

Franklin D. Roosevelt

A P R E S I D E N T ' S V I S I O N

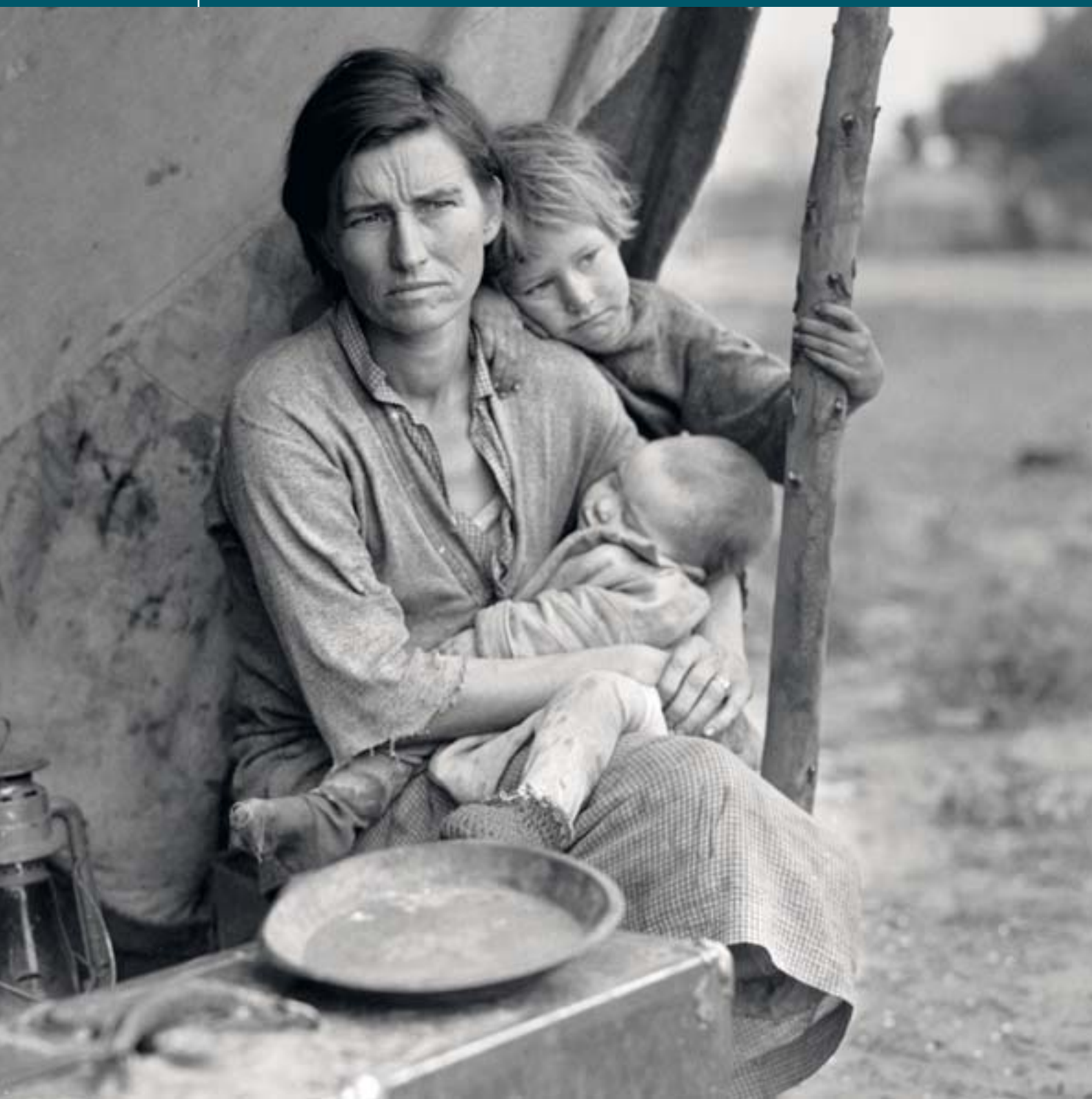
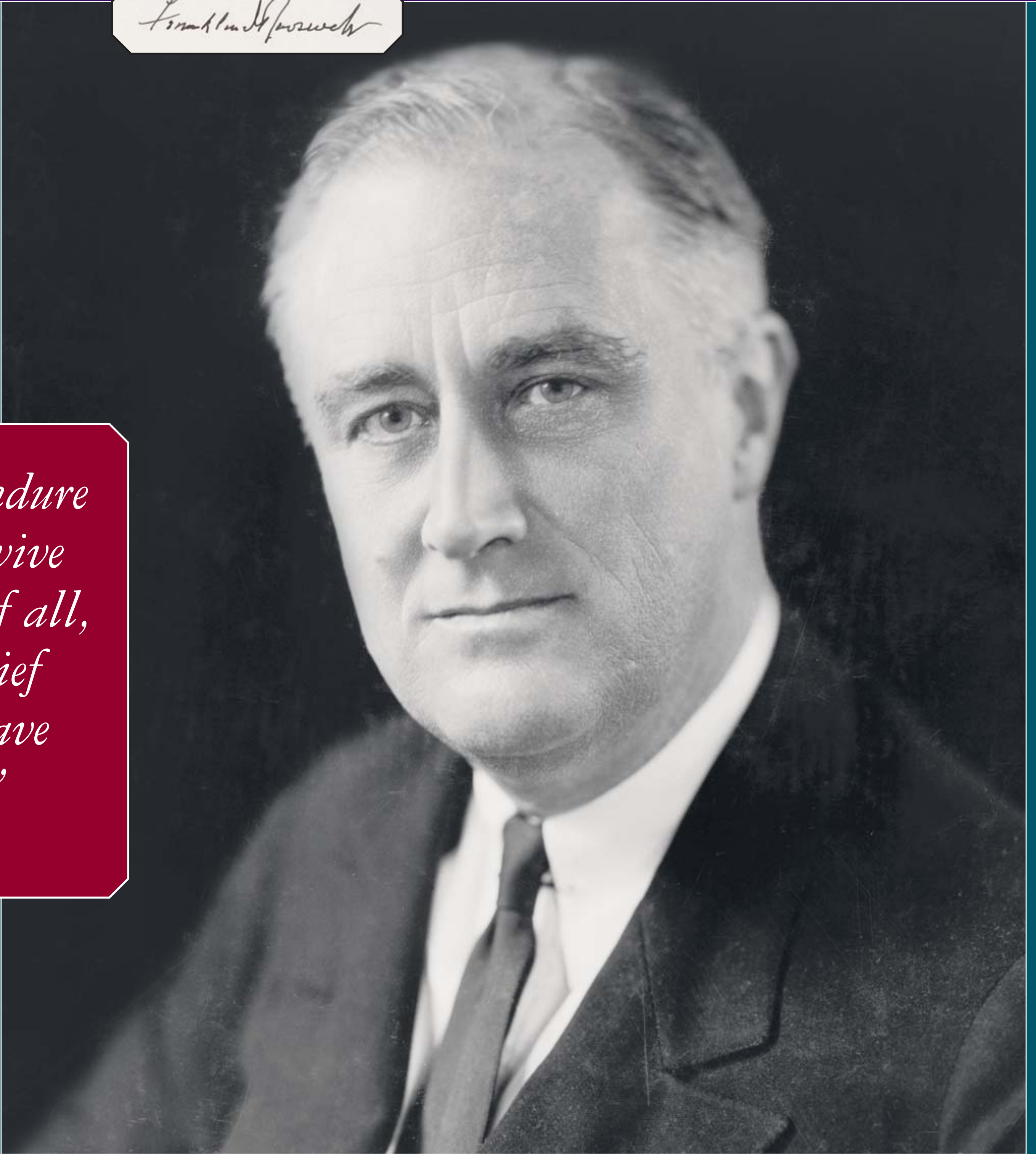
Franklin D. Roosevelt



Run on San Antonio's City-Central Bank and Trust Company during the Depression, 1931. SAN ANTONIO LIGHT COLLECTION, UTSA INSTITUTE OF TEXAN CULTURES, ML-1302-4, COURTESY OF THE HEARST CORPORATION

“This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself...”

— FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1933



Migrant agricultural worker's family. Seven children without food. Mother aged 32. Father is a native Californian. Nipomo, California, by Dorothea Lange, 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

When he was inaugurated in March 1933, Franklin D. Roosevelt offered hope to a population battered by years of economic hardship. Natural disasters and drought had decimated farming in the Great Plains and Southwest, while the ailing economy, failing financial markets, and unstable pyramids of holding companies had plunged the nation into the Great Depression. The banking system was on the verge of collapse, unemployment approached 25%, and food prices were falling. Wages also plummeted, reducing consumers' purchasing power. With reduced demand for goods, factories and businesses closed, laying off workers and dragging families into the ranks of the destitute.

President Roosevelt promised “a new deal for the American people.” In the first one hundred days of his administration, he put his plans for relief, recovery, and reform into action, producing and signing fifteen major legislative initiatives. He believed that the federal government had to take a larger role in supplying the basic needs of citizens, while also enacting regulatory reform to prevent recurrence of the practices that had led to the economic disaster. His critics accused him of wasteful spending and government interference with the free enterprise system. But Roosevelt's confidence and drive buoyed the American people, and he kept the public informed about the progress of his plans through radio talks known as “fireside chats.”

Not all of the New Deal programs achieved their aims, but Roosevelt's vision had a lasting impact on the politics and social fabric of the United States. He was elected to four terms as president, spending the years after 1939 mobilizing society to meet the threat of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan and leading the American people through World War II. President Roosevelt died in office in 1945, only weeks before V-E Day.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt by Elias Goldensky, 1933. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION



Joseph Stalin, FDR, and Winston Churchill at the Teheran Conference, Iran, 1943. COURTESY OF THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY DIGITAL ARCHIVES



Farmer listening to radio, 1933. RECORDS OF THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE, 1939-1961. RECORD GROUP 16, NATIONAL ARCHIVES



FDR delivering a fireside chat, 1935. COURTESY OF THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY DIGITAL ARCHIVES

MAJOR NEW DEAL INITIATIVES

Naming his program the New Deal, President Roosevelt pursued a number of federal initiatives meant to bring relief to the unemployed, reform to existing business practices, and recovery to the economy.

- Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA), 1933
- Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), 1933
- Civil Works Administration (CWA), 1933
- Emergency Banking Act, 1933
- Fair Labor Standards Act, 1938
- Farm Security Administration (FSA), 1937
- Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), 1933
- Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), 1933

- Federal Housing Administration (FHA), 1934
- Indian Reorganization Act, 1934
- National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), 1933
- National Labor Relations Act, 1935
- National Recovery Administration (NRA), 1933
- National Youth Administration (NYA), 1935
- Public Works Administration (PWA), 1933
- Rural Electrification Administration (REA), 1935
- Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), 1934
- Social Security Act, 1935
- Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), 1933
- Works Progress Administration (WPA), 1935



Electric power line tower, Tennessee Valley Authority, ca. 1938. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION



Bonneville Dam, Oregon, 1938. COURTESY OF THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY DIGITAL ARCHIVES

Works Progress Administration poster, ca. 1936. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION

Civilian Conservation Corps poster, ca. 1941. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION



CCC Camp, Carlsbad Project, New Mexico, 1940. RECORDS OF THE BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, RECORD GROUP 115, NATIONAL ARCHIVES



Eleanor Roosevelt and Marian Anderson, 1939. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS PRINTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS DIVISION



Social Security Board poster. COURTESY OF THE FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT LIBRARY DIGITAL ARCHIVES



A We the People INITIATIVE OF THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES
DESIGN BY RESEARCH & DESIGN, LTD.
© HUMANITIES TEXAS 2009

FOR RELATED EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES, VISIT WWW.PRESIDENTSVISION.ORG