See Also: FEDERAL EMERGENCY RELIEF ADMINISTRATION (FERA); WOMEN, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA).

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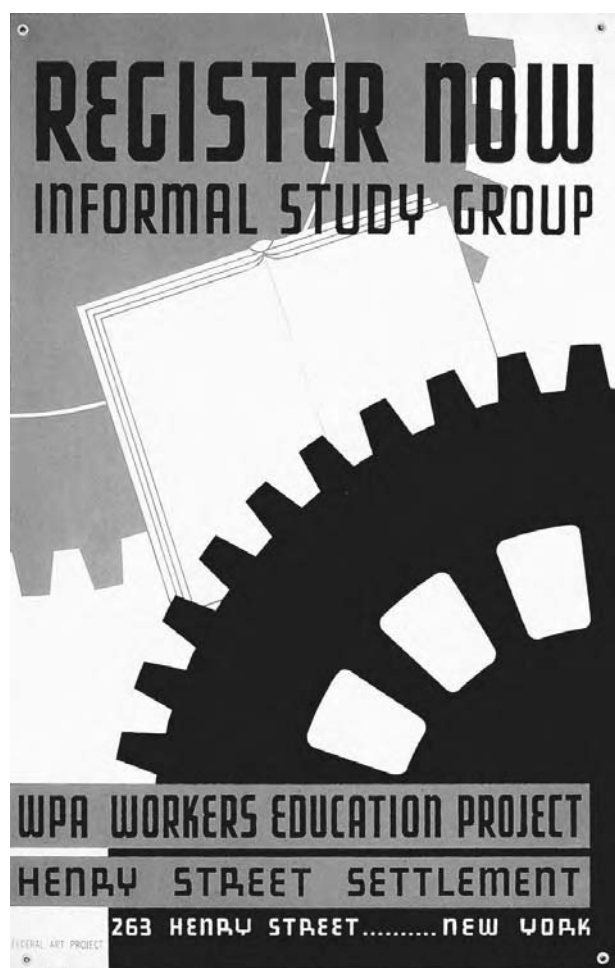
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MARTHA H. SWAIN

WORKERS EDUCATION PROJECT

Practically speaking, workers' education accounted for a tiny part of the federal government's New Deal emergency education programs—and was, because it yoked together the interests of American capitalism with those of left-oriented trade unions, a controversial enterprise at that. But these workers education programs played a key role in the development of a "labor culture" in the Popular Front movement in the United States.

Schools set up for the purpose of training working-class activists and intellectuals had been pioneered by the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and leftist labor unions, such as the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, the United Electrical Workers, and others. These education pro-



This poster announced a WPA Workers Education Project study group to be held at the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, WPA POSTER COLLECTION

grams included both urban night schools and residential labor colleges, most famously the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, co-founded by Myles Horton and Don West. In particular, the growth of the labor movement during the 1930s had created a pressing need for trained leadership. From 1933 to 1942, these schools were able to receive some federal funding, and became what was called the Workers Education Project (the name changed in 1939 to the Workers Service Program). When the Work Projects Administration ended in 1942, labor unions attempted to continue the schools without government funding.

Hilda Smith, an education specialist who founded and directed Bryn Mawr's Summer School for Women Workers, was program director. The first funds went to hire unemployed teachers, working through relief agencies, to lead classes in adult literacy. As the number and variety of classes grew, local unions and community groups could request classes or speakers through a government sponsor, such as a state university or a state department of labor or education. The classes met in labor halls and in public schools. At its peak enrollment, 65,000 workers participated in approximately 3,000 classes. Classes in the social sciences, economics, and labor history were the most popular.

An early memo among Workers Education Project administrators, which would come to be widely circulated and quoted, differentiated the mandates of workers' education from adult education more generally: "Workers' education offers men and women workers in industry, business, domestic service and other occupations an opportunity to train themselves in clear thinking through the study of those questions closely related to their daily lives as workers and as citizens."

See Also: HIGHLANDER FOLK SCHOOL;
ORGANIZED LABOR.

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RACHEL RUBIN

WORK ETHIC

The term *work ethic* refers to efforts to apply oneself diligently to the task at hand. The application of the work ethic became important during the industrial revolution when a majority of people gradually began to work for wages. The work ethic contained



This billboard, photographed by Dorothea Lange in California in 1937, promoted a work ethic endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

a strong moral dimension by promoting the spiritual idea of “living to work” rather than “working to live.” According to historian Daniel T. Rodgers, the work ethic placed work at the center of moral life—work made people useful in a world of economic scarcity. In fact, the work ethic, while still an icon of lip service, had already been substantially undermined before the Depression began. The needs of the mass production economy that came into its own in the 1920s required an emphasis on consumption that severely weakened the work ethic.

Nonetheless, during the Great Depression, many politicians and business leaders feared that the traditional work ethic was being undermined by

the economic situation that many people found themselves in, and it was threatened even more by many of the proposed solutions to that situation. For this reason, most of the New Deal programs that aimed to assist individuals economically, including the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), required that recipients work for the assistance that they received. Even Social Security, a pay-as-you-go program, was sold to the American public as a program for which people “earned” credit, even though the money that an individual paid into the system was immediately dispersed to someone else.

Although the United States was an advanced industrial nation at the onset of the Great Depression, it had one of the most rudimentary social welfare systems. The unemployed and underprivileged had to rely on private charity or local (city or county) welfare systems. The severity of the economic malaise during the early years of the Great Depression quickly taxed this system beyond its capacity to respond; many industrial cities found that they had to reduce essential services, like fire and police departments, in order to simply feed their citizens. President Herbert Hoover's insistence on a program of "voluntarism" meant that he discouraged any legislation that would provide additional funds to supplement these programs. When Franklin D. Roosevelt assumed office in 1933, one of the earliest agencies established was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), headed by Harry Hopkins. FERA's purpose was to provide funds to states so that they could supplement the funds being dispersed locally. Much of the money was to be augmented by state and local governments, particularly those in the north, since southern states provided little or no support or social welfare.

Concern both inside and outside the administration that this program would undermine the work ethic, and demean those receiving such assistance "for nothing," quickly led to the creation of programs like the CCC. The purpose of the CCC was, in part, to rescue young men from "dangerous" influences in the city, such as criminal gangs and Communists, and relocate them to the countryside, where the work ethic could be instilled in them through projects such as building roads, digging ditches, and planting trees. Similar programs, such as the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the WPA, eventually put millions of men and women to work on a variety of public works projects, ranging from road-building to writing travel guides to the states.

Franklin Roosevelt envisioned Social Security as a "cradle to grave" social welfare system, but the political realities of the time, as well as Roosevelt's need to use his political capital judiciously to coax recalcitrant southern congressmen to support the New Deal, prevented Roosevelt's vision from becoming a reality. The need to retain as many south-

ern votes as possible for Social Security legislation meant that in exchange for those votes Congress excluded farm and domestic workers, a part of the labor force that in the 1930s largely consisted of women and African-American men. The old-age pension system was funded exclusively by contributors through a new tax levied by the federal government, while unemployment and aid to families with dependent children were funded by matching contributions from the federal government to state governments. This led to widely varying levels of aid from state to state, with the greatest disparity being between northern states (supplying greater amounts of aid) and southern states (supplying lesser amounts).

