**SS8H8a**

**The Destruction of King Cotton**

For many Georgians, the twenties were not a time of abundance. A small, grayish, long-snouted beetle, the boll weevil, was destroying the primary source of income for many Georgia farmers: cotton. The boll weevil had come from Mexico, moved through Texas, and into the southern states in the 1890s. The beetles hatch in the yellow flower of the cotton plant. As the flower becomes a boll (the place were the fibers are formed), the larvae feeds on the growing white, fluffy cotton, making it useless.

The boll weevil appeared in southwest Georgia in 1915 and quickly spread across the state, destroying thousands of acres of Georgia’s major agricultural crop. By 1923, cotton production had dropped to 600,000 bales from a high of 2.8 million bales in 1914. The postwar price was only fifteen to seventeen cents a pound.

In 1924, Georgia farmers were hit with another natural disaster—a major drought. The sun-baked fields slowed down the destruction of the boll weevil, but the drought ruined most of Georgia’s other crops. Over 375,000 farm workers left Georgia between 1920 and 1925. The number of working farms fell from 310,132 to 249,095. When farms failed, banks that had loaned the farmers money took huge losses. Many farm-related businesses closed. Georgia was in a deep depression.

1. **What two events occurred causing Georgia’s and the rest of the South’s economies to be weakened long before the beginning of the Great Depression?**
   1. Prohibition and disenfranchisement
   2. The boll weevil and the drop in cotton prices
   3. Adoption of child labor laws and the county unit system
   4. Election of Woodrow Wilson and the beginning of World War I
2. **The boll weevil originally came from…?**
   1. Texas
   2. Florida
   3. Mexico
   4. Mississippi
3. **The boll weevil larvae feed on the…?**
   1. White, fluffy cotton
   2. Leaves of the cotton plant
   3. Yellow flowers on the plant
   4. Insects that are found on the stalk
4. **Besides the boll weevil, Georgia cotton farmers in the 1920’s were hurt by?**
   1. Tornadoes
   2. Droughts
   3. Frosts
   4. Fires
5. **What positive impact did the 1924 drought make on Georgia?**
   1. It slowed down the destruction by the boll weevil
   2. It contributed to the end of the Great Depression
   3. It created a good climate to attract industry
   4. It increased tourism at state parks

**SS8H8b**

**Causes of the Depression**

What caused the Great Depression? One cause was that the people of the United States had borrowed more money than they could afford to repay. This hurt the banks that had loaned the money and the businesses waiting for their payments. Businesses that did not get paid had to lay off workers.

Many factories had produced more goods than they could sell. When the demand for the goods fell, the businesses had to slow production until the surpluses were gone. Farmers were also guilty of overproduction. For several seasons, the farmers had produced surplus crops, causing prices to decline steadily. After World War I, European farmers began raising crops again; that added to the worldwide overproduction. The decline in farm income meant farmers could not repay their debts or buy goods from suppliers.

After World War I, Americans wanted to trade with other nations. But the United States and other nations had

enacted tariffs. The high tariffs made it difficult for other countries to sell their goods in the United States to get money with which to repay wartime loans and buy American products.

Speculation in the stock market also helped cause the Great Depression. During the 1920s, most people bought stock and paid only a portion of the cost of the stock at the time of the purchase. Even though the stock was not completely paid for, the investor had the right to sell it. If the stock price had gone up, the investor sold the stock and made enough to finish paying for the stock. This practice forced the price of stocks up, making them higher than what they were really worth.

Many banks had purchased large amounts of stock. When the market crashed, the banks lost a lot of money. When depositors learned this, there were runs on the banks. When too many people withdraw their money from a bank, the bank collapses; everyone loses.

One final cause was the laissez-faire attitude of the American people and of American government and business leaders. Almost every government official believed the economy itself, not the government, would work out any problems. President Hoover did what any other politician of the time would have done—nothing. Hoover kept telling the American people that “prosperity is just around the corner.” But prosperity was not just around the corner.

* **Borrowing more money than could be repaid**
* **Speculating in the stock market**
* **Overproducing farm products**

1. **These events led to…?**
   1. The Great Depression
   2. The Great Society
   3. Hoover’s re-election
   4. World War II
2. **What United States president’s policies are blamed for the Great Depression?**
   1. Dwight Eisenhower
   2. Herbert Hoover
   3. Franklin D. Roosevelt
   4. Harry Truman
3. **Laissez-faire policies of the U.S. government helped bring about the depression by…?**
   1. Overextending trade agreements
   2. Giving businesses too many loans
   3. Encouraging people to invest in the stock market
   4. Not doing anything to help solve the country’s economic problems
4. **Georgians did not feel the impact of the stock market crash because…?**
   1. The state was already in a depression
   2. Banks were protected by state insurance
   3. Citizens had little money invested in the stock market
   4. The state constitution prohibited investing tax dollars in the stock market

**SS8H8c**

**Eugene Talmadge**

State government changed greatly when Eugene Talmadge became governor in 1933. The Forsyth farmer, lawyer, and sawmill owner had been elected commissioner of agriculture in 1926 and had served three years in that position. Talmadge was a dramatic politician in the style of Tom Watson. He often compared himself with Watson, especially when trying to get the support of rural voters. You may have heard the expression that politicians “stumped the state” giving speeches to voters. Talmadge actually took a stump with him, a sawed off section of an oak, two feet high and three feet in diameter. He put it in the middle of the crowd, stood on it, and delivered fiery speeches. He often told rural Georgia voters that they had three friends – Sears Roebuck, God Almighty, and Eugene Herman Talmadge.

