

# Roles of the government during the great depression critical thinking example

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Arguably, the Great Depression was the worst international crisis in the 20th century. This crisis began in America following the decline in the value of the capital market. This was on the fourth day of September, 1929; a day that later came to be referred to as the black Tuesday. During the great depression, many political leaders held different ideas on the way out of the appalling economic situation (Boezi, 2005). The need for an economically pragmatic leader saw Franklin Roosevelt elected to power. The leader, whose election was a sign of relief, had many philosophies relating to the social, financial and legislative solutions to the crisis.

According to Roosevelt, it was the responsibility of the government to regulate competition and ensure fairness and peaceful coexistence as a means of rebuilding the self esteem of the American people. Roosevelt advocated for collectivism through his policies that were embraced in the famous New Deal. It is through this Deal that Roosevelt brought the government to the lives of the Americans (Boezi, 2005). His idea was that it was the task of the government to ensure all human beings were equal. As such, his administration ensured that women and black people could access the same opportunities as the white men.

One of the biggest critics to the Roosevelt administration was Louisiana governor who later became senator, Huey Long. Huey Long advocated for the redistribution of wealth from the affluent to the poor. He argued that Roosevelt's plan had ignored such social rights as the right to free higher education, healthcare for the elderly and veterans, as well as vocational training. These constituted Huey's theory of the role of government in restoring economic empowerment (Boezi, 2005). Just like Roosevelt had his

policies in the New deal, Huey had a philosophy in the slogan ‘ Share Our Wealth’.

The Liberty League was among the most notorious revolutionist elite groups of the 20th century. Formed on the 3rd day of august 1934 the group sought to challenge the foundations of Roosevelt’s new deal. Their philosophy of the group was anti-collectivism. The proponents of the group’s ideas argued that the role of the government was to create a favorable economic situation and let the powers of capitalism take over (Boezi, 2005). They viewed the role of the government as that of protecting the rights of individuals, and private firms as far as ownership of land was concerned. They took a libertarian position and opposed centralization.

## References

Boezi, M. L. (2005). America through the Eyes of Its People. New York: Prentice Hall