

Chapter 10 Lesson 2

After the first two years, Roosevelt's popularity was high but there was growing concern about and opposition to his policies. Although about two million new jobs had been created, around 10 million were still without jobs. Roosevelt faced criticism from both sides. The right wing believed that New Deal was too tight in its regulations of businesses. They also believed that the federal government had too much power over the states. As deficit spending increased throughout 1934, opposition to that grew as well.

The left wing believed that the New Deal had not gone far enough. Their belief was that government intervention was needed even more to implement a plan of income redistribution, to shift money from the wealthy to the poor and middle class. One of the most vocal critics of Roosevelt's actions was Huey Long, the senator from Louisiana. Huey had long been a champion of the poor, especially as governor of Louisiana. He established the Share Our Wealth Society and planned to run for president in 1936. Huey had been a supporter of FDR in the beginning but broke with him and allied with another critic of FDR to improve his chances at the presidency. He was assassinated in 1935.

Long's ally was Father Charles Coughlin, a Catholic priest and radio host. Like Long, he began as a supporter of FDR and the New Deal. He became a critic of FDR because he was frustrated with the moderate reform. He believed in nationalizing banks, redistribution of wealth and inflation of currency. His organization, the National Union for Social Justice, had millions of members but was loosely organized. After 1936, his radio shows became more anti-Semitic and supportive of new European leaders, Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. After the outbreak of WWII, FDR used legal tactics to shut down the radio show and later Coughlin's newspaper also.

The other major critic was Francis Townsend, who was a physician from California. His main idea was a retirement pension for the elderly. FDR had to face the fact that the three men could form an alliance and prevent his reelection.

The Second New Deal

- 1) The Works Progress Administration—WPA—largest New Deal public works program—employed over 8.5 million—built roads, airports, parks and buildings—also employed artist, musicians and writers to complete projects in the fields of the arts
- 2) The Supreme Court—1935—struck down the authority of the National Recovery Administration—NRA's codes were declared unconstitutional because the SC believed that Congress had delegated its legislative power to the President—this encouraged FDR to push hard for his new slate of programs
- 3) Wagner Act—National Labor Relations Act—guaranteed workers the right to unionize—needed because when the SC struck down NRA also eliminated NRA regulations about allowing labor unions—NRLB could investigate employers, use secret ballots to allow union votes, set up binding arbitration—this led to a growth of union activity
 - a. CIO—Committee of Industrial Organization—union for all workers, skilled or unskilled, in a particular industry—used the sit down strike (workers sit down inside the factory and refuse to work)—change its name in 38 to Congress of Industrial Organizations

- b. One major strike was the UAW (United Auto Workers) in December of 1936—those outside the factory helped by passing food and water to the workers—the police tried a tear gas attack and several were injured but the strike held—in February 1937, General Motors accepted the UAW as the representative of the workers
 - c. US Steel followed suit to avoid the same type of strike scenario
 - d. Union membership tripled in the 1930's
- 4) Social Security Act—was passed to provide a safety net for America's elderly—Americans would pay a special payroll tax for the insurance of a small pension upon retirement—it would also help the disabled and poor mothers with children—left out farmers and domestic workers (which is what lots of African Americans were)—and Congress borrowed from the fund, which FDR did not want to happen