

READING CHECK

What were the immediate and long-term results of the sit-down strike against General Motors?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *upsurge* in the underlined sentence mean? Look for clues in the surrounding words, phrases, and sentences. Circle the word below that is a synonym for *upsurge*.

- gain
- loss

READING SKILL

Connect Ideas How did the policies of the second New Deal improve the standard of living of Americans?

President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s goals for the first New Deal were relief, recovery, and reform. He used legislation passed by the **second New Deal** to accomplish the goals of promoting the general welfare and protecting citizens’ rights.

In the spring of 1935, Congress created the **Works Progress Administration (WPA)** to provide new jobs doing public works. The WPA even provided programs to employ displaced artists. The government paid for WPA programs by spending money it didn’t have. British economist **John Maynard Keynes** argued that such deficit spending was needed to end the depression.

The **Social Security Act** created a pension system for retirees, as well as unemployment insurance for workers who lost their jobs and aid for the disabled. New programs aided farmers. The Rural Electrification Administration (REA) helped bring electricity to farms. New laws also aided industrial workers. The **Wagner Act** gave workers the right to **collective bargaining**. This meant that employers had to negotiate with unions about hours, wages, and other working conditions. The **Fair Labor Standards Act** of 1938 established a minimum wage and a maximum number of hours for the workweek. It also outlawed child labor.

During the Great Depression, there was an upsurge in union activity. The **Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)** was established to organize workers in major industries. In 1936, CIO members staged a **sit-down strike** against General Motors, refusing to leave the workplace until a settlement had been reached. Their success led to other strikes, which improved wages and working conditions for union members.

FDR faced challenges from the Supreme Court, which struck down a number of the key laws of the New Deal. To dilute the power of the sitting Justices, FDR asked Congress to add six new Justices to the nine-member court, a plan that became known as **court packing**. After 1937, the Supreme Court became more willing to accept New Deal legislation. After a new economic downturn in 1938, FDR chose not to try to force more reforms through Congress.

Review Questions

1. Describe one New Deal program that promoted the general welfare.

2. Explain how New Deal legislation promoted the well-being of workers.
