

A book review on: nothing to fear by adam cohen

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



Cohen, an editorial writer at The New York Times, makes extensive use of both primary and secondary sources to unmask the clear, compelling story of how the prevailing circumstances of the nation - together with the attitude of its political leaders - reshaped American society in so brief period of time.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt faced extraordinary economic challenges when he assumed the presidency of the United States in March 1933.

Nothing to fear reveals by Adam Cohen explains in vivid prose of the decisive first 100 days of Franklin Roosevelt in office at the worst moments of America which coincidentally was the era of great depression. A remarkable, timely and informative blue print for political firststarts, it shows how 5 inner-circle liberals jumpstarted those remarkably historic first 100 days of Roosevelt in office.

He and the inner circle members initiated the new deal and launched the delivery of modern America. The book is simply the evaluation of the watershed in the modern America and it is a reality of the pivotal days in modern America; the crisis-ridden first 100 days of FDR in office . FDR and the inner circle wiped the old order and replaced it with new order i. e. the government acceptance and execution of her responsibilities.

At this time in history, , there was 85% drop in stock market, 25% of Americans had lost their jobs and banks had gone on holidays to prevent further crises , farmers were openly angry and hungry men and women were eaten from refuse and garbages. 40% of Americans at this point were living on agriculture and farm income had decreased by 40%. Those who had jobs were struggling for sustenance on their wages.

Those who picked cotton in Arizona were reportedly collecting 30 cents after a week's job excluding the food and housing payment. The period also witnessed close to 90% of school children being underweight while another percentage being malnourished.

Radicalism and "hunger marches" by the jobless were on the increase both in the urban and the sacred rural American farm belt. Roosevelt on assuming office charted a different pathway from that of his predecessor- Herbert Hoover. Hoover had turned deaf ears to the hues and cries of Americans.

His approach was an absolute privatization of all sectors of the economy with no favor to the poor. His wickedness was later revenged by Americans when they made epithet of his name. Hoover lost the 1932 election to Roosevelt and managed to win only 6 states.

In his introduction, Cohen tactically gave a summary of the first Hundred Days:

While the public story line of the Hundred Days was about how Roosevelt, through his eloquent public statements and legislative initiatives rallied a desperate nation, behind the scenes his advisers were battling over what shape the New Deal would take. Perkins, Wallace, and Hopkins worked with members of Congress, farm leaders, union officials, and other progressives to promote their agenda.

Douglas worked with business leaders and other conservatives to pull Roosevelt in the opposite direction. In the first month of the Hundred Days, through the passage of the Economy Act, Douglas's side prevailed. For the

rest of the Hundred Days, Perkins's side did. While Douglas won the early battles, Perkins, Wallace, and Hopkins won the war.

America According to Cohen in the early part of the book, there is a gradual metamorphosis of the great depression into a real and full blown financial and social collapse. After these 100 days, FDR had reached a full blown acceptance of responsibilities to the needs and warfare of Americans.

He worked with the 5 members of the inner circle to bring transformation to America. He relied on their pieces of advice and preferred if it is conflicting so as to be able to choose the best. On assuming office, FDR came with few plans to combat the great depression. The inner circle encouraged FDR to embrace activist agendas.

FDR was a fiscal conservative as well as a pragmatic politician. For this, he had close relationship with Frances Perkin and Lewis Douglas who were advocate of social warfare programs and cutter of budget respectively. In most cases, Douglas was at odds with other FDR's members. FDR being not ideological, preferred varieties and a policy that is "bold, persistent experimental." He featured in the most feverish and agitated period of America history that brings about the modern America.

Nothing to fear is an attention holding, fascinating account of the personal dynamics that realign the catastrophic early period of FDR's relationship and a character X-ray of one of America's distinctive leaders in a period of crises. However, Cohen points us to the political blunders of this period over warfare situation, government laws, agricultural policy, and according to him they are still with us till today.