



The Philosophical Differences Between the Democratic and Republican Parties

In attempt to restore America's confidence, the Democratic party put America's faith in the Federal, State, and local governments by making the people believe they can be dependent on the government in hard times such as the Great Depression. Franklin D. Roosevelt had a compassion towards the every-day American citizen and stressed our dependence on one another (2). He was more than willing to make sacrifices if they would eventually equal a larger good. His "experimental" New Deal moved for more progressive action by including government in employment, occupancy, agriculture, relief, and business.

In Roosevelt's New Deal, he promised jobs by, if need be, employment by the government and formed numerous public works programs such as the Works Projects Administration (WPA), the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), the National Youth Administration (NYA), the National Recovery Act (NRA) and the Public Works Administration (PWA), which gave the unemployed jobs in construction or in the repair of buildings. And, for those in desperate need, Roosevelt also formed the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. He pushed for a drastic reduction of housing and land prices in rural areas and helped many people keep their homes by making new refinancing options available through the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC). He researched Americans agricultural needs and appointed Henry Wallace as secretary of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA). He pushed for Federal and State involvement in the, then current, "scattered, uneconomical, and unequal" relief efforts and formed the Social Security Act in 1933, which would pay every person over 60 years old a \$200 monthly pension. He wanted strict government regulation on all business and banking activities and set up the Federal Securities Act of 1933 (1) which would supervise the stockmarket by enforcing a full disclosure of all information on stocks being sold. He also tried to convince the people everything was not lost and that there was much to still be thankful for. In his first inaugural address, he said "... we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. ... we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty ..." None of the

reforms proposed would come without a high pricetag.

The Republican party disagreed with Franklin D. Roosevelt and his progressive actions by stating that the New Deal violated the rights of the people. The Republicans were strong believers in independence and discouraged government involvement in most affairs. They believed things were fine the way they were prior to the Great Depression. Even as business shut down, Herbert Hoover had great confidence that recovery was on its way. He discouraged government involvement in business and said that involvement would only hinder the re-employment of Americans. Government involvement in agriculture was only to be provided within means of the national budget, but did promote experimental aid to help farmers. The Republican party characterized the New Deal as a "shameful waste and general financial irresponsibility" and hoped to halt the uncontrolled spending and balance the budget by eliminating the relief programs the Roosevelt administration had set up.

The Democratic party had the courage to try to change what had existed for decades and were not stingy, narrow, or conservative in the process. Their relief efforts managed to help millions of families keep their homes and have food on the table. They also managed to increase the people's confidence in America. Because of this, the liberal Democratic party deserve to be on the far left side of the spectrum.

The Republican party was perfectly happy with how they had been running the country and were confident that progress was on its way. They believed that the depression was caused by other reasons than the economy and was beyond their control. Cautious and cheap, they preferred to wait out the depression rather than take much action, which is why this conservative party is placed where they are.

SOURCES:

"Out of Many Volume 2 Document Set, 2003." (Prentice Hall, 340-324 & 347-350)

1 "Jeff Francis, 2001." (Internet, <http://web.mit.edu/students/~jfran/newdeal.htm>)

2 "Pranav Gupta, 1996." (Internet, <http://www.bergen.org/AAST/Projects/depression/>)