



**FRANKLIN DELANO OBAMA...**  
**FDR and BHO – were they**  
**actually separated at birth?**  
**Do depression era survivors**  
**or scholars see similarities?**  
**Let’s take a look!**

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Cover of Time Magazine, November 24, 2008

***Franklin Delano Obama – kinda’ has a ring to it doesn’t it?***

There have been many comparisons between our current President and the legendary activist President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Recall the TIME magazine cover which inserts Obama’s face and hands into FDR’s suit, and crumpled hat, with a cigarette in its holder and pince-nez perched on his nose – smiling broadly from behind the wheel of an early ‘30s convertible. And the President himself cements the comparison by referring to FDR as an inspiration and one who handled challenges aggressively like he is trying to do. He asserts that only he and FDR have faced challenges of similar nature and magnitude. **(The guy is brilliant!! – note the way he gives himself cover from failure.)** But is such a close comparison really advisable and will Obama’s emulation of FDR survive scrutiny and analysis?

So, let’s us take a look. First a look back into Obama’s tenure and FDR’s regime.

***The campaign of 2008 – was FDR Obama’s honorary campaign manager? Both claimed excess spending by their predecessors?***

From historian Larry Schweikert: “During the campaign, FDR, a man whose presidency would feature by far the largest expansion of the federal government ever, called for a balanced budget and accused Hoover of heading the ‘greatest spending Administration in ... all our history’.”

While campaigning, Obama stated “I’m running for president because I believe we can choose our own economic destiny ... to go another four years with the same reckless fiscal policies that have busted our budget, wreaked havoc in our economy, and mortgaged our children’s future on a mountain of debt; or we can restore fiscal responsibility in Washington.” **Very similar indeed!**

***They both had a thirst for dishonoring and humiliating their predecessors!***

Schweikert wrote: “Roosevelt heaped dishonor on the defeated Hoover, denying him even a Secret Service guard out of town.”

At Obama’s inauguration, his supporters booted, heckled and chanted tauntingly at George W. Bush. The new President went to dinner during President Bush’s farewell speech, and repudiated the Bush era in his inaugural address. And remember all of his harping and finger pointing when assigning the blame to Bush for any and all problems we now face. Consider his embarrassing comments while in Europe and Latin America early in his presidency. Consider his tactic of smugly keeping the possibility open for prosecution of Bush administration officials and advisors for

promoting “torture.” As far as I can tell, such extreme disdain has occurred only during the FDR and BHO assumptions of power.

*Lot's of commotion for both administrations! And don't waste a good crisis! This was part of both of their tactics. Look busy and occupied! A flurry of action, or is it just running in place?*

The LA Times recently recalled the following about FDR's early activities: “The initial storm set a tone for the rest of **Roosevelt's first term: constant action, bold experimentation, unprecedented expansion of the authority of the federal government.**”

Obama implied a similar observation on “60 Minutes”: “There's a new book out about FDR's first 100 days. And what you see in FDR that I hope my team can emulate is not always getting it right, but projecting a sense of confidence and a willingness to try things and experiment...” Sounds a lot like “lets throw a lot of ‘s.....t’ at the wall to see if it sticks”. Plus – and here it is again – a masterful statement providing cover for failures as they occur. **Obama is clever!!!**

Schweikart wrote: “Roosevelt hoped to capitalize on the terrifying collapse of the economy ... to bulldoze through a set of policies that fundamentally rearranged the business and welfare foundations of American life ... Above all emergency measures, needed to be done quickly before opposition could mount to many of these breathtaking challenges to the Constitution.”

Dilbert by Scott Adams 8/21/13



Didn't Obama promote panic to rush his stimulus and spending bills through Congress, heeding advice from Rahm Emanuel to never let a crisis go to waste? The Heritage Foundation's Robert Rector said Obama's stimulus bill “will overturn the fiscal foundation of welfare reform ..... For the first time since 1996, the federal government would begin paying states bonuses to increase their welfare caseloads”. Our President regards this legislation as just “a down payment” in his mission to restructure and transform America and its economy.

*Naughty businessmen! And those greedy “money changers”! They chose the same culprits!*

Schweikert chronicled the liberal historians' view that FDR “saved capitalism from itself by entrenching a number of regulatory measures and social programs that kept the market economy from its own ‘excesses’.” **Rexford Tugwell, an advisor to FDR, forthrightly stated that: “Virtually all of the New Dealers shared, to one degree or another, a distrust of business and entrepreneurship** that they thought had landed the nation in its current distressed condition ... The administration's aims were crudely simple ... to enlarge the publicly owned sector of the power industry ... as a means of diminishing private control over the necessities of life.”

