

**CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO: A NEW DEAL FOR AMERICA:  
THE GREAT DEPRESSION, 1929–1940**

**READING AND STUDY GUIDE**

- I. The Early Days of the Depression
  - A. Herbert Hoover
  - B. Economic Weaknesses in a Time of Prosperity
  - C. The Stock Market Crash of 1929
  - D. Hoover’s Response to the Depression
  
- II. A New President and a New Deal
  - A. FDR: The Politician
  - B. Managing Appearances
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- III. Recovering from the Depression
  - A. Revamping Banking and Financial Institutions
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- IV. A New Deal for Farmers
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- V. Reforms to Ensure Social Justice
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When Franklin D. Roosevelt accepted the Democratic nomination for president in 1932, he promised to remember “the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid.” FDR won the election and took office in the throes of the Great Depression, the most devastating and longest economic crisis in American history.

Americans had different visions of how the government should respond to the crisis, and throughout the decade political debate centered on whether and how much the government should intervene. Presidents Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt both championed initiative, freedom, and opportunity. They disagreed, however, over what government action preserved or destroyed these values. In the early thirties, President Herbert Hoover, who

preferred minimal government intervention in the economy, took a few historic steps by lending money to banks and businesses and helping farmers. More attuned to the mood of the public, Roosevelt initiated a broad array of public works programs and social reforms to satisfy the demand for direct government intervention in the economy.

Taken together, policy initiatives by Hoover and Roosevelt paved the way for a complete transformation of the role that the federal government played in American society. The New Deal did not end the Depression; that honor belonged to World War II. It was, however, one of the most important periods of legislative activity in American history.

Farmers, migrants, and industrial workers did not just passively wait for help during these hard times. They demanded a “new deal” from the federal government that alleviated the sufferings of common people. Organized labor and charismatic populist politicians on the left helped create a groundswell of support for active government intervention in the economy. The decade, therefore, was not just the story of unrelenting hardship. The era also had moments of triumph for ordinary Americans, like Burroughs, who found their political voice.

### **Learning Objectives**

After a careful examination of Chapter 22, students should be able to do the following:

1. Briefly outline the causes of the Great Depression.
2. Describe the immediate economic impact of the Great Depression on the lives of average Americans.
3. Explain the specific impact of the Great Depression on the availability of jobs for women. Describe the impact of the Great Depression on the lives of children. Describe the impact of the Great Depression on the lives of African Americans and Hispanic Americans.
4. Identify the major groups in the United States that openly protested against the conditions created by the depression.
5. Describe the Hoover administration’s approach to easing the nation’s suffering during the depression.
6. Identify the Bonus Army and describe its treatment at the hands of the Hoover administration.
7. Briefly describe Franklin D. Roosevelt’s political background and why voters found him such an appealing candidate in the election of 1932.
8. List the major pieces of legislation passed during the First Hundred Days.
9. Explain the shortcomings of the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act. Describe the Supreme Court’s reaction to these laws.

10. Identify the American Liberty League and describe its role in articulating the business world's response to the New Deal.
11. Identify the sources of leftist criticism of the New Deal. Name four 1930s personalities who publicly criticized the New Deal for being too conservative.
12. List the major pieces of legislation associated with the Second New Deal. Explain how relief programs established during the Second New Deal differed from those created during the First Hundred Days.
13. Describe the realignment of the Democratic Party during the 1930s.
14. Describe the impact of the New Deal on labor organization in the United States.
15. Describe the political and economic impact of the New Deal on women.
16. Describe the economic and political impact of the New Deal on American minorities including African Americans, Native Americans, and Hispanic Americans.
17. Describe the impact of the New Deal on the American South and West.
18. Explain Roosevelt's "court packing scheme."
19. Describe the status and effectiveness of the New Deal by 1938.
20. Explain the Good Neighbor policy and how it was strained by the Great Depression.
21. Discuss the role of Americans' lingering isolationism in facilitating the rise of European fascism.
22. List the positive and negative outcomes of the New Deal in terms of their impact on American politics.

### **Key Terms & Definitions:**

**stock market crash of 1929** A ten-day period beginning on October 20, 1929, when the value of stocks plummeted as panicked investors sold off their stock in droves. This moment is usually considered the official start of the Depression. (657)

**Great Depression** The most devastating and longest economic crisis in American history that lasted from 1929 to 1939. (659)

**Bonus March** A two-month-long demonstration by forty thousand impoverished World War I veterans in Washington, D.C., that ended violently when the army expelled the protesters. (660)

**New Deal** An avalanche of legislation from 1933 to 1938 intended to promote economic recovery, reform American capitalism, and offer security to ordinary Americans. (662)

**Dust Bowl** Drought and soil erosion caused massive dust storms across southern and plains states throughout the thirties. (670)

**“Migrant Mother”** Dorothea Lange’s 1936 photograph of a destitute woman, which became an iconic portrait of Depression-era suffering. (673)

**share our wealth** Louisiana Senator Huey Long’s plan to redistribute money from the rich to the poor. (674)

**deserving poor** Needy Americans who were legitimately entitled to public support, a category open to differing interpretations. (676)

**American Federation of Labor (AFL)** A craft-based organization that accepted only skilled workers, like carpenters or cigar makers, who practiced a trade. (678)

**Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)** A brand-new type of labor organization that organized workers within an entire industry rather than by their trade orientation. (679)

**sit-down strike** Workers occupy a factory to paralyze production lines and prevent strikebreakers or management from entering the building. (679)

**New Deal coalition** A political partnership formed in the mid-thirties among liberals, trade unionists, Catholics, and northern blacks that redrew the nation’s political map. (680)

### **Study Questions:**

What emotions does Walker Evans’s portrait of the “forgotten man” arouse? (654)

What qualities made Hoover a popular president when he was first elected? (656)

Why did farmers fail to prosper in the 1920s? (657)

What factors led to the stock market crash in 1929? (658)

How did Hoover respond to the initial economic crisis? (659)

What innovative solutions did Hoover propose as the economic crisis continued? (660)

Why was Hoover’s choice to evict the bonus marchers significant? (661)

How did the competing social philosophies of Hoover and FDR differ? (662)

What role did Eleanor Roosevelt play during her husband’s administrations? (663)

How and why did FDR manage his political image? (664)

What competing responses did the poor offer to the ongoing Depression? (665)

How did FDR reform the nation's banking and financial institutions? (666)

Why did New Deal banking reforms and relief programs generate criticism? (667)

Who was helped by the wide range of New Deal work relief programs? (668)

What competing visions arose over New Deal work relief programs? (669)

How did FDR tackle the problems of rural America? (670)

How did displaced farmers act to improve their own lives? (671)

What happened to Mexican immigrants during the Depression? (672)

What was the purpose and impact of Dorothea Lange's migrant farmer photographs? (673)

How did critics from the left shape the social justice programs of FDR's second administration? (674)

What competing images of the poor do Long and this Indiana woman offer? (675)

Who was considered part of the "deserving poor" in the new social Security system? (676)

How did government support of unions change during the 1930s? (677)

Why were the CIO's innovative organizing and strike tactics effective? (678)

Why did many African Americans switch their allegiances from the Republican to the Democratic Party in the 1930s? (679)

What role did the Supreme Court Play during the New Deal? (680)

Why did the New Deal end in 1938? (681)