

Background: By 1935, some Americans opposed Roosevelt and his New Deal. Many conservatives felt he had increased the power of the federal government too much and was hurting the economy by increasing taxes and providing what they saw as "charity." Other critics argued that Roosevelt was not doing enough to help. In 1936, however, Roosevelt won reelection as President, indicating that most Americans wanted to see what else the New Deal might offer. The 1936 election also changed typical voting patterns and realigned political support to make it similar to what it is today—75% of African-Americans voted for Roosevelt and the Democrats.

Document 1: Clashes with the Court

- In 1935 the Supreme Court declared that the National Recovery Act was unconstitutional because it gave too much power to the federal government in regulating business.
- In 1936 the Supreme Court also declared the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) unconstitutional because FDR was taking powers that belonged to Congress.
- Finally in 1937, Roosevelt tried to pass a law that would allow him to add more judges to the Supreme Court, which would help make sure his programs were not declared unconstitutional. His plan did not pass and he was heavily criticized.

Comprehension Questions:

1. How did the Supreme Court limit FDR's New Deal programs? Why do you think this caused conflict between Roosevelt and the Supreme Court?

Document 2: Political Challenges in the Election of 1936

By the time FDR was up for reelection in 1936, the Depression had improved but was still severe. Several candidates ran against FDR for president, offering their own solutions for how to end the Depression. Their platforms are summarized below:

Huey Long: "Share our Wealth"	Father Charles Coughlin: National Union for Justice	Dr. Francis Townsend: The Townsend Plan	Upton Sinclair: EPIC Plan (End Poverty in California)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase taxes on the rich • Guarantee every family an income of at least \$2,000 a year • Social Security would be available to anyone over 60 • No single person would be allowed to earn over \$1 million per year • Free education and training programs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government ownership of all banks • Inflation to help those in debt • Establish a minimum living wage for all • Blamed Jews and Communists for economic problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay every person over 60 \$200 per month • The money had to be spent within 30 days (this would help the economy) • A nationwide 2% sales tax 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government ownership of farms & factories to employ more workers • Higher income taxes on the wealthy • Social Security benefits of \$50 per month to anyone over 60 or disabled • \$50 per month to any widowed mother

Comprehension Questions:

1. Looking at the platforms of these candidates, why did some people think FDR's New Deal had not done enough?
2. Why do you think these politicians appealed to some Americans? How did they present alternatives to the New Deal?

Document 3: Eleanor Roosevelt's New Deal

Many women were left out of the New Deal. The WPA employed thousands of women, but 82% of Americans felt women should not work outside the home and many men felt women who worked were stealing jobs from men. In response, Eleanor Roosevelt decided to take an active role in the New Deal. She wrote a weekly newspaper column, fought for Civil Rights, and advised FDR on New Deal programs and policies. She soon became a role model for aspiring female politicians and social activists.

Below: Eleanor Roosevelt visiting a camp she helped create that provided jobs for women.



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Comprehension Questions:

1. Why do you think women were left out of New Deal programs? Why were many programs more focused on helping men?
2. How did Eleanor Roosevelt become a role model for many women and try to draw attention to women's suffering during the Depression?

Document 4: Election of 1936

Despite facing opposition, FDR easily won the 1936 election after Huey Long was assassinated and the other candidates failed to gain enough support. FDR won the election with 61% of the popular vote, the largest percentage anyone had ever won. He won 46 of 48 states. He was mainly supported by farmers, city workers, immigrants, African-Americans, and southerners, creating the modern Democratic Party that we still have today.

Sunrise Extra

Nation's Verdict
An Editorial, On Page 11

The Washington Post

The Weather
Today: Partly cloudy with light rain
tomorrow: Partly cloudy
Wednesday, Nov. 4, 1936: Partly cloudy

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1936 ***** XX ***** THREE CENTS

President Roosevelt Is Reelected in Landslide; Victory May Assure Him All But Two States; Democrats Increase Big Majority in Congress

Easy Control of the House For Roosevelt Program Due

NEW DEAL WILL HOLD PRESENT MEMBERSHIP, MAY INCREASE IT.

Captures 3 Seats in Pennsylvania

Other Gains Reported From N. Y., Maine, R. I., Connecticut.

The Post's Institute Poll Forecast Of Election, Most Nearly Correct

YESTERDAY'S election decided not only a political contest, but also a poll contest.

AMONG all of the polls that have been conducted during the campaign period, The Washington Post, publishing the results of the first AMERICA SPEAKS poll Monday, shows that its guess is to be correct on the most accurate forecast of the election.

THIS POLL, conducted by the American Institute of Public Opinion under the direction of Dr. George Gallup, showed only three states . . . Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont . . . as likely to be carried.

ALL THIS edition of The Washington Post goes to press, latest election returns indicate this prediction as being borne out.

THIS CONGRESS' AMERICA SPEAKS poll . . . as the most accurate of all published forecasts.

IF YOU are not already a regular Washington Post subscriber, please telephone 4000 today. AMERICA SPEAKS polls appear exclusively in The Washington Post.

G. O. P. Faces Loss of Many Senate Seats

Reelected by Landslide



By Robert C. Albright.

Although the Democrats will maintain their majority in the Senate, and a strong possibility that they may even increase their hold on that upper body, developed out of the election, on the part of the Republican party, the loss of many seats is a foregone conclusion.

Republicans at best had hoped to grow four or five new seats in the Senate, but as falling prices, greater optimism, and the fact that several members of it will be re-elected.

In three senatorial Republican strongholds, New Jersey and Rhode Island (Republican 10-0), and

New Hampshire Conceded to F.R. By Knox Paper

Landon's Defeat Is Worst Suffered by Candidate Since Taft's in 1912; Roosevelt's Popular Ballot Rise

Manchester, N. H., Nov. 4 (A.P.)—The Manchester Union, which Col. Frank Knox, Republican Vice Presidential candidate, is president, conceded New Hampshire's four electoral votes to Roosevelt early today.

By Franklin Waldman.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John Nance Garner yesterday were predicted President and Vice President, respectively, of the United States by a landslide of unprecedented proportions in both the electoral college and in popular vote.

They will commence their new terms of office on January 20, the first time a President and Vice President have been inaugurated on that date instead of March 4.

Gov. Landon conceded his defeat at 1:30 p. m. today, asserting in a telegram to the President that "in Maine has spoken" and adding that "every American will accept the verdict and work for the peaceful course of our country."

Comprehension Questions:

1. By 1936, FDR faced many critics who did not like or agree with his policies. Why do you think he won reelection anyway?

Document 5: Herbert Hoover on the New Deal and Liberty (1936)

In a speech at the Republican National Convention of 1936, former President Hoover accused his successor of endangering "fundamental American liberties." Roosevelt, he charged, was either operating out of sheer opportunism, with no coherent purpose of policy, or was conspiring to impose "European ideas" on the United States.

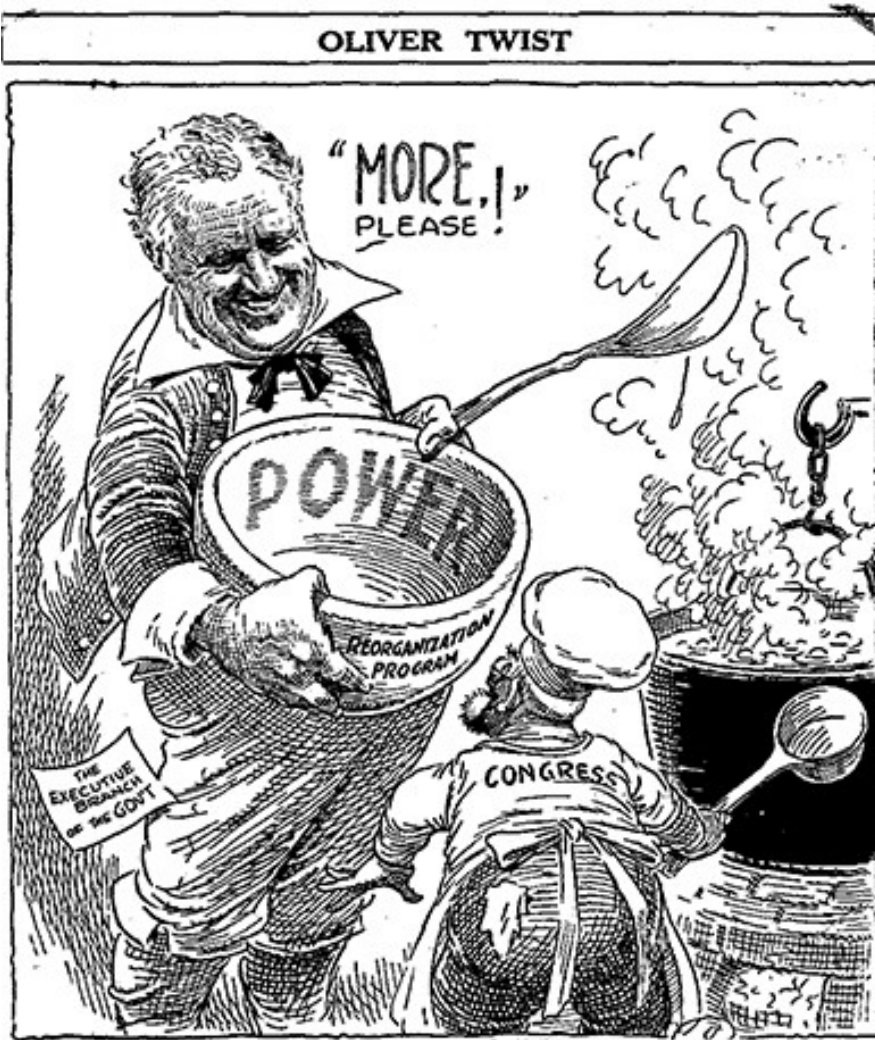
We have seen these gigantic expenditures and this torrent of waste pile up a national debt which two generations cannot repay. One time I told a Democratic Congress that "you cannot spend yourselves into prosperity."...Billions have been spent to prime the economic pump. It did employ a horde of paid officials upon the pump handle. We have seen the frantic attempts to find new taxes on the rich. Yet three-quarters of the bill will be sent to the average man and the poor. He and his wife and his grandchildren will be giving a quarter of all their working days to pay taxes. Freedom to work for himself is changed into a slavery of work for the follies of government.

We have seen an explosive inflation of bank credits by this government borrowing. We have seen varied steps toward currency inflation that have already enriched the speculator and deprived the poor. If this is to continue the end result is the tears and anguish of universal bankruptcy and distress. No democracy in history has survived its final stages.

1. What does Hoover say are the consequences of spending money on New Deal programs? Whom does it harm?

Document 6: Assessing the New Deal

To get America out of the Depression, Roosevelt greatly expanded the power and role of the federal government. However, not everyone agreed with this tactic. Joseph Parrish illustrates President Roosevelt's need for more power in this illustration in the Chicago Tribune, 1937. FDR holds a large bowl that says "POWER" and says "more please" to a chef labeled "Congress."

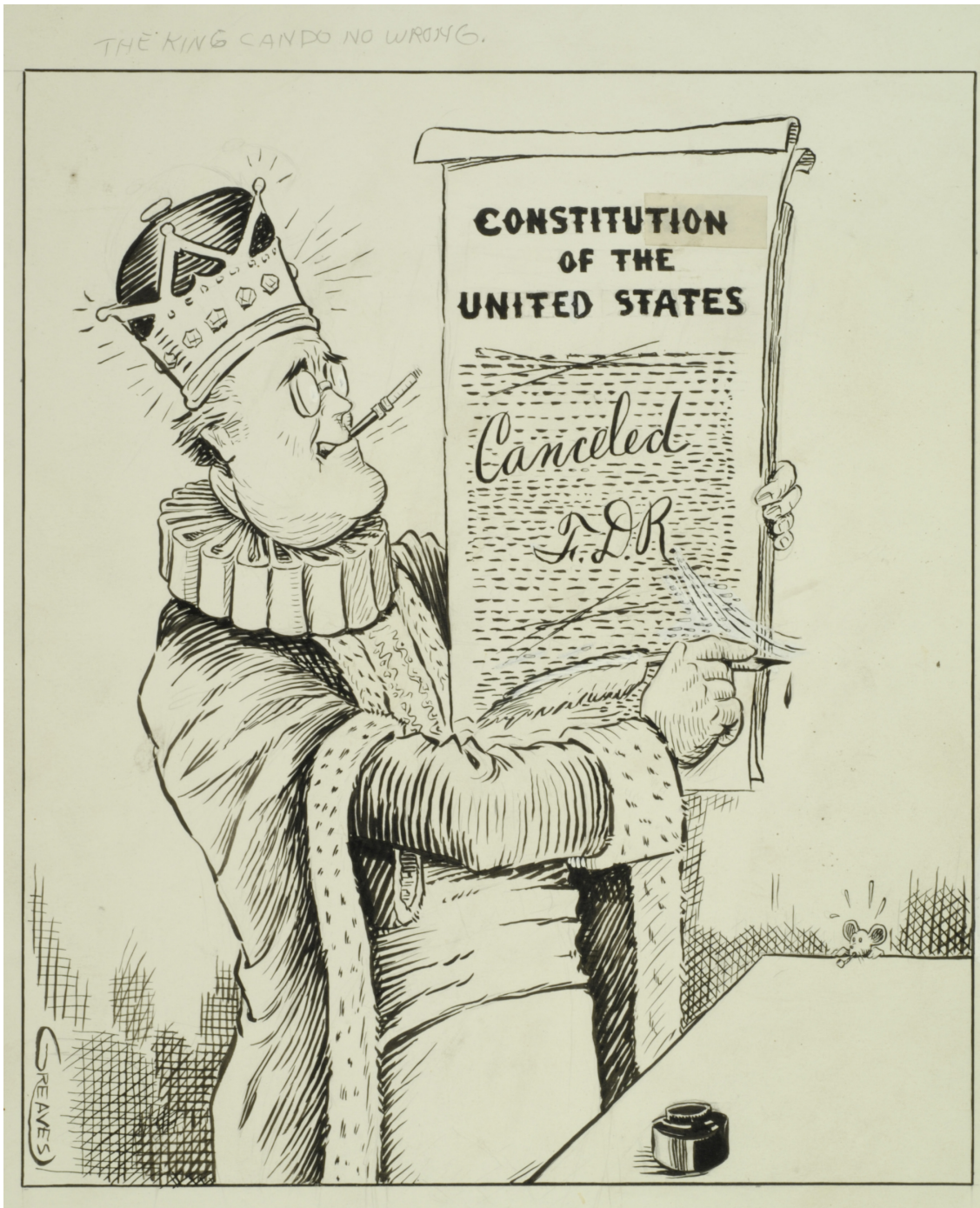


Comprehension Questions:

1. According to this cartoonist, what has FDR done in order to get New Deal programs passed?
2. If FDR was trying to end the Depression, why might some dislike FDR's attempts to increase the role of the federal government?

Document 7: Roosevelt Cancels the Constitution

This political cartoon, made after Roosevelt tried to pack the Supreme Court with more Supreme Court justices, shows Roosevelt writing "cancelled" across the US Constitution.



Comprehension Questions:

1. This cartoon was made after Roosevelt tried to pack the Supreme Court with more judges (document 1). According to the cartoonist, why was Roosevelt wrong in trying to change the Court?
2. How does this cartoon reflect other criticisms about Roosevelt and his New Deal programs? Why did some think the New Deal was "illegal" or beyond the government's powers?