Some critics of these New Deal initiatives have argued that the Roosevelt administration undertook them in a cynical attempt to undermine more radical political possibilities; defenders of the New Deal argue that these limitations were imposed on the administration by the political realities of the time. On the contrary, until this point in the history of the United States, the federal government had largely left individual citizens of the nation to shift for themselves during times of economic distress, and it was the expectation of a large number of people that the poor would have to continue to rely on their work ethic to see them through this latest crisis.

See Also: COLLECTIVE BARGAINING;
INDIVIDUALISM.

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GREGORY MILLER



The dance unit of the WPA Federal Theatre Project opened this production of Candide in New York City in 1935. FRANKLIN

DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (WPA)

When Franklin D. Roosevelt assumed the presidency on March 4, 1933, he focused much of his inaugural address on the approximately thirteen million unemployed Americans constituting roughly 25 percent of the workforce. "Our greatest primary task," Roosevelt advised, "is to put people to work." Characterizing President Herbert Hoover's approach to poverty as "scattered, uneconomical, and unequal," Roosevelt called for a massive attack on the Depression. On May 12, 1933, Congress responded with a law creating the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). FERA became the

first stage in an evolutionary process during which the New Deal shifted its Depression-fighting strategy from the dole to public employment by way of the Civil Works Administration and the Works Progress Administration.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF RELIEF

Depressions, recessions, and financial panics have plagued the United States since its colonial period. Early Americans relied on British methods, mainly the dole, to relieve the persistent problem of poverty. Although outright grants and indentured servitude constituted the primary methods, America's attitude toward poverty soon became obvious with the emergence of poor houses, also known as



The Melrose Art Center in New Mexico, shown here in 1935, was one of many art centers the WPA established across the country. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

“pest houses,” which became common. These isolation structures, provided by churches and wealthy humanitarians, reflected a national belief that privatism, the private solution to public problems, was the most efficient means of aiding the needy. From 1929 to 1932, President Hoover insisted that if Americans relied upon private initiative, “prosperity was just around the corner.” Having served as food administrator and relief commissioner during World War I, Hoover claimed early in his administration to have found a “final solution to poverty.” However, after three years of depression, it became obvious that the old methods were not working in a country where more than 50 percent of the people lived in what the Census Bureau de-

fined as urban areas (populations of 2,500 or more). Hoover, who feared that government relief payments would undermine people’s self-reliance, became a national scapegoat and lost his 1932 reelection bid by a landslide to Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York.

Roosevelt’s philosophy of dealing with the Depression was apparent during his New York governorship when he created the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (TERA), headed by Harry L. Hopkins, in October 1931. Roosevelt clearly stated his belief that cities and counties should control relief and local funds should supplement state money. He steadfastly warned against deficit spending. However, as the Depression deepened,

Roosevelt placed New York in debt by supporting an emergency \$30 million bond issue.

When Roosevelt assumed the presidency in March 1933, he faced a Congress representing a public that demanded action on the problem of widespread poverty and unemployment. However, during the first "Hundred Days" of his presidency (March to June 1933), even the political opposition agreed that he had made a good start at handling the problem. Republican floor leader Bertrand Snell, indicating bipartisan congressional support, said, "the house is burning down and the president of the United States says this is the way to put out the fire."

RELIEF DURING THE FIRST NEW DEAL (1933–1935)

During the First New Deal, Roosevelt's approach to relief closely resembled that taken by his predecessor, with one major difference. Whereas Hoover felt that public employment that competed with private enterprise was un-American, Roosevelt followed Hopkins's advice to incorporate public works into his relief programs. With urban bread and soup lines lengthening and farmers destroying their crops and livestock, Roosevelt placed Hopkins in charge of the \$500 million Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA).

One New Dealer stated that Hopkins combined "the purity of St. Francis of Assisi with the sharp shrewdness of a race track tout." A social worker, bureaucrat, and politician from Iowa who ran relief programs in New Orleans and New York, Hopkins was an unusual Washington power broker. Unlike most of the Washington establishment in 1933, he had been divorced and had undergone psychoanalysis. By 1936, Hopkins had become Roosevelt's closest advisor and remained in that position until the president died in 1945. Roosevelt ordered Hopkins to provide quick relief and keep politics out of relief. He achieved the first goal. The second proved an impossible task.

Political intuition, empathy for the poor, and speed with the dispensation of relief were Hopkins's greatest assets. The FERA administrator spent millions even before workers installed a desk in his office. His goal was to provide assistance to

poor people and he did not care about the political fallout. "I'm not going to last six months here," he noted, "so I'll do as I please." To the surprise of many, he lasted twelve years.

Hopkins's chief aide in the business of dispensing relief was Aubrey Williams of Alabama. Starting as a regional administrator with FERA, Williams moved up the bureaucratic ladder and eventually controlled the WPA during Hopkins's prolonged medical absences. A liberal idealist, Williams had a relationship to Hopkins that resembled Hopkins's role in Roosevelt's cabinet. They made a formidable team, relieving misery and enabling millions of Americans to survive the crisis.

FERA established a practice that was followed by the Civil Works Administration (CWA) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Late in the fall of 1933, President Roosevelt expressed concern that economic recovery was proceeding too slowly. The slow-moving Public Works Administration (PWA) under Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes left millions of unemployed workers and their families facing a harsh winter. Hopkins seized the initiative and persuaded Roosevelt to adopt a plan that became the CWA, which paid the jobless a minimum wage. Roosevelt, who agreed with Hopkins's argument that the dole demeaned and demoralized recipients, subsequently approved \$400 million worth of work relief. Hopkins and his FERA staff ordered the CWA to construct more roads, buildings, and airports. Fifty thousand CWA teachers taught in rural schools built by the same organization. The program was a spectacular success, although cost overruns and Republican cries about waste and political corruption marred its image. On balance, however, public reaction was favorable and the CWA so impressed Roosevelt that he became amenable when Hopkins proposed the Works Progress Administration.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION (1933–1943)

Early in 1935, Roosevelt decided to emphasize public works over direct relief. The principal result was the WPA. Executive Order 7034 on May 6, 1935, created the WPA, which Congress had previously authorized by passing the Emergency Relief

Appropriation Act. The WPA probably constituted the most successful effort at public works ever conducted by the federal government. Certainly it spent the most money, finished the most projects and hired the most people, averaging 2,112,000 on its monthly payroll from 1935 to 1941.