Talmadge was a conservative white supremacist who did not like federal government intervention or government debts. He especially disliked relief efforts, public welfare, and federal assistance programs. After becoming governor, he tried to rid the state of New Deal programs. He used federal funds to build highways more often than to help the unemployed. He reduced property taxes, utility rates, and some license fees.

Talmadge was elected to a second term in 1934 by a landslide. Officials who disagreed with Talmadge were fired and replaced with his supporters. Once, Talmadge ordered the highway commissioner to reduce spending or resign. The commissioner refused. Talmadge called in the National Guard, declared martial law, and had the commissioner physically removed from his office. A Talmadge supporter was named as the new commissioner. When Talmadge refused to follow federal New Deal regulations, the federal government took over New Deal programs in Georgia.

In 1934, during the state’s worst textile strike, the governor declared martial law again and used the National Guard to arrest strikers. However, Talmadge’s political power plays did not change the fact that Georgia law would not allow him to serve more than two consecutive terms. Because he could not run for governor, Talmadge ran for the U.S. Senate in 1936 against Richard Russell and was soundly defeated.

In 1940, Eugene Talmadge ran for governor again and was elected. Talmadge had softened his anti-Roosevelt stand and began using modified versions of New Deal legislation. The state’s economy grew. Then, a series of events angered the voters and put Georgia in a bad light.

A Talmadge supporter was an instructor at the University of Georgia. He told the governor that one of the deans at the university and the president of the Teachers College in Statesboro (now known as Georgia Southern University) had plans to integrate the school (open it to members of all races and ethnic groups). Talmadge convinced the board of regents to fire the two individuals. He also got rid of several members of the board of regents who publicly opposed his interference in the university system.

There was a great deal of national publicity, strongly against the governor’s stand. The situation so offended the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools that they voted to take away the accreditation of white Georgia colleges. Georgians were upset with both the association and the governor.

1. **What Georgia governor served during the Great Depression and spent a great deal of his time speaking out against the New Deal, blacks, and the metropolitan areas?**
   1. Ellis Arnall
   2. Eurith Rivers
   3. Richard Russell
   4. Eugene Talmadge
2. **Which policy did Governor Eugene Talmadge support?**
   1. Public welfare
   2. Voting rights for blacks
   3. Reduced property taxes
   4. Federal assistance programs
3. **From what group of voters did Talmadge revieve his greates support?**
   1. Rural voters
   2. Black voters
   3. Wealthy voters
   4. Women voters
4. **Which issue did Eugene Talmadge support?**
   1. Integration
   2. States’ rights
   3. Higher taxes
   4. White supremacy
5. **What action by Eugene Talmadge resulted in the loss of accreditation of ten Georgia public colleges and universities, including the University of Georgia?**
   1. He withheld federal funds from Georgia’s colleges and universities
   2. He ordered the Confederate flag to be flown at all colleges in Georgia
   3. He fired two University System administrators who supported integration
   4. He approved the admission of several black students at two all-white colleges
6. **Besides himself and God, who did Eugene Talmadge call the friend of rural voters?**
   1. Franklin D. Roosevelt
   2. Montgomery Ward
   3. Sears Roebuck
   4. William Hartsfield

**SS8H8d**

**The New Deal: Civilian Conservation Corps**

In 1932, President Hoover ran for re-election. His opponent was Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt of New York. When Roosevelt accepted his party’s nomination, he told the audience, “I pledge you, I pledge myself, to a new deal for the American people.” Roosevelt won the election. In his inaugural address, Roosevelt said:

*We are stricken by no plague of locusts.*

*Compared with the perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed*

*and were not afraid, we have still much to*

*be thankful for. Nature still offers her*

*bounty and human efforts have multiplied*

*it. Plenty is at our doorstep. . . .*

His speech and his natural optimism won the people’s confidence. They believed Roosevelt would try new ways to end the depression, which was, by then, felt all over the world. When Roosevelt took office on March 4, 1933, he took steps to fulfill his promise of “a new deal for the American people.”

Roosevelt had no clear idea of how to deal with the depression. He gathered a group of advisers from all over the country; they became known as the “brain trust.” With their help and at Roosevelt’s urging, Congress passed a series of laws that came to be known as the New Deal. The purpose of these laws was to bring about economic recovery, relieve the suffering of the unemployed, reform defects in the economy, and improve society.

One New Deal program was more popular in Georgia and is still enjoyed today. As a result of the TVA, we now have Blue Ridge Lake (which was actually created in 1925), Lake Chatuge, and Lake Nottely.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was popular in Georgia in part because of its work at Camp Brumby with the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. The CCC also built many of the facilities at Roosevelt State Park in Pine Mountain. Other CCC projects in Georgia included construction of sewer projects in many of the state’s cities; flood control and drainage projects such as Tybee Island’s seawall; recreational facilities such as ball fields, band stands, and theaters throughout the state; and a host of municipal facilities such as Augusta’s Savannah River Levee, Atlanta’s Municipal Auditorium, St. Simons’ airport, Macon’s airport, Stewart County’s courthouse and jail, and renovations of Dalton’s city hall. The CCC also worked to build, expand, or improve schools and hospitals throughout the state. For example, much of the work on Grady Hospital in Atlanta was done by the CCC.

1. **What was NOT a purpose of the New Deal?**
   1. To provide loans to students
   2. To improve lifestyles for Americans
   3. To reform the defects in the economy
   4. To relieve the suffering of the unemployment
2. **Which New Deal program was responsible for such projects in Georgia as Roosevelt State Park in Pine Mountain, Tybee Island’s seawall, Augusta’s Savannah River Levee, and Macon’s Airport?**
   1. CCC
   2. NYA
   3. TVA
   4. WPA

**The New Deal: Agricultural Adjustment Act**

The Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA) was created in March 1933. The AAA paid farmers **NOT** to plant crops on part of their land. The legislation created **price supports** (guaranteed higher prices) to farmers who agreed to cut back their cotton and tobacco crops. The idea was to raise farm prices by limiting production. The plan worked, and farm income improved. In 1929, Georgia was already reeling from low cotton prices. Between 1929 and 1932, cotton prices had fallen to 5 cents a pound. The production limits set by the AAA raised cotton prices to 12 cents a pound; by 1936, cotton prices had reached 15 cents a pound.

On drawback of the AAA was that farm **subsidies** (grants of money from the government) went to landowners rather than to the tenant farmers, who were predominantly black. The tenant farmers who worked the land never saw any of the money. In fact, with decreased production, many tenant farmers were without work. The AAA was eventually declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court because it was not voluntary.

1. **Why did the Agricultural Adjustment Act fail to benefit African-Americans in Georgia?**
   1. Subsidies were paid to property owners, not the tenant farmers
   2. Only whites qualified for Social Security and Medicare benefits
   3. Only whites were hired by the Works Progress Administration
   4. Young blacks were not hired under the National Youth Administration
2. **Which group of Georgians failed to benefit from the Agricultural Adjustment Act?**
   1. Property owners
   2. Tenant farmers
   3. Alcoholics
   4. Blacks
3. **Which group of Georgians benefited most from the Agricultural Adjustment Act?**
   1. Property owners
   2. Tenant farmers
   3. Alcoholics
   4. Blacks

**The New Deal: Rural Electrification**

Rural electrification was an important New Deal program. In the 1920s, power companies mainly ran lines to towns and cities. Because the rural population was spread out, power lines were expensive to build and maintain. The Rural Electrification Authority (REA) reportedly was a result of President Roosevelt’s first night at Warm Springs, Georgia. He was sitting on the porch of his small cottage, trying to catch a breeze on a hot, sultry summer night. He noticed that no lights were showing from neighboring farms. When he received his electrical bill at the end of the month, he saw that it was many times higher than what he paid at his mansion in Hyde Park, New York. Roosevelt never forgot that night, and on May 11, 1935, he signed into law the act creating the REA. The REA loaned over $300 million to farmers’ cooperatives to help them extend their own power lines and buy power wholesale. This program was one on the most important and far-reaching of the New Deal programs. By 1940, a significant percentage of farmers in Georgia and other parts of the nation had electricity. Electric water pumps, lights, milking machines, and appliances made farm life much easier.

1. **What did the New Deal’s rural electrification project (REA) do for Georgia’s farmers?**
   1. It provided loans to farmers’ cooperatives so they could run power lines in rural areas
   2. If provided funds for power companies to run lines in rural areas
   3. It required power companies to provide power at a lower rate
   4. It enabled farms to double their size
2. **What New Deal program resulted from President Franklin Roosevelt’s view of rural Georgia while sitting on his porch in the evening?**
   1. CCC
   2. FDIC
   3. REA
   4. WPA

**The New Deal: Social Security**

New Deal relief efforts, however could not reach those people who could not work—children, the blind, widows with small children, and the elderly. In addition, workers needed some protection against unemployment. In 1935, Congress passed the Social Security Act. The federal government would provide retirement and unemployment insurance from taxes paid by both workers and their employers. Farm workers, however, were not covered by the new program. As President Roosevelt stated at the signing of the legislation into law, “*We can never insure 100% of the population against 100% of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age*”.

1. **The purpose of social security is to…?**
   1. Create a system to save the banks
   2. Protect the financial sovereignty of the federal government
   3. Create a system of retirement and unemployment insurance
   4. Give all workers in the United States a savings plan for the future
2. **What group of workers was NOT covered by Social Security?**
   1. Store clerks
   2. Farm workers
   3. School teachers
   4. Factory owners