

DBQ 18: The New Deal's Opponents *(continued)*

Document 1

This political cartoon, "Pinched for Reckless Driving," was published by the *Chicago Tribune* on June 3, 1935.




Document 2

President Roosevelt made this statement in November of 1935.

I can realize that gentlemen in well-warmed and well-stocked clubs will [complain about] the expenses of Government because . . . their Government is spending money for work relief.

(continued)

Document-Based Assessment 
Activities for U.S. History Classes

DBQ 18: The New Deal's Opponents *(continued)***Document 3**

U.S. Senator Huey Long, from Louisiana, became a vocal critic of FDR and of the New Deal during Roosevelt's first term, in the depths of the Depression. Before being elected to the Senate, Long had served as governor of Louisiana. He had built a nationwide following among the poor for his vocal attacks on the rich and powerful. In 1932 Long formulated a "Share-The-Wealth" program, advocating very high tax rates on the rich and on large inheritances to finance social programs to benefit the poor. By 1935, his program and his appeal made Long a political force throughout the nation. He planned to run for president in 1936 against FDR, but in September of 1935 he was assassinated. The following excerpt comes from a radio speech Long made in January of 1935 that was later printed in the *Congressional Record*.

We are in our third year of the Roosevelt depression, with the conditions growing worse . . . We must now become awakened! We must know the truth and speak the truth. There is no use to wait three more years. It is not Roosevelt or ruin; it is Roosevelt's ruin.

When I saw him [FDR] spending all his time . . . with the business partners of Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., with such men as the Astors, etc., maybe I ought to have had better sense than to have believed he would ever break down their big fortunes to give enough to the masses to end poverty. . . .

So therefore I call upon the men and women of America to immediately join in our work and movement to share our wealth.

1. The fortunes of the multimillionaires and billionaires shall be reduced so that no one person shall own more than a few million dollars. . . .
2. We propose to limit the amount any one man can earn in one year or inherit to \$1 million. . . .
3. . . . we will throw into the government Treasury the money and property from which we will care for millions of people who have nothing . . . we will provide a home and the comforts of home, with such common conveniences as radio and automobile, for every family in America, free of debt.
4. We guarantee food and clothing and employment for everyone who should work by shortening the hours of labor to thirty hours per week, maybe less, and to eleven months per year, maybe less. . . .
5. We would provide education . . . for every child . . . through college and vocational education. . . .
6. We would give a pension to all persons above sixty years of age. . . .
7. . . . we would grant a moratorium on all debts which people owe that they cannot pay.

(continued)



DBQ 18: The New Deal's Opponents *(continued)***Document 4**

In December 1935, *Fortune* magazine ran an article entitled "The Case Against Roosevelt." *Fortune*, a magazine that generally presented a pro-business viewpoint, was read by well-educated professionals and business managers. The following excerpt comes from this article.

What the business grievance comes down to in the last analysis is that the government of Mr. Roosevelt is a government of men and not of laws. . . . the menace of dictatorship and the essence of dictatorship is government by personal will. What happens when a dictator, either fascist or communist, takes over is that a man or group of men undertake to make a direct attack on social and economic problems. The appeal of the dictator is: "Let us save ourselves! Let us act!" . . . the Roosevelt theory of federal administration is a menacing and dangerous thing.

Document 5

The following cartoon was printed in the June 1936 issue of *Current History*.



(continued)



DBQ 18: The New Deal's Opponents *(continued)***Document 6**

Former president Herbert Hoover, who had been defeated by FDR in the 1932 presidential election, said the following in a speech given in October of 1936, in the closing days of that year's presidential election.

Through four years of experience this New Deal attack upon free institutions has emerged as the [most significant] issue in America. [This attack includes] . . . coercion and compulsory organization of men . . . great trade monopolies and price-fixing through codes . . . "economic planning" to regiment and coerce the farmer . . . national plans to put the government into business in competition with its citizens . . . currency inflation . . . attempts to centralize relief in Washington for politics and social experimentation. . . .

Document 7

In 1937, soon after his second inaugural, FDR proposed a law that aimed to change the makeup of the Supreme Court. During his first term, the court had ruled a number of New Deal programs to be unconstitutional. FDR, in an effort to reshape the court to make it more favorable to New Deal legislation, now proposed that he be allowed to appoint a number of new justices, expanding the size of the court. He presented it to the public as a reform, designed to reduce the workload of those justices over the age of 70. But Congress, and much of the public, opposed the "reform," and it never became law. The following is an excerpt from a public statement written in February 1937 by Frank Gannett, owner and publisher of a chain of newspapers. (This letter is filed in the records of the U.S. Justice Dept. See *Teaching With Documents: Using Primary Sources From the National Archives.*)

President Roosevelt has cleverly camouflaged a most amazing and startling proposal for packing the Supreme Court. . . . Increasing the number of judges from nine to fifteen would not make this high tribunal [court] act any more promptly than it does now, but it would give the President control of the Judiciary Department.

This proposal should give every American grave concern for it is a step toward absolutism and complete dictatorial power.

