

The Great Depression

Block 1

Mr. Powers

DBQ Essay Question

Using your knowledge about the Great Depression and the New Deal and the primary sources provided, answer the following question in a well-organized essay. Please bring your rough draft to class tomorrow for a writing activity.

Question:

Following the stock market crash of 1929, the United States entered a severe economic depression. When President Franklin Roosevelt was elected, he promised the American people “a new deal” and a government that would support its citizens in times of crisis. Using the sources provided and what you have learned throughout this unit, explain how the New Deal forever changed the way Americans view their government. In your essay, be sure to include the perspectives of individuals in favor of and against the New Deal. Also, after explaining the legacy of the New Deal, include your opinion as to whether the New Deal successfully provided what President Roosevelt promised.

Source # 2

Huey Long, "Share the Wealth" Speech, 1934

"... we start from the bottom. That the 25 or more million American families shall have a homestead. Up to \$5,000...a home and the comforts of a home, including an automobile and a radio, the things it takes in that house to live on...

We say to America, 125 million, none shall be too big, none shall be too poor, none shall work too much, none shall be idle. No luxurious mansions empty, none walking the streets, none impoverished, none in pestilence, none in want, but in the land blessed by the smile of the Creator with everything to be consumed, to be eaten, to be worn, that America will become a land, sharing the fruits of the land, not for the favored few, not to satisfy greed, but that all may live in the land in which the Lord has provided an abundance sufficient for the luxury and convenience of the people in general! I thank you..."

Points to think about:

What was Huey Long's opinion about the New Deal?

Did Huey Long believe that the government was responsible for taking care of its citizens?
What actions did he think were necessary to end the Great Depression?

How did he feel about excessive greed and wealth?

“...Never before in modern history have the essential differences between the two major American parties stood out in such striking contrast as they do today. Republican leaders not only have failed in material things, they have failed in national vision, because in disaster they have held out no hope, they have pointed out no path for the people below to climb back to places of security and of safety in our American life.

Throughout the Nation, men and women, forgotten in the political philosophy of the Government of the last years look to us here for guidance and for more equitable opportunity to share in the distribution of national wealth.

On the farms, in the large metropolitan areas, in the smaller cities and in the villages, millions of our citizens cherish the hope that their old standards of living and of thought have not gone forever. Those millions cannot and shall not hope in vain. I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people. Let us all here assembled constitute ourselves prophets of a new order of competence and of courage. This is more than a political campaign; it is a call to arms. Give me your help, not to win votes alone, but to win in this crusade to restore America to its own people...”

Points to think about:

What was the New Deal? How did most Americans view FDR?

What was Roosevelt’s opinion about the responsibility of the government?

How has the New Deal remained a part of American life?