**Nothing to Fear—CCG Notes**

*Nothing to Fear: FDR’s Inner Circle and the Hundred Days that Created Modern America* by Adam Cohen

**FIRST HUNDRED DAYS/THE NATION IN 1933**. When he took the oath of office in March 1933, after 16 straight years of Repub leadership, thousands of banks had collapsed following the Crash of 1929, a quarter of all American workers were unemployed (27M w/o income), farmers were in open rebellion, and hungry people descended on garbage dumps and fought over scraps of food (inside flap).

“Panic was in the air. Millions of people were half-fed, barely clothed, and living more like wild dogs than human beings.”

“We older folks expect to have problems, but there is something terribly wrong when young people are afraid.” 39

Guests to the inaugurating learned that the checks they had brought to pay their hotel bills would not be honored—their bank had failed.

1930-32, 772 national banks and 3,604 state banks failed. More than $2.7 B lost. 48.

Bank of US failed in Dec. 1930. 450,000 depositors wiped out. 49. 8,000 people stood in line at ONE branch in Brooklyn.

Dutch Bible, 178 radio stations. 37. Roosevelts came to America in early 17th C.

**FIGHT BETWEEN TWO PHILOSOPHIES/GETTYSBURG**: 1932 election not between two parties, but TWO philosophies (2); it was not just the greatest burst of legislative action—it was a revolution (10).

“The Hundred Days was the third great revolution in American History. George Washington had guided the nation from breakaway British colony to constitutional republic. Abraham Lincoln had led the nation through a civil war that determined that it would be an indivisible union, with a single standard of citizenship. The Roosevelt revolution created modern America.” (11)

This was a new philosophy that held that Americans had responsibilities to one another and that the fed gov had a duty to intervene when capitalism failed(11). New Deal est’d “safety net for the elderly, the unemployed, and poor children.” (11).

“We all go up, or else we all go down, as one people. . . the fed gov is the instrument of our united purpose.” (12). Hoover had written a book called American Individualism. 27. Hoover called on charity. FDR believed in social duty. 31. Hoover was content to wait. FDR would ACT.

“Rugged individualism” v. “mutual responsibility”

Do urban workers owe a responsibility to American farmers? And vice versa? Do younger citizens owe a duty to elderly Americans? Do adults owe a responsibility to poor children? The New Deal answered, yes, yes, yes.

1-2: **Human Toll**. In the summer heat, when “flies were thick,” a hundred people descended on one dump, “falling on a heap of refuse as soon as the truck had pulled out and digging in it with sticks and hands.”

Stocks down 85%, auto mfg 20% capacity; job advertisement for 750 men to dig canal for .20/hour drew 12K applications (14)

Brooklyn textile worker worked for 6 cents an hour. After carfare, lunch, childcare, brought home 10 cents per WEEK! (15)

A widow and her 14 yr old son were there. She always took off her glasses before she picked up a piece of meat “so she would not be able to see the maggots.”

2: Hoover. “I am convinced that we are passed the worst of it.” 1930

“A family of ten moved in with a family of five in a three-bedroom apartment.” (15)

“People slept in rusted out hulks of cars, and, in the case of one large family, in an old piano crate.” (15)

“There was nothing more destructive of the family than prolonged unemployment, where a man has to sit around the house and brood, and his only occupation is to go twice a week to get his basket or dole (handout).” 216.

“The mother mixes a little flour and water and cooks it in a frying pan. That is their regular meal.” (15)

“Unemployed men were found frozen to death in abandoned warehouses in wintertime.” (16.

“The most disheartening experience of my life,” an Iowa lawyer recalled, “was when men of middle-age, with families, go to bankruptcy court, with furniture, a team of horses, and a wagon…all that they have left after twenty-five years of work.” 16.

IN 1932 Southern Pacific, a single railroad, ejected 683,457 from its trains. 272.

In an eight-month period in 1932, 185,794 families received eviction notices. It was common to see evicted families sitting on the sidewalk surrounded by their furniture. 262.

3. **FDR ACTION**. We need “action and action NOW.”—“a presidential barrage of ideas and programs unlike anything known in American history.”

“bold persistent experimentation.”

“Try something, if it fails, try another, but above all, TRY SOMETHING.”

3. Impact on **MORALE**: “The nation was bewildered, thrilled, happy with hope.”

“If he burned down the capitol, we’d say as least he got a fore started.”

FDR would help “the forgotten man at the bottom of the economic pyramid.”

450,000 letters to WH IN 1ST WEEK!

“A smile in the WH seemed like a meal to us.” 47.

**SIMBA**:

Banking. Emergency Banking Act, Banking Act of 1933

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FDIC: “the structural change most conducive to monetary stability since the Civil War” 278.

Securities: Truth in Securities Act, regulated issues of stock

Ag: Ag Adjustment Act increased farm process by paying farmers NOT to grow crops

Farm Credit Admin-federal mortgage program to save farmers from foreclosure

Public Works: CCC (250,000 jobless youths), NIRA ($3.3B on wide range of projects)

Unemplpyment. First camp was in George Washington National Forest. It was called Camp Roosevelt.

**BRAINS TRUST/CABINET**: FDR had a “cap and gown” cabinet and was creating a “factocracy.” (7)

Perkins: is Elizabeth Warren. She is from Worcester, MA. worked with Jane Addams at Hull House; eyewitness to Triangle Fire; champion of urban workers.

Hopkins: social worker $500M relief budget

Add Moley Chapter Notes…

OTHER LECTURES. MOBILIZATION. Hoover at Food Admin told farmers what crops to produce, how miuch, what they sold for, and where they ended up. 27.

**HOOVER & CATASTROPHE.**

* Wrote a book “American Individualism” 27.
* Hawley-Smoot was “a virtual declaration of economic war on the rest of the world.” Led to global trade war. 28.
* Hoover supported millions of federal dollars to buy feed for starving animals but no money for farmers. 30.
* Hoover crushed to Bonus Army. Federal troops attacked using tanks, bayonets, tear gas, and set fire to shacks housing veretans and their families. Brutal response. 31.
* “Hoover sent the army. Roosevelt sent his wife.” 227.

Stick Mkt Sim. “Frothy” economy of the 1920s. Stockbrokers from 30K to 70K. 47.

“anyone not only can be rich, but OUGHT to be rich. 48.

Tenement Houses: “The assault of the smells: the odors of human waste, which was only occasionally picked up by the sanitation eperatment, the stench of fish and meat starting to rot on pushcarts, the foulness of negelected sewers and gutters.” 256.

QUOTES:

“A lot happened out of the determination of a few people, didn’t it” ~ Frances Perkins to Harry Hopkins. 321.

“We have had our revolution, and we like it.” 284-85.

“If you steal $25, you’re a thief. If you steal, $250,000 you’e an embezzler.

“Hopkins, things will work out for the unemployed in the long run.”

“People don’t eat in the long run. They eat every day.” -Hopkins

EXAM QS:

“From this point on, it would be a matter of concern to Washington when farmers were unable to support themselves, when depositors lost their life savings in failed banks, and when parents could not afford to feed their children. The relationship between the American people and their government would never be the same again.” 284-85.

“The best hope for the immediate future is the launching of the largest program of federal public works that can be financed, bringing immediate jobs to [millions] all over the country, and pouring rivers of money through the dried-up channels of trade.” 205.

“We must have mass consumption or we will never get a market for mass production.” 193-94

Triangle Fire. “Never shall I forget that cold, sinking feeling at the pit of my stomach as I watched those girls clinging to life on the window ledges, until, their clothing in flames, theu leaped to the deaths.” 170.