Does this sound similar to the stated goals of the financial bailouts and the forced control of the auto industry? Obama trashes capitalism while pretending not to, and without naming it specifically. He just refers to it as “an economic philosophy that has failed”. Likewise, Obama's

disciples have expressed their intension to curb capitalism's "excesses" and punish "greed" through capping wages and bonuses. **Just like FDR, they are expanding the public sector at the expense of the private sector.**

And then we have the stock market crashes of '29 and '08-09 – both are thought by many to have been caused by the greed inherent in unregulated capitalism. The reactions, complaints, and accusations of the FDR "New Dealers" then, and "Obamians" now, are eerily similar.

***Both had easy money policy that didn't work!***

In fact, there is evidence that the "easy money" policy by the Fed Chairman in '29, and the current Chairman's low interest and those "easy loan" policies which actually were demanded by Congress, led to both financial crises. They all blamed the banks and greedy "financiers" – not government, which was very culpable in both cases. **Sooooo similar!**

***"John Maynard" would love them both! Federal government's fingers should be in everything!***

According to Schweikart, most of FDR's "brain trust" subscribed to the Keynesian (that's John Maynard Keynes) premise that government spending would spur demand and thus pull a nation out of a depression. He recalls that few of the New Dealers were troubled by the fact that this strategy hadn't worked in Britain. And these Keynesians expressly tried to transform federal spending "from a temporary expedient to a permanent institution of government."

Obama is clearly an extreme and committed Keynesian and apparently untroubled, or unaware, of **the repeated failure of extreme Keynesian policies – both during and subsequent to its application in the New Deal.** Robert Rector notes that Obama has more ambitious plans than merely stimulating the economy: "The real goal is to get 'the camel's nose under the tent' for a massive permanent expansion of the welfare state."

***Nary a clue! They's both determined, yet confused!***

Schweikart relates that FDR advisor Raymond Moley "was impressed ..... by the ..... scantiness of (FDR's) precise knowledge of things that he was talking about (and) by the immense and growing egotism that came from his office."

David Limbaugh observed that Obama "has sometimes revealed himself to be similarly uninformed on matters about which he has revealed an inflexible certainty, such as the complexities and consequences of (whatever) ..... (quoting attorney Debra Burlingame) 'Obama said the right words in general, but when it came to specifics he was uncertain, uninformed and sometimes just plain mistaken'. In addition, many have begun to comment on Obama's egotism, some even calling it narcissism."

***Good neighbor policies abound! To HECK with American Exceptionalism. They both were concerned with America appearing "selfish" and "greedy." Too bad it didn't work!***

FDR instituted the Good Neighbor Policy for Latin America as a step toward openness and better relations with our southern neighbors. And FDR encouraged other nations, especially the Soviet Union, to believe that America was intent on promoting collective security for all nations, not it's own "selfish" economic and political interests.

Sound familiar? The “smiling high fives” with Hugo Chavez and Daniel Ortega, the overtures to Fidel, the apologies in Europe, and the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton “resetting” the game with the Russia – Obama has it all “workin’.”

***But so what! The New Deal was a disaster, and so will be Obama’s similar economic policies!***

All of that philosophical stuff is fine, but who cares? The only important thing is to determine if the naïve, egotistical, Keynesian known as FDR actually hit on a successful formula – even if by accident. **Contrary to traditional conventional wisdom many modern scholars have come to a new conclusion that the New Deal was a disaster of the highest order.** Under this school of thought, not only did it ensure that recovery from the Depression would be impossible, but most of its programs would wreak havoc with America’s economy and social fabric. Only the impact of WWII could break us loose from the grip of the Great Depression.

The stock market crash occurred in 1929. The rise in unemployment after the crash was “nothin’” compared to the unemployment reached later. The New Deal didn’t start until FDR took office in 1933. Grand spending ensued and there is fairly broad consensus that some of his actions made a positive difference, but there is no denying that by 1937, unemployment was still at almost 15%. That’s not quite double today’s total. And in 1938 it reached 19%!

