

New Deal Programs: Alphabet Soup

FOCUS QUESTION: How did President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal Programs aim to fix the causes and effects of the Great Depression?

Historical Context: In 1932 President Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) offered Americans a New Deal. Roosevelt, a liberal democrat, believed strongly that an active government could solve a host of national ills. Rejecting the conservative policies of his predecessors, FDR launched an era of governmental activism unprecedented in American history. Everything from unemployment, to hunger, to the lack of housing was attacked by the Roosevelt administration. Never before nor since has the United States experienced such a flurry of lawmaking. Prior to Roosevelt's New Deal, when Americans spoke of government, they usually thought of the local sheriff or the town leaders at city hall. The actions of the federal government under the New Deal, however, so changed society that afterwards the term was more likely to conjure up images of huge federal agencies and extensive programs.

Americans in the 1930s debated the effectiveness and appropriateness of the New Deal. Some argued that FDR's programs were little more than haphazard experimentation. Others believed that Roosevelt was really a conservative, and that by instituting federally sponsored programs he had saved capitalism and the business class from socialist solutions that were adopted in Europe and elsewhere during the 1930s. Still others felt that FDR had gone too far, that he had ushered in an age of national debt and bloated bureaucracies. In spite of the vigorous arguments surrounding the New Deal in the 1930s, the legacy of the New Deal is beyond the debate. As a consequence of FDR's New Deal, the role of the federal government grew dramatically. For better or worse, the impact of Roosevelt's actions could be seen in a wide variety of current governmental programs for the rest of the twentieth century. The relationship of the federal government to the states, local municipalities, and individual Americans changed, with long lasting results.

Directions: Using the information sheets provided record notes on at least *TWO* programs in each of the three categories to better understand and evaluate how the New Deal provided relief to struggling Americans, stimulated economic recovery, and reformed the structure of the nation's economy.

RELIEF	What was the overall goal of Relief programs?	
Acronym and Full Name of New Deal Program	Description of the Program	How did the program affect society during the Great Depression?

RECOVERY	What was the overall goal of Recovery programs?	
Acronym and Full Name of New Deal Program	Description of the Program	How did the program affect society during the Great Depression?

REFORM	What was the overall goal of Reform programs?	
Acronym and Full Name of New Deal Program	Description of the Program	How did the program affect society during the Great Depression?