

# Good franklin d. roosevelt essay example

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



## **Introduction**

Great Depression was the most serious economic crisis in the inter-war world. Almost all European countries and the USA suffered from economic problems that couldn't be solved by traditional means. The best way to overcome the crisis was proposed by the American President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Roosevelt was an excellent politician. He knew how to listen and to reconcile enemies, and besides that he was an optimist by nature. Actually, he didn't have any premeditated targeted programs and his policies often consisted of the series of improvisations. A brilliant orator, he was among the first ones to use a new genre of the talk with the Americans on the radio. His "New Deal" program started from the famous hundred days of work of the Congress that adopted some important anti-crisis laws. The first reforms were aimed to save the financial system. From 6th till 10th of March 1933, all banks were on "vacation" (Maney, 1992). Then a mortgage interest for homes was reduced, that helped for the owners to avoid the property loss. The state has also taken control on the gold monetary.

In May 1933, the Administration for regulation of agriculture was organized. The President of the Administration decided to reduce the production of agriculture and to pay the compensation for it to the farmers. Business associations adopted a "Code of Fair Competition", setting the volume of production, price, maximum work week and a minimum wage. Workers retained the right to form unions and bargain collective settlements with the employers. If Hoover sought to lift the economy, stimulating the production of private business, the government of Roosevelt revived the economic

model of J. Keynes. J. Keynes proposed to raise the purchasing power of the population by increasing government spending and giving billions of dollars on public spending. For the first time in the national history the state began to pursue an active social policy, taking a number of programs.

In May 1933, the Federal administration of relief to the unemployed was organized (Maney, 1992). This organ handed out money to the states for projects to save people from hunger, until the federal programs were designed. G. Gopkins, who was the head of it, spent 5 million dollars in the first two hours of activity. And for two years the administration has spent around 1 billion.

Sharp and expensive reforms were unusual for the American people.

Roosevelt's course faced a lot of critics. Some people viewed the president as a dictator, while others perceived him as a democrat. The criticism came from the entrepreneurs (G. Ford, E. Mellon) and farmers who called Roosevelt's course a socialistic. They considered the reform only in the interests of the workers against the rich. G. Ford, being afraid of the nationalization at the factories, did not sign the " Code of Fair Competition".

Representatives of big business considered Roosevelt as a traitor of their class and in 1934 organized the American League of freedom, opposing " dictatorship of the course" (Di Nunzio, 2011). Farmers of the South and Midwest were resisting the intervention of the state into their affairs.

Political criticism appeared in the country. The most striking figure was Governor Huey Long of Louisiana. Coming from a poor family, he defended the interests of the common people, speaking against monopolies. Being a Governor, he built roads, bridges, hospitals, schools in the state. He

increased taxes on corporations to finance his projects. When he was accused of violating the state constitution, he said: "The Constitution is me." He continued to manage the state, becoming a senator in 1930. Firstly, Long supported FDR, but later moved to the opposition. He insisted on the raising pensions for the elderly, whole country education (college level), and on public procurement of the agricultural surpluses. Long was supported by the agrarian sector of the South and the Midwest.

Another opponent of Roosevelt was a Catholic priest from Detroit, Father Charles Coughlin, who spoke with sermons on the radio. He criticized capitalism of free competition, meaning that the capitalism has exhausted itself and must be replaced with a system of public ownership. Coughlin saw the root of evil in the concentration of wealth. All the difficulties of the country he explained by the conspiracy of bankers. In 1935, he created the National Union for Social Justice that defended the rights of workers and demanded the nationalization of key sectors of the economy. Coughlin called Roosevelt a communist and threatened to remove him from the White House. As an anti-Semite and anti-communist, he supported the Nazi regime in Germany, and in 1936, together with supporters, entered the Long Unionist Party (Flinn, 2008).

The United States began to consider social problems of elderly people. Elderly people organized some unions with the Plan T. by Francis Townsend among them. Townsend was the American physician and reformer, who gained fame for his project of old-age pension. He was aiming not only to help the elderly, but also for an early escape from the "Great Depression." He planned to perform the monthly payments of \$ 200 for all people who

reached the age of 60, the money could come from the federal sales tax. The program was broadly supported by society, it included more than 1.5 million members (Flinn, 2008).

Considering the four ways that aimed to overcome the crisis, we should note that only Roosevelt course was adopted by the American society and brought its results. It was the most modest and effective way to resolve the crisis and open the new way for the relations between the state and economy.

## **Works Cited**

Di Nunzio, M R. Franklin D. Roosevelt and the third American Revolution.

California N. p., 2011. Print.

Flinn, J T. The Roosevelt Myth. Alabama N. p., 2008. Print.

Maney, P J. The Roosevelt presence: the life and legacy of FDR. N. Y.:

Twayne, 1992. Print.