

TEACHER'S GUIDE
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MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"

A Citizen Reports on How the New Deal Has Impacted His Life

This letter was written to President Roosevelt after his Fireside Chat radio broadcast of June 28, 1934, in which he explained the "Three R's" of the New Deal: relief, recovery, and reform. While economic data showed that the nation was beginning to recover from the worst of the Depression, Roosevelt also asked his listeners to answer four questions to determine if they personally were experiencing recovery. H.O.L.C. stands for the Home Owner's Loan Corporation, a New Deal program that allowed homeowners to refinance their mortgages to prevent foreclosure.

July 3, 1934

My dear Mr. President:—

Thank you many times for your cheerful message over the Radio. My family and I answered each of your questions as they were asked, in the affirmative, some in the negative. "Are you better off than last year" Yes, decidedly. "Are your debts less burdensome" Yes, Yes, thanks to your H.O.L.C. —Heretofore only the wealthy could hope to receive favors from our Government, but now even the "forgotten man" is remembered. "Is your bank account more secure?" Absolutