

The New Deal and the Great Depression
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New Deal legislation is associated with creating agencies to bring relief, recovery, and reform to our nation during the “Great Depression”. This legislation required FDR and Congress to work with each other and at times created conflict with the judicial branch.

Using the following documents and your own knowledge of the period discuss how effective the New Deal legislation was in bringing us out of the depression. What lasting impact if any did the New Deal have on our nation and society?

New Deal Programs

Act or Program	Acronym	Year Enacted	Significance
Agricultural Adjustment Act	AAA	1933	Protected farmers from price drops by providing crop subsidies to reduce production, educational programs to teach methods of preventing soil erosion.
Civil Works Administration	CWA	1933	Provided public works jobs at \$15/week to four million workers in 1934.
Civilian Conservation Corps	CCC	1933	Sent 250,000 young men to work camps to perform reforestation and conservation tasks. Removed surplus of workers from cities, provided healthy conditions for boys, provided money for families.
Federal Emergency Relief Act	FERA	1933	Distributed millions of dollars of direct aid to unemployed workers.
Glass-Steagall Act	FDIC	1933	Created federally insured bank deposits (\$2500 per investor at first) to prevent bank failures.
National Industrial Recovery Act	NIRA	1933	Created NRA to enforce codes of fair competition, minimum wages, and to permit collective bargaining of workers.
National Youth Administration	NYA	1935	Provided part-time employment to more than two million college and high school students.
Public Works Administration	PWA	1933	Received \$3.3 billion appropriation from Congress for public works projects.
Rural Electrification Administration	REA	1935	Encouraged farmers to join cooperatives to bring electricity to farms. Despite its efforts, by 1940 only 40% of American farms were electrified.
Securities and Exchange Commission	SEC	1934	Regulated stock market and restricted margin buying.
Social Security Act		1935	Response to critics (Dr. Townsend and Huey Long), it provided pensions, unemployment insurance, and aid to blind, deaf, disabled, and dependent children.
Tennessee Valley Authority	TVA	1933	Federal government built a series of dams to prevent flooding and sell electricity. First public competition with private power industries
Wagner Act	NLRB	1935	Allowed workers to join unions and outlawed union-busting tactics by management.
Works Progress Administration	WPA	1935	Employed 8.5 million workers in construction and other jobs, but more importantly provided work in arts, theater, and literary projects.

Feldmeth, Greg D. "U.S. History Resources"
<http://home.earthlink.net/~gfeldmeth/USHistory.html> (31 March 1998)



The United States Supreme Court Building: Washington D. C.

- 1. What role did the Supreme Court play during the Great Depression?**
- 2. How did FDR get along with the Court?**
- 3. What constitutional question arose during the depression and what was the conclusion?**

Table 1: Statistics ^[79]	1929	1931	1933	1937	1938	1940
Real Gross National Product (GNP) (1)	101.4	84.3	68.3	103.9	96.7	113.0
Consumer Price Index (2)	122.5	108.7	92.4	102.7	99.4	100.2
Index of Industrial Production (2)	109	75	69	112	89	126
<u>Money Supply M2</u> (\$ billions)	46.6	42.7	32.2	45.7	49.3	55.2
Exports (\$ billions)	5.24	2.42	1.67	3.35	3.18	4.02
Unemployment (% of civilian work force)	3.1	16.1	25.2	13.8	16.5	13.9

(1) in 1929 dollars (2) 1935-39 = 100

- 1. What does this chart say about the economy between 1929 and 1940?**
- 2. What happened to exports during this period and why?**
- 3. What happened to the unemployment rate during this period?**

Table 2: Unemployment (% labor force)

Year	Lebergott	Darby
1933	24.9	20.6
1934	21.7	16.0
1935	19.41?	14.2
1936	16.9	9.9
1937	14.3	9.1
1938	19.0	12.5
1939	17.2	11.3
1940	14.6	9.5
1941	9.9	8.0
1942	4.7	4.7
1943	1.9	1.9
1944	1.2	1.2
1945	1.9	1.9

Darby counts WPA workers as employed; Lebergott as unemployed source: *Historical Statistics US(1976)* series D-86; Smiley 1983^[80]

1. What does the chart about unemployment?
2. Why did the unemployment rise again after 1938
3. Why did unemployment go down after

[\[edit\]](#) Relief statistics

Families on Relief 1936-41

Relief Cases 1936-1941
monthly average in 1,000

	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940	1941
<i>Workers employed:</i>						
WPA	1,995	2,227	1,932	2,911	1,971	1,638
CCC and NYA	712	801	643	793	877	919
Other federal work projects	554	663	452	488	468	681
<i>Public assistance cases:</i>						
Social security programs	602	1,306	1,852	2,132	2,308	2,517
General relief	2,946	1,484	1,611	1,647	1,570	1,206
	5,886	5,660	5,474	6,751	5,860	5,167
<i>Total families helped</i>						
Unemployed workers (Bur Lab Stat)	9,030	7,700	10,390	9,480	8,120	5,560
coverage (cases/unemployed)	65%	74%	53%	71%	72%	93%

1. **What does the chart show about the role of the New Deal?**
2. **What successes do you see?**
3. **What is significant about 1941?**



1. What is the cartoonist trying to convey?
2. What is the view of the American people toward FDR and the New Deal?
3. What groups would tend to make up the detractors?



Bread line standing in front of a billboard showing prosperity

- 1. How does this picture show differences between prosperity and poverty?**
- 2. How does this photo show differences between the races during the depression?**
- 3. Is this an accurate depiction?**