

New deal essay



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In hindsight, even for the most ardent capitalist, the role of the American government and its exponential growth in the influence of its people was absolutely necessary in order to help the country pull itself out of the Great Depression. The apathy that President Hoover had towards the condition of the country was choking the optimism out of this country and the American people were begging for government intervention in order to help save their lives. In this spirit, the Social Securities Act, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Securities Act are the programs that have given the contemporary American society, the greatest benefit to our fiscal and physical security. The New Deal was the name that President Roosevelt gave to a number of programs from 1933-1937 which was designed to help the condition of the American individual through the improvement of the country's economy.

When the Great Depression began in the fall of 1929, no one could see the seriousness of the current fiscal crisis in America. Therefore, President Hoover did nothing to shorten the Great Depression. However, even two years later, when the unemployment rate was above 15% and on its way to a record high of 25%, President Hoover still did little to offer relief to the American people.

[1] His apathy was part of a greater representation of the capitalist's belief that government intervention in the fiscal lives of its people, would lead to socialism. This was promised not to happen by President Roosevelt as most Americans found socialism to be repugnant and against the laws of God. However, unfettered capitalism certainly was not advantageous to the American public as well. This battle would not only be played out in the

media and in the homes of Americans across the country but also in the Supreme Court as many of Roosevelt's plans, including the NRA, were seen as unconstitutional.[2] In response, President Roosevelt attempted to pack the Supreme Court with his own hand-picked justices and even though the Judicial Reorganization Bill of 1937 failed to pass Congress, the Supreme Court got the message and some of his programs were allowed to continue. The legacy of the New Deal is that citizens now sees a greater role and responsibility for the American government in relation to the health and well being of the American public.

In the years before the New Deal, the only safety net for senior citizens was their children who were expected to take care of their aging parents. This, regardless of the financial capabilities of the children as well as the medical training if that parent was sick or infirmed, is what was expected of the family of the one who was sick. Many times, that was just a prudent choice, yet there was little to no other alternatives available for the individual. Now, it is seen as the responsibility of the public as a whole, to take care of the senior class as well as others who might not be able to take care of themselves, through no fault of their own as say, for example, the mentally and physically disabled who reside in group homes. The two abovementioned groups have become much more valuable to society than in years past. Only until the 1970's, were the mentally challenged recognized as not only needing extra help, but deserving it as well and the money needed to fund such programs, need to come from the taxes of the masses.

[3] This is also the case for senior citizens. When one has spent his or her entire life, paying taxes and living a responsible and law abiding life, by the

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time that person has reached the age of 65, though this age is looking to be increased to 67, it is now seen as the responsibility of the people, through their tax dollars, to help support this aspect of our society. These ideas come from the New Deal and the legacy that it has left us. Another aspect of the New Deal is the role of the federal government to give its citizens protection and security, not just from foreign invasion but from financial catastrophes as well. The FDIC is one of the most important programs to come out of the Great Depression.

It is hard to imagine for a contemporary society, the reasons why a person would be hoarding his money away in a dresser drawer or under his mattress when people today just place their money in the banks. However, before the FDIC, if there was a run on the bank, an investor would be under the danger of losing their entire life savings and with this occurring during the Great Depression, this made it even more important that people can trust the banks with their money.[4] Not only does a customer's money within a secure financial institution benefit the individual but also the bank and the economy as well on a large scale. It adds greatly to the wealth of the country when the public can feel safe and secure that their hard earned money that they put in their banks, is ensured by the federal government.

Confidence in the government and other financial institutions, leads to growth in the American economy which benefits the entire country as a whole. The legacy of the New Deal strengthened the role of the government in the lives of the average American. For the time, the New Deal was absolutely essential in the fact that the Great Depression was creating such havoc in the lives of 130 million American people. Capitalism had failed and <https://assignbuster.com/new-deal-essay-essay-samples/>

America and most of the West were made to suffer because of it. Some modern economics say that the reforms of the New Deal did not bring Americans out of the depression but rather just kept the economy from decaying any further. Not only did the New Deal put more people to work, it gave the masses confidence in their government and in their economy. And that can be just as powerful as the nation's GDP and other indicators which dictates the fiscal health that a country is experiencing. And that can be just as powerful.

However, people who are on the left politically have taken the ideas of the New Deal and expanded on it. Depending on one's own personal ideologies, this may or not be a good thing. Unfettered capitalism, most people can agree, is not the best for the country. However, socialism is counterproductive to the American spirit as well.

It is the belief that government is there to take care of its citizens that comes from the New Deal and which can also serve as an impediment to the independence of the American people as well. Until the Republicans took control of the House and Senate in the 1994-1995 sessions and changed the social welfare program with their "Contract with America," an individual was able to stay on welfare for decades if he so chose and the amount of money that he would receive would be in direct relation to the number of children that he continued to father. This program, coming out of President Johnson's War on Poverty in the 1960's had its foundation in the New Deal of the Roosevelt Administration. The legacy of the New Deal depends upon how far one feels the government has a role in the lives of the American people.

Should the well being of those who do not want to work and who make irresponsible decisions on a daily basis concerning family planning, be rescued by the working middle class and should this be completed through increasing taxes? Should the American individual be expected to pay for the health care of the country as a whole or is it up to the individual to pay for the services that they use?

These are the questions that The New Deal has left us. This is due to the fact that the most important legacy of the New Deal was that it prompted Americans to ask themselves these questions. What role does the American government have in the lives of its people and where does personal responsibility end and government intervention begin? Many of the contemporary debates within Congress are surrounded by this most important question with a major difference in ideology existing between the two political parties concerning these questions.

The New Deal is not something that happened seventy years ago and then went away when the Great Depression was over but rather is with us even to this day and will continue to be with the American public as government's intervention in the daily lives of American citizens, will most likely remain obvious and unmistakable. WORKS CITED Goodwin, Doris Kearns. No Ordinary Time. New York: Simon & Schuster. 2004 Mulligan, Ken. *The Supreme Court*. Boston: PBS Video February 12, 2007 Peters, Roy. The New Deal: Its Legacy New York: Century Press. 1967 [1] Goodwin, Doris Kearns. No Ordinary Time.

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