The influence of Hopkins, who became the chief administrator, could be seen in Roosevelt's speech announcing that the intent of the massive program was to "preserve not only the bodies of the unemployed from destruction, but also their self-respect, their self-confidence, courage, and determination." The dole, Roosevelt warned, was "a narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit. . . . Work must be found for able-bodied but destitute workers."

Hopkins also persuaded Roosevelt to see that a greater percentage of the vast sums of WPA money would go into the workers' paychecks, not materials, based on the argument that increased revenue would come back to the treasury. Only "useful projects" should be funded and they should be staffed solely by workers taken directly off relief. State governments would be given the right to request projects, and hire and fire employees. Although Roosevelt and Hopkins strongly desired to keep local and state politicians out of the process, the WPA nonetheless opened the door to political coercion, interference, waste, and corruption.

This was the WPA's Achilles heel. The massive organization had the potential to provide tremendous support for Roosevelt's 1936 reelection campaign. Accordingly, the president, not Congress, controlled billions of WPA dollars. Republicans, such as minority leader Bertrand Snell, complained vociferously, warning that the WPA gave Roosevelt "greater spending power than any ancient or modern dictator ever wielded." Democrat Huey Long, who was planning to run for president himself, asked "why should Congress give Roosevelt a \$5 billion blank check with an election coming on?" Others, however, such as columnist Walter Lippmann, congratulated Roosevelt for not allowing Congress to earmark pork barrel projects in their home towns, counties, and states. Stating that "everything is political," Hopkins concluded that the WPA staff should control the program. It was Roo-

sevelt, however, who determined the nature and direction of work relief.

Despite the best efforts of the president and his WPA administrator, state and local politicians did control and manipulate many of the projects. Occasionally, as with Governor Martin Davy of Ohio, Hopkins federalized state WPA programs. In other instances, where urban machines run by bosses like Edward Crump of Memphis, Frank Hague of Jersey City, and Edward J. Kelly of Chicago, controlled their states' electoral votes, Roosevelt did not attempt to keep politics out of relief.

When reformers complained, Roosevelt reminded them of his rule never to interfere in local Democratic politics. The principal exception to this rule occurred in Missouri when Roosevelt, over Senator Harry S. Truman's protests, allowed the Federal Bureau of Investigation to prosecute Truman's Kansas City mentor, Thomas J. Pendergast, and the Missouri WPA director, Matthew Murray. The prosecution of Pendergast and Murray proceeded because Roosevelt could rely on Governor Lloyd C. Stark to deliver Missouri's electoral vote in 1940. Roosevelt ignored similar charges against Hague and Kelly because he had no replacements to run the machines that controlled the electoral votes in New Jersey and Illinois.

Against this broiling political scenario, Hopkins determinedly proceeded to ensure that the WPA would employ as many as 3,500,000 people taken off the relief rolls. He hoped that WPA workers would perform jobs that suited their particular skills. The FERA staff, with Aubrey Williams assisting Hopkins, would run the program. Subordinates in Washington and throughout the country played a key role. They included Jacob Baker, who directed FERA and CWA public works; Corrington Gill, research and statistical director; Lawrence Westbrook, assistant administrator; David K. Niles, publicity and political advisor; Dallas Dort, chief investigator; and Ellen S. Woodward, head of the Women's Division.

Woodward, possibly the second most important woman in the New Deal after Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, worked her way up the FERA into the WPA. She ensured that sufficient funding be provided to more than 500,000 women

working on projects that focused on public health, sewing, and school lunch preparation. Later, Woodward expanded the program to include actresses, artists, and writers.

Below the Washington staff were the field investigators led by Lorena Hickok, Hopkins's personal representative, whose close friendship with Eleanor Roosevelt gave her sharply analytical reports great influence. Hickok identified the major problems throughout the country, such as drought and starvation. She attacked political greed and bureaucratic inefficiency. Her letters to the First Lady also became a source of pressure on Roosevelt and Hopkins to take action.

Other field representatives, such as Howard Hunter, Pierce Williams, and Alan Johnstone, supplied a wealth of information on such varied subjects as waste, inefficiency, corruption, and the coercion of WPA workers in election campaigns. State directors controlled by Democratic bosses and officeholders, however, maintained their jobs unless charges of corruption forced Hopkins to appoint civil engineers to direct those programs. Numerous complaints from Republicans and excluded Democrats charging waste and inefficiency reached the Washington staff. Although these accusations damaged the program's image, the WPA nonetheless succeeded in relieving poverty and unemployment for the millions who benefited from it.

At its peak, the WPA employed 3,300,000 persons working on projects as diverse as roads, sewers, theatre and art, football stadiums, courthouses, dams, historical and literary writing, and sewing circles. Although defenders of the private enterprise system saw waste, Roosevelt and Hopkins operated under the premise that, while they knew some of the money would be stolen, enough would reach the people who needed it, thus satisfying the WPA's chief goal.

Hopkins never wavered from his mission to aid that one-third of the nation Roosevelt described as "ill housed, ill clad, and ill nourished." WPA workers basically built (or rebuilt) America's infrastructure, including approximately 2,500 hospitals, 572,000 miles of road, 1,000 airports, 5,900 schools, and 85,000 courthouses, police stations, firehouses, and arenas. The projects varied widely, ranging

from the multimillion dollar Lake of Ozarks Project in Missouri, through shelterbelts in Kansas, to a children's hospital in Brooklyn, New York.

WPA instructions required that the government hire unemployed workers from the relief rolls who passed a "means test." WPA workers were encouraged to accept employment opportunities in private enterprise since fear of competition with the private sector was deeply embedded in the New Deal's public works philosophy. WPA projects were aimed at filling local needs and paying people quickly so that their wages would translate into purchasing power to stimulate the economy and ultimately into tax revenue. Monetary expenditures and project selection required approval from New Dealers working in tandem with Democratic National Committee Chairman James A. Farley, but patronage sometimes went to Republicans, causing complaints from Roosevelt's party.

Federal One. Although most of the WPA men worked on construction sites and women taught, sewed, or learned home economics, thousands of actors, artists, writers, and musicians benefited from Federal One, the WPA arts program that included the Federal Art Project, the Federal Music Project, the Federal Theatre Project, and the Federal Writers' Project. Federal One reflected Roosevelt's willingness to experiment. Its controversial plays and paintings prompted criticism from Roosevelt's political opposition, especially since many of its projects reflected the New Deal's liberal political philosophy. Hopkins counterattacked, asserting that the recipients of the New Deal arts program needed "to eat just like other people."

Perhaps the most famous of Roosevelt's artistic work relief programs was the Federal Writers' Project, whose employees were free to write in their specialties. Historians, as well as many nonhistorians, for example, traveled from town to town, and state to state, writing guides that described the history and culture of their subjects. Urban and state histories, biographies of former slaves, sharp analyses of conditions in areas as diverse as New York's Bowery, Missouri's Bootheel, and San Francisco's Cannery Row contributed much to the national literature.

Struggling directors and actors received employment opportunities in the Federal Theatre Project. Plays, puppet shows, vaudeville presentations, and even circuses became part of the New Deal's effort to keep the culture alive. Hallie Flanagan, Hopkins's classmate at Grinnell College in Iowa, ran the theatrical program with assistance from such famous actors as Charles Coburn and playwrights such as Elmer Wright. *It Can't Happen Here*, a play based on Sinclair Lewis's novel by the same title, opened on twenty-one stages simultaneously throughout the country. Lewis, who had previously become the first American to receive the Nobel Prize for literature, played the leading role in the New York production.

Criticism of the WPA. The WPA's Federal Theatre Project added to a growing political controversy swirling about the basic nature of President Roosevelt's approach to poverty and unemployment. Conservative Republicans ridiculed the agency, stating that WPA stood for "we piddle around," and remarking that "you can always identify the federal government's road builders by the way they lean on their shovels." Such Republicans as Representative Hamilton Fish, who ironically represented Roosevelt's New York congressional district, branded the WPA as a huge political machine whose purpose was to achieve the election of 100 percent Roosevelt Democrats. Comparing "the whole rotten mess. . . [to] a dead mackerel," Fish exclaimed that it "stinks and shines and shines and stinks."

Southern conservatives also became increasingly disgruntled with the WPA. Walter George and Eugene Talmadge of Georgia, Josiah Bailey of North Carolina and "Cotton Ed" Smith of South Carolina railed against the New Deal's interference with southern states' rights. In particular, Eleanor Roosevelt's excursions south of the Mason-Dixon line to promote the WPA's employment of African Americans infuriated southern politicians and embarrassed Roosevelt. Senator Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas warned that the WPA would inflict damage on the national character by making a large percentage of the population permanently dependent on government aid. "I get very much discouraged," he warned, [that] it is going to be very diffi-

cult to ever get away from this habit of giving out federal favors." Even South Carolina Democratic Senator James Byrnes, who loyally supported Roosevelt on most issues, thought the WPA wasted millions of dollars. In response to the critics, the president admitted that waste existed.

A deepening recession in 1937 to 1938, however, caused Roosevelt to reverse his position and increase the WPA workforce. In 1938, Roosevelt's congressional opponents, concerned with the president's growing power as evidenced by his attempted court-packing scheme and campaign to purge conservatives from the Democratic Party, created a coalition dedicated to blocking New Deal measures. As these Republicans and southern Democrats gained strength in Congress, various committees began scrutinizing the WPA's political activities. The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) condemned the Federal Theatre Project's employment of Communists and other "un-patriotic Americans," prompting Roosevelt to end the program on June 30, 1939. Mindful that Roosevelt had increased the WPA workforce in the months preceding the 1938 off-year elections, Congress further passed two Hatch acts in 1939. Aimed at eliminating political corruption and coercion in New Deal agencies, they attempted to prevent Roosevelt from using the WPA to produce votes for the 1940 presidential campaign, despite his claim that he was not a candidate.

On July 1, 1939, the Works Progress Administration became the Work Projects Administration, an effort by Roosevelt to shift the emphasis from welfare to more positive achievements, such as infrastructure construction. The new WPA focused on military projects after 1939, and Roosevelt ended it on June 30, 1943.

Legacy. Despite all the controversy generated by the criticisms, the WPA made important contributions to the American economy and culture. Many of the buildings constructed by WPA projects still functioned as the nation entered the twenty-first century. Millions of Americans received an education from teachers employed by the agency. Although politicians, including Roosevelt, used the WPA as a form of patronage, its \$10 billion subsidized families of the unemployed and relieved their misery.

In the years that followed President Roosevelt's death in 1945, other politicians advocated philosophies similar to the one that produced the WPA. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson secured the passage of several laws providing job training, federal employment, highway construction, and education as a part of his Great Society. In 1988, Senator Paul Simon made a revived WPA his campaign promise in his unsuccessful bid for the Democratic presidential nomination. For whatever reasons, these attempts did not succeed in continuing the practice of public employment in the way that the WPA had addressed America's economic woes. Such programs as the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, however, reflected one of the WPA's legacies to the nation as it entered the twenty-first century.

The Works Progress Administration succeeded in enabling millions of desperate Americans to survive the 1930s. Employment generated by World War II achieved the WPA's primary goals.

See Also: FEDERAL ART PROJECT (FAP); FEDERAL MUSIC PROJECT (FMP); FEDERAL ONE; FEDERAL THEATRE PROJECT (FTP); FEDERAL WRITERS' PROJECT (FWP); HOPKINS, HARRY.

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J. CHRISTOPHER SCHNELL

WORLD COURT

The interwar World Court (officially called the Permanent Court of International Justice) was the judicial arm of the League of Nations, just as the present-day International Court of Justice is the "judicial arm" of the United Nations. The earlier Court was expected both to adjudicate disputes between member-states of the League of Nations and to maintain the treaty system established at the Paris Peace Conference that concluded World War I. But for many Americans, no less than foreigners, the World Court became a symbolic battle-ground, with American membership to the Court seen as a possible point of entry into the League of Nations.

The triumph of Warren Harding in the presidential election of 1920 had apparently decided

Woodrow Wilson's "solemn referendum" against U.S. involvement with the League of Nations. Article XIV of the League Covenant had called for the "establishment of a Permanent Court of International Justice," a provision that escaped serious opposition even from those who bitterly opposed U.S. membership in the League during the campaign. Indeed, in 1920 a committee of jurists from ten countries had drafted the statute (or constitution) of this embryonic World Court, and one of the most influential participants was Elihu Root, who was prominent in the Republican Party leadership outside Congress.

The World Court was inaugurated in 1922 at The Hague, with the preeminent American international lawyer, John Bassett Moore, one of the fifteen judges. In the United States, activists divided into three groups: those (like Moore) who opposed American membership in the League of Nations but favored adherence to the World Court; those who sought adherence to the Court as the first stage to full League membership; and those who opposed the Court precisely because they saw it as a "back door" to the League. In December 1925 the Senate began full debate on adherence to the Court—the delay due more to the cautious pro-League supporters than to their opponents. Indeed it was the proponents in the Senate who followed the Harding and Calvin Coolidge administrations in framing the eight conditions governing senatorial consent to ratification and thus U.S. membership in the World Court. The affirmative vote of seventy-six to seventeen in January 1926 reflected how uncontentious these conditions were: protection of the Monroe Doctrine, a senatorial veto over the president's submission of disputes to the Court; U.S. agreement to any changes in the court statute; and voting power equal to that of any of the major member-states (such as Britain, France, and Japan) in the League-based elections to the Court bench. Only one issue began contentiously but ended in unanimity: the requirement that the U.S. government have a veto over the Court's advisory jurisdiction. Such a technical matter of jurisdiction (or competence) to decide an international dispute was highly political, for only the League of Nations could request advisory opinions and thus insert itself quasi-judicially into interstate conflicts.