***The real evidence emerges. Both have failed economic policies; both were charismatic; and both had a genius like grasp of symbolism (often referred to as “optics” using O’s terminology).***

The evidence suggests that it was not the financial crisis or ‘29 that caused massive unemployment but the politicians attempted solutions –by both Hoover and FDR. Just like today, some suggested that the Federal Reserve’s intervention into the economy gave rise to the boom and bust phenomenon, and only a temporary feeling of prosperity. So, wouldn’t it be silly to assign a label of “compelling success” to the New Deal, and unwise to use it as a recipe for economic recovery. **Henry Morgenthau, FDR’s Treasury Secretary wrote in his diary: “We have tried spending money. We are spending more than we have ever spent before and it does not work. I want to see this country prosperous. I want to see people get a job. I want to see people get enough to eat. We have never made good on our promises. I say, after eight years of the Administration we have just as much unemployment as when we started and an enormous debt to boot!”**

There were many worker strikes at many factories and businesses. At the time, the jobs programs were often criticized as “boondoggles”. There were widespread allegations of political favoritism and corruption. Governorships and the House of Representatives seats were actually lost by the democrats in the ‘30s. And New Deal policies lost their majority support in the Congress. **All this was going on while Europe was actually pulling out of their depression era economies.** Looking back, the Democrats were actually destined to lose handily in the 1940 elections, **but then in 1939 war broke out in Europe.** FDR’s real charisma and a genius-like grasp of symbolism, made the citizens forget about the failed policies and shallow politics and looked to him as a real leader, which he was, but only for the perilous times of during WWII.

Dennis Prager wrote: “... as we watch the stimulus package moving to passage, we get the whiff of bailout favoritism and crony capitalism that was also present in the New Deal. The forced unionization envisaged by the card-check bill may prove to be no more popular than the unionization forced by the sit-ins ..... in 1938. Today’s Democratic programs may get as mixed a political reaction as the New Deal did in the years before World War II.”

**Surprisingly (to me at least), a group of UCLA economists calculated that FDR's policies prolonged the Great Depression by seven years.** One of the professors, Harold L. Cole said: "The fact that the Depression dragged on for years convinced generations of economists and policy-makers that capitalism could not be trusted to recover from depressions and that significant government intervention was required to achieve good outcomes. Ironically, our work shows that the recovery would have been very rapid had the government not intervened."

***Responses to criticisms of the New Deal – same excuse as for Obama – not enough spending!***

Even the FDR Presidential Library and Museum acknowledges: "the effects of the Great Depression stubbornly held on into the early 1940s." Roosevelt was elected after berating Hoover for being the "greatest spender in history". His economic advisor Rexford Tugwell admitted, years later, that the New Deal amounted to repackaging Hoover's initiatives saying: "practically the whole New Deal was extrapolated from programs Hoover started."

So what is the counter argument given the facts presented and the startling admissions, even by those closest to FDR. From what I have found I can summarize the argument as follows: The stimulus programs which were started, and the spending which was expanded by FDR, failed simply because they didn't spend enough. **WOW!** Just like Obama's supporters claim! So, how much would have been enough?

***Recap – FDR jobs programs were not successful, except for military expansion. But Obama doesn't like the "military solution"!***

Why, in spite of the statistics that prove the contrary, does the image remain that Roosevelt's New Deal saved America from the Great Depression? It's simply because he was the President, and an effective one during WWII – and that **war was what adequately united and mobilized the military, businesses, and citizenry, to spring us out of the depths of the depression and propel us to many years of relative prosperity. It was NOT the New Deal** – far from it! So why is Obama trying so hard to march in lock-step with FDR? He must have a shallow sense of history.

We should remember also, the New Deal programs that are now considered to have made a positive impact, specifically the part of the jobs program that built up portions of the military, are specifically the areas our President is neglecting. He has made it clear he wants to throw money at everything except the military. Maybe he's paying attention to the wrong part of the lesson.

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*Here are references to for information on this topic: (1) "A Patriots History of the United States" by Michael Allen and Larry Schweikhart (David Limbaugh's analysis was very useful); (2) "America's Great Depression" – Fifth Edition by Murray N. Rothbard; (3) "Meltdown: A Free-Market Look at Why the Stock Market Collapsed, the Economy Tanked, and Government Bailouts Will Make Things Worse" by Thomas E. Woods Jr.; (4) "The Politically Incorrect Guide to the Great Depression and the New Deal" by Robert Murphy. These are some sources for my opinions and commentary. Many more are available presenting all sides to the debate.*

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But what about all that's happened the last few weeks? Watch for the **NEXT REPORT ON THIS TOPIC: FDR AND BHO MADE MAJOR "POWER GRABS"!**