Although legal specialists appreciated the political importance of the Court's advisory jurisdiction, the arguments appeared abstract before the Senate vote and during the next three years when the League itself twice refused to accept this one American demand. Then in 1931, the League of Nations and World Court combined to justify the anxieties of those who supported U.S. adherence to the Court and vindicate the warnings of those who opposed membership in the League of Nations. In its advisory opinion on the "Austro-German Customs Union" the Court decided by a single vote that a proposed tariff agreement constituted the threat of an economic *Anschluss* (union) and was therefore subject to the veto of the League Council. With many predicting war in Europe before full-scale war broke out between Japan and China, on the eve of the 1932 presidential campaign, the Senate reaffirmed the 1926 conditions because of, rather than despite, the intervening double rejection by the League. Such was the international context in which Franklin Roosevelt famously repudiated his earlier support of U.S. membership in the League, mainly to appease the Hearst press.

Throughout the seventy-third Congress Roosevelt and his bipartisan supporters concentrated upon a New Deal whose orientation was unilateralist and nationalistic (isolationist) rather than multilateral (internationalist). Yet progressive Republicans, like Senators William Borah of Idaho and Hiram Johnson of California, on whose votes and influence Roosevelt relied, feared pro-League "Wilsonianism" in the State Department and hence dangerous foreign diversions from the domestic crisis. The midterm elections of 1934, a personal success for Roosevelt and an endorsement of the pro-New Deal ad hoc coalition, tempted Roosevelt to defer to the conservative Senate majority leader, Joseph Robinson of Arkansas, and cautiously back U.S. adherence to the Court.

Knowledgeable observers agreed that, at best, the Senate would repeat the terms of 1926; at worst, the recent Manchurian crisis and current Italian preparations for war with Ethiopia, both raising fears of League involvement, would deter the Senate altogether. Astonishingly, Roosevelt agreed with Robinson to alter the terms of adherence ap-

proved by the Senate a decade earlier, despite the objections of pro-Court Democrat Key Pittman, chair of the Foreign Relations Committee. This combination of executive arrogance and foreign anxieties prevented, after three weeks of animated debate, the two-thirds majority needed for approval, despite the virtual rewriting of the resolution by the proponents to conform to the language of 1926. Commentators then, and historians later, emphasized the last-minute impact of the anti-League “propaganda barrage” from Father Charles Coughlin and the Hearst press. Rather, roll calls showed that the decisive alignments against the rewritten conditions coalesced days before the final vote on January 29, 1935. The “triumph of isolationism” registered by the defeat of the World Court owed as much to Roosevelt’s misguided leadership and the reality of dangerous events abroad as to the power of home-grown American isolationism.

See Also: COUGHLIN, CHARLES; ISOLATIONISM.

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MICHAEL DUNNE

WORLD WAR II AND THE ENDING OF THE DEPRESSION

World War II had a profound and multifaceted impact on the American economy. Most obviously, it lifted the nation out of the Great Depression of the 1930s. As late as 1940, unemployment stood at 14.6 percent; by 1944 it was down to a remarkable 1.2 percent, and the gross national product (GNP) had more than doubled. But the wartime economic mobilization did more than end the Depression. It greatly increased the size, power, and cost of the federal government. It corroborated the argument of the British economist John Maynard Keynes that deficit spending could stimulate economic growth, with consequences not only for government fiscal policy, but also for the agenda of New Deal liberalism. It virtually revolutionized the tax structure by vastly increasing the number of taxpayers, making personal income taxes a larger source of federal income than corporate taxes, and inaugurating the withholding system. It enlarged the economic and political power of big business, spurred the mechanization of agriculture and the further consolidation of big agribusiness, and increased the size and influence of organized labor. It catalyzed major breakthroughs in science and technology, including the development of the atomic bomb. It contributed to the resurgence of conservatism in Congress that had begun in the late 1930s. And among its other consequences, it made the United States overwhelmingly the dominant economic power in the world.

As the United States became the “arsenal of democracy” during World War II, economic mobilization brought a double victory for the American people by ending the decade-long Great Depression at home, as well as playing a pivotal role in defeating the Axis Powers abroad. President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal of the 1930s had contributed to economic improvement after the calamitous collapse of the American economy that had led to unemployment of at least 25 percent by 1933. It had also provided essential assistance to the impoverished and unemployed. But the New Deal had not ended the Depression. Indeed, after some recovery from 1933 to 1937, the sharp recession of 1937 to



An anthracite miner in an eastern Pennsylvania mine shows an American soldier how to swing a pick under a low ceiling during a war production drive in 1942. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

1938 sent economic indexes plummeting again, with unemployment reaching 19 percent. The economy then headed up again, but in 1940 unemployment still stood at a Depression-level 14.6 percent.

By 1940, however, the war in Europe and the American national defense program provided economic stimulus, and in 1941 and 1942 defense spending and mobilization for war began to send the economy to new levels of prosperity. With the United States accounting for about 40 percent of all war goods produced worldwide by 1944, the GNP rose from \$91 billion in 1939 to \$126 billion in 1941, to \$193 billion in 1943, and to \$214 billion in 1945. Civilian employment increased by eight million

workers, to some fifty-four million, between 1939 and 1944, at the same time that the armed forces mushroomed from one-third of a million to 11.5 million. Unemployment virtually vanished, falling to just 1.2 percent in 1944. National income soared from \$73 billion in 1939 to \$183 billion in 1944. And as the United States prospered, the economies of the other major nations were distorted and damaged by the war. In 1947, the United States produced about half of the world's manufactured goods, three-fifths of the world's oil and steel, and four-fifths of the world's automobiles. Such newer industries as aviation, petrochemicals, and electronics also grew in size and importance because of the war—as did new technologies in those and



Dante Electrical Company in Connecticut, pictured in 1942, was one of many small factories around the country that joined the war production effort in the early 1940s. FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT LIBRARY

other areas, including computers. One leading economic historian has argued that such American economic dominance was perhaps “the most influential consequence of the Second World War for the postwar world.”

World War II thus brought the return of good times for the American people and laid foundations for the unparalleled prosperity of the postwar era. Even allowing for wartime inflation and shortages, the new employment opportunities and higher incomes produced increased consumer spending and rising living standards. And while there was very little redistribution of income during the war, personal income increased so dramatically—it nearly

doubled among the lowest 40 percent of families—that it seemed to many that the war had worked a revolutionary change in their circumstances and aspirations. Wartime shortages of workers also led employers to hire women, African Americans, and other groups in larger numbers and better positions than before. In addition to their wartime training and experiences, armed forces personnel received important educational and economic benefits from the G.I. bill.

Economic mobilization not only produced widespread prosperity, rising living standards, and new opportunities, but also helped to enhance and institutionalize the economic and political power of



President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs the declaration of war against Japan on December 8, 1941. NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

big business, big farming, and big labor. In manufacturing, defense contracts tended to go to corporate giants with a demonstrated capacity for high-volume, high-quality production. Just thirty-three firms won more than half of all prime war contracts awarded from 1940 to 1944. The proportion of workers employed by businesses with 10,000 workers or more rose from 13 to 30 percent of the total. Working with the military, in an early manifestation of what came to be called the “military-industrial complex,” big business resisted spreading war contracts around more, lobbied successfully for curtailing antitrust efforts, and helped prevent early re-conversion to peacetime production by smaller firms.

Mobilizing the economy was achieved more by government support and subsidy than by controls and coercion. Though federal power over materials, priorities, manpower, and production increased

significantly during the war, expansion was facilitated by such assistance to business as tax breaks, subsidies, low-cost loans, and contracts that guaranteed the cost of production plus a profit. War contractors also received federal assistance in post-war demobilization. To bring needed experience and expertise to economic mobilization, moreover, executives from such business giants as General Motors, U.S. Steel, General Electric, and Sears, Roebuck were brought to Washington and played key roles in the war mobilization agencies. These “dollar-a-year men,” who remained on their corporate payrolls while accepting a nominal salary from the government, further augmented the influence of big business. In all, big business emerged from the war with its reputation enhanced and with enlarged economic and political power.

Organized labor and big commercial farmers also experienced gains during the war. Membership in American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions rose by about 50 percent during the war, and AFL and CIO leaders played significant roles in wartime mobilization agencies, though without the same influence as business. Big commercial farmers represented by the “farm bloc” in Congress saw that farm prices received relatively high ceilings in the wartime price control efforts. To make up for the loss of farm labor, more farmers turned to mechanization, which contributed to the ongoing depopulation of parts of rural America and to the consolidation of large commercial farming. The growing size and influence of big business, big labor, and big farming gave clearer shape to the modern American political economy that had been emerging over the previous half century.

So also did the larger size, power, and cost of the federal government. To manage wartime economic mobilization and organize the material, manpower, and money needed to win the war, the number of civilian employees of the federal government quadrupled, to some four million. Such agencies as the War Production Board (WPB), the Office of Price Administration (OPA), the Office of Economic Stabilization (OES), the National War Labor Board (NWLB), the War Manpower Commission (WMC), the Office of Scientific Research and De-

velopment (OSRD), the Office of War Mobilization (OWM), and the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion (OWMR) greatly increased the power of the federal government over virtually every aspect of the economy. The mobilization agencies got off to a slow and stumbling start, but by 1943 became far more efficient and expanded federal power over the economy well beyond what the New Deal had done. Wartime agencies and powers were curtailed in the postwar era—but in 1950, the federal government had two million civilian workers, twice the 1940 level. To finance war mobilization, annual federal expenditures rose from \$9 billion to nearly \$98 billion between 1939 and 1945. In all, the government spent some \$300 billion during the war—twice as much as in all its previous history going back to 1789.

Less than half of federal spending was financed by taxation, but that required an enormous effort that profoundly and permanently changed the tax system. Wartime taxation, especially the Revenue Act of 1942, greatly expanded the reach of the tax system, as the number of taxable individual incomes rose from four million in 1939 to almost forty-three million by 1945. With so many more people paying taxes, the government introduced the withholding system. And for the first time, individual income taxes became a larger source of federal revenues than corporate taxes—another pattern that continued into the postwar era.

But the greater part of wartime spending was financed by borrowing, through war bonds and other devices. And by underwriting full-production, full-employment prosperity, the massive deficits—of some \$50 billion in each of three years, a sum amount twelve times the highest deficit of the New Deal years of the 1930s—corroborated the arguments of John Maynard Keynes. Keynesian economic analysis had maintained that large-scale, purposeful deficit spending could stimulate economic growth and produce full-employment prosperity. Keynesian analysis became increasingly central to economic theory and government policy, and the new tax system of the war years enabled government fiscal policy—taxes and spending—to be implemented more quickly and easily.

Wartime prosperity had other political implications as well. For one thing, it helped reorient liberal policy. Partly because of some of the inefficiencies and the business domination of wartime mobilization agencies, liberals became less attracted to microeconomic planning and regulation, and, as deficit spending produced full-fledged prosperity, they became more attracted to macroeconomic policy to achieve full-production and full-employment prosperity by means of Keynesian fiscal policy. Liberals proposed expensive and expansive social programs that might produce both reform and prosperity. But the return of prosperity made Depression-era social welfare policies seem less necessary and less attractive to many Americans, and wartime prosperity and frustrations produced striking Republican gains in the 1942 elections that made a congressional conservative coalition of Republicans and conservative (mostly southern) Democrats more powerful. The conservative coalition stymied social reform—except for the enormously important G.I. Bill—and remained in control of the Congress in the postwar era.

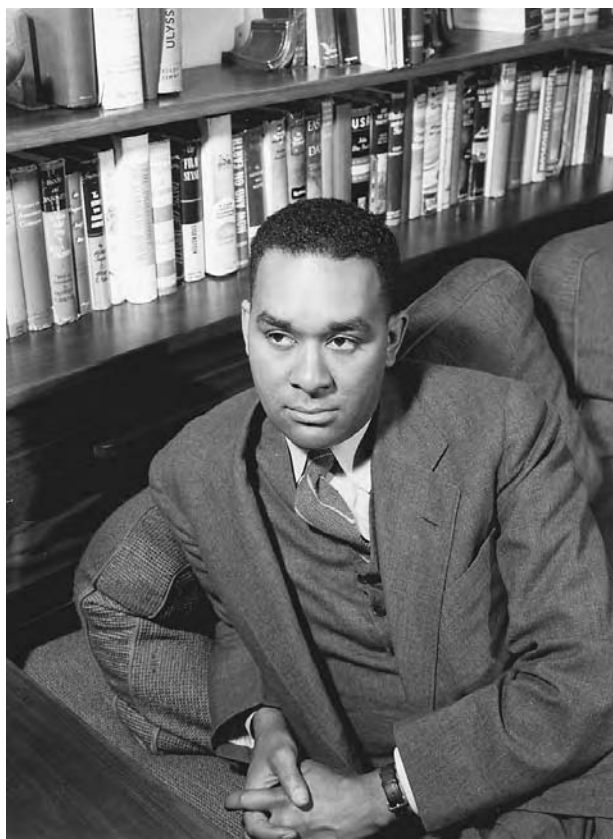
See Also: EUROPE, GREAT DEPRESSION IN.

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JOHN W. JEFFRIES

WPA. *See* WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION.



Richard Wright, 1943. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, PRINTS & PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION, FSA/OWI COLLECTION

WRIGHT, RICHARD

Born near Roxie, Mississippi, in 1908, Richard Nathaniel Wright (September 4, 1908–November 28, 1960) became one of America's foremost chroniclers of African-American life under segregation. The son of a sharecropper and a schoolteacher, Wright spent a grim childhood in Mississippi. He detailed his attempts to retain individual dignity in the face of poverty and racism in the autobiographical *Black Boy* (1945). Valedictorian of his ninth-grade class, Wright received little further formal education. A voracious reader, he was influenced by contemporary literary naturalists and modernists, such as Sinclair Lewis, Theodore Dreiser, and James T. Farrell, as well as the critic H. L. Mencken.

In 1927 Wright joined the great migration of black southerners to Chicago, where he worked as

a delivery boy, dishwasher, and a post office clerk, a job he lost after the economy soured in 1930. Wright began to produce poetry and fiction, the bulk of which details the corrosive effects of southern racism. Conditions in Chicago acquainted Wright with the northern face of Jim Crow. While black Chicagoans did not face the threats of physical violence so common in the Deep South, they were segregated on Chicago's South Side, where they paid high rents for bleak ghetto housing. Wright attended meetings of the John Reed Club, read Marxist theory, and joined the Communist Party in 1932. He published poetry and short fiction in progressive magazines such as *Left Front*, *Anvil*, and *New Masses*. In 1935 Wright was hired by the WPA's Federal Writers' Project to help research the Illinois volume in the American Guide series. He also worked for the Negro Federal Theatre of Chicago, a division of the Federal Theatre Project. In 1937 he moved to New York, where he became editor of the Harlem-based *Daily Worker*, a Communist newspaper. Wright's work in the 1930s and 1940s revealed to white Americans the frustration that black Americans felt toward poverty and racism. One of his best-known essays, "The Ethics of Living Jim Crow," was published in *American Stuff: WPA Writers' Anthology* (1937).

In 1940 Wright published his first novel, *Native Son*, which gained critical and popular success. Set in Chicago, the novel traces the life of Bigger Thomas from his encounters with racism, both paternalistic and violent, through his flirtation with radical politics, to his accidental murder of his white employer's daughter. Wright's fiction was influenced by Marxian materialism and the work of contemporary sociologists. Wright portrayed a society riven by class tensions exacerbated by racism. Wright's characters, like most Americans of the Depression years, seem buffeted by economic, social, and political forces beyond their control.

During World War II, Wright broke with the Communist Party, but he continued to be critical of American racism. In 1947, Wright became an expatriate in France, where he was joined by other major black writers, including James Baldwin and Ralph Ellison. Wright's later works did not enjoy the critical or financial success he had met in the 1930s and

1940s, although his reputation as one of America's major twentieth-century writers is secure. He died in France in 1960.

See Also: AFRICAN AMERICANS, IMPACT OF THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON; HUGHES, LANGSTON; LITERATURE.

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TRENT A. WATTS

ZANUCK, DARRYL F. *See* "GRAPES OF WRATH, THE."

BACKMATTER

TIMELINE

- 1893–1898:** Panic of 1893, the worst economic collapse in American history prior to 1929.
- 1913:** Henry Ford introduces the moving assembly line in production of his automobiles, pointing the way toward an economy of mass production that will require the stimulation of mass consumption.
- 1914–1918:** World War I severely disrupts the international economy, distorts international trade, transforms the United States into the world's leading creditor nation, prompts overproduction in American agriculture, and leads to the development of techniques of mass persuasion that will be used in advertising in the 1920s.
- 1919:** Versailles Peace Conference demands huge reparations from Germany.
- 1920–21:** Severe postwar deflation and economic recession.
- 1923–24:** Hyperinflation in Germany.
- 1925–26:** Florida real estate bubble.
- 1928–29:** Great Bull Market on Wall Street. Speculators push stock prices far above their realistic values.
- November 6, 1928:** Herbert Hoover is elected president of the United States.
- October 24–29, 1928:** Stock Market Crash, followed by continuing severe decline through mid-November.
- 1930:** Grant Wood paints *American Gothic*.
- 1930:** Repatriation programs begin to deport Mexican immigrants.
- 1930:** Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* is published.
- June 17, 1930:** Hawley-Smoot Tariff is enacted, raising duties on products imported into the United States.
- 1931:** Empire State Building in New York is completed.
- January 1931:** Gangster movie *Little Caesar* released.
- March 25, 1931:** Scottsboro Boys arrested. Nine black men are accused of raping two white women in Alabama, beginning a celebrated legal battle.
- May 1931:** Austrian Kreditanstalt collapses, precipitating a financial crisis in central Europe.
- July 1931:** Donatbank in Germany goes bankrupt, leading to closure of all German banks.
- February 2, 1932:** Reconstruction Finance Corporation established to provide loans to banks and other financial institutions.
- March 23, 1932:** Norris-LaGuardia Act prohibits injunctions against strikes and boycotts.
- May–July 1932:** "Bonus Army" of World War I veterans comes to Washington to demand imme-

- diate payment of a bonus Congress had enacted in 1924. Troops forcibly evict the group on July 28.
- June 30, 1932:** Franklin D. Roosevelt wins Democratic nomination for president.
- July 2, 1932:** Roosevelt accepts the Democratic nomination in a speech in which he pledges himself to a “new deal” for the American people.
- October 1932:** Recording of “Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?” The song became an anthem for Depression victims.
- November 8, 1932:** Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected president in a landslide over Herbert Hoover.
- November 11, 1932:** *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang* released.
- 1933:** Elaborate Busby Berkeley musicals score big at the box office.
- January 30, 1933:** Adolf Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany.
- February–March 1933:** Banking crisis in which runs on banks force bank failures and several states proclaim “bank holidays,” closing the banks statewide. Almost all banks in the nation are closed by March 4.
- March 4, 1933:** Franklin D. Roosevelt inaugurated as president, asks for powers similar to those he would be given in a war.
- March 9, 1933:** Emergency Banking Act gives the government the power to reopen banks once they are declared secure.
- March 12, 1933:** Roosevelt addresses the nation by radio in his first “fireside chat.”
- March 31, 1933:** Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established, providing reforestation and conservation work for unemployed young men.
- April 19, 1933:** United States officially abandons the gold standard.
- May 12, 1933:** Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) appropriates \$500 million to aid states in providing relief payments.
- May 12, 1933:** Agricultural Adjustment Act enacted with the purpose of raising prices and farm income by cutting excess production.
- May 18, 1933:** Tennessee Valley Authority established to improve life in the impoverished region through planning, the provision of hydroelectric power, flood and erosion control, and other means.
- May 27, 1933:** Federal Securities Act requires full disclosures when new securities are issued.
- June 12–July 27, 1933:** London Economic Conference fails to agree on international approach to fighting the Depression.
- June 13, 1933:** Home Owners’ Loan Act provides for federal refinancing of mortgages on homes.
- June 16, 1933:** National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) establishes the National Recovery Administration (NRA) to set up codes of fair competition in industries and establishes the Public Works Administration (PWA) to construct public buildings, roads, etc.
- June 16, 1933:** Glass-Steagall Banking Act separates investment banking from commercial banking and creates the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) to guarantee bank deposits.
- June 16, 1933:** Farm Credit Act provides for the reorganization of credit for farmers.
- September 30, 1933:** Dr. Francis Townsend’s letter outlining his proposal for an old-age pension system is published in the *Long Beach Press-Telegram*.
- October 18, 1933:** Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) set up to make loans to farmers on their crops.
- November 8, 1933:** Civil Works Administration (CWA) established to provide work relief for millions of the unemployed.
- January 1, 1934:** Frank Capra’s film *It Happened One Night* is released.
- June 6, 1934:** Securities Exchange Act establishes the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) to regulate the operation of the stock market.
- June 18, 1934:** Wheeler-Howard (Indian Reorganization) Act is passed, starting the Indian New Deal.
- June 19, 1934:** Communications Act sets up the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to regulate radio and other electronic communication.

- June 19, 1934:** National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) established.
- June 28, 1934:** National Housing Act creates the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) to insure loans for home building.
- July 1934:** Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU) formed.
- July 16, 1934:** San Francisco General Strike begins.
- August 1934:** American Liberty League formed to oppose the New Deal.
- August 28, 1934:** Upton Sinclair wins the Democratic nomination for governor of California on his socialist “End Poverty in California” platform.
- November 6, 1934:** Congressional elections give Democrats an additional nine seats in each house of Congress; Sinclair defeated in California.
- March 19, 1935:** Race riot is touched off in the Harlem area of New York City when false rumors spread that a policeman had killed an African-American boy.
- April 8, 1935:** Emergency Relief Appropriation Act provides \$4.8 billion for relief, most of which goes to the new Works Progress Administration (WPA).
- May 1, 1935:** Resettlement Administration (RA) set up to assist impoverished families by resettling them on productive land.
- May 11, 1935:** Rural Electrification Administration (REA) established to provide electricity to rural areas on the nation.
- May 27, 1935:** In the case of *Schechter Poultry Corp. v. U.S.*, the Supreme Court unanimously invalidates the National Recovery Administration (NRA).
- June 19, 1935:** Roosevelt sends “Wealth Tax” message to Congress calling for changes to reverse the concentration of wealth and economic power.
- June 26, 1935:** National Youth Administration (NYA) set up to assist people aged 16–25.
- July 5, 1935:** National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) provides protections for workers seeking to organize unions.
- August 14, 1935:** Social Security Act establishes a system of old-age pensions, unemployment compensation, and aid to dependent children.
- August 28, 1935:** Public Utility Holding Company Act (Wheeler-Rayburn Act) restricts the use of holding companies in the ownership of utilities.
- September 8, 1935:** Senator Huey P. Long assassinated in Baton Rouge.
- November 9, 1935:** Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO, later Congress of Industrial Organizations) is formed to promote unionization of mass production industries.
- February 1936:** John Maynard Keynes’s *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* is published.
- February 5, 1936:** Charlie Chaplin’s film *Modern Times* is released.
- June 27, 1936:** In a speech accepting his re-nomination, Roosevelt attacks “economic royalists.”
- June 30, 1936:** Margaret Mitchell’s novel *Gone with the Wind* is published.
- July 17, 1936:** Spanish Civil War begins.
- August 1936:** African-American athlete Jesse Owens wins four gold medals at The Olympic Games in Berlin, confounding Hitler’s racial views.
- November 3, 1936:** Roosevelt defeats Republican Alfred Landon by an extraordinary margin, winning all but two states.
- December 30, 1936:** Sit-down strike against General Motors begins in Flint, Michigan.
- January 20, 1937:** Roosevelt gives second inaugural address, in which he speaks of “one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished.”
- February 5, 1937:** Roosevelt submits to Congress his plan to reorganize the judiciary, beginning the fight over court-packing.
- February 10, 1937:** General Motors agrees to a contract with the United Auto Workers (UAW), ending the sit-down strike.
- March 2, 1937:** U. S. Steel Corporation recognizes and signs an agreement with the Steel Workers’ Organizing Committee (SWOC) without a strike.

- May 30, 1937:** Memorial Day Massacre of union members outside the Republic Steel plant in South Chicago.
- July 2, 1937:** Aviator Amelia Earhart disappears over the Pacific during attempted around-the-world flight.
- July 22, 1937:** Bankhead-Jones Farm Tenancy Act establishes the Farm Security Administration (FSA).
- August 1937:** “Roosevelt Recession” of 1937–38 begins.
- September 1, 1937:** National Housing Act (Wagner-Steagall Act) creates the U.S. Housing Authority to assist in providing housing for low-income people.
- December 1937:** Publication of report by La Follette Civil Liberties Committee in the Senate details tactics used by anti-union employers.
- December 21, 1937:** Walt Disney’s *Snow White* is released.
- February 16, 1938:** Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 revived the AAA of 1933 in a form that avoided the problems that had led to the earlier act being declared unconstitutional.
- June 1938:** *Superman* comics begin.
- June 16, 1938:** Temporary National Economic Committee (TNEC) is formed to investigate concentration and monopoly in business.
- June 25, 1938:** Fair Labor Standards Act provides for a minimum wage and a maximum number of working hours and outlaws child labor.
- October 31, 1938:** Orson Welles radio broadcast of *War of the Worlds* touches off a panic about Martians landing in New Jersey.
- November 7, 1938:** Kristallnacht, the “Night of Broken Glass” in which Nazi thugs, encouraged by the government, looted and vandalized Jewish homes, businesses and synagogues across Germany.
- November 8, 1938:** Congressional elections bring significant gains for Republicans, but maintain large majorities in both houses.
- 1939:** Film versions of *Gone with the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz* are released.
- 1939:** Frank Capra’s *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* and John Ford’s *Stagecoach* present moviegoers with pre-capitalist values.
- February 6, 1939:** Raymond Chandler’s *The Big Sleep* is published.
- February 18, 1939:** Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco opens.
- April 3, 1939:** Administrative Reorganization Act rearranged and reorganized the units within the executive branch of government.
- April 9, 1939:** Marian Anderson gives free concert for seventy-five thousand at the Lincoln Memorial after the Daughters of the American Revolution deny her use of Constitution Hall.
- April 14, 1939:** John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* is published.
- April 30, 1939:** New York World’s Fair opens.
- August 2, 1939:** The Hatch Act prohibits federal officials from participating in political campaigns.
- August 24, 1939:** Nazi-Soviet nonaggression pact opens the way for World War II.
- September 1, 1939:** German invasion of Poland starts World War II.
- 1940:** Richard Wright’s *Native Son* is published.
- January 1940:** Frank Capra’s film version of *The Grapes of Wrath* is released.
- July 18, 1940:** Franklin Roosevelt is nominated for a third term as president.
- November 5, 1940:** Roosevelt defeats Republican Wendell Willkie to win an unprecedented third term as president.
- 1941:** Military production in preparation for World War II brings the Great Depression to an end.
- May 1, 1941:** Orson Welles’ film *Citizen Kane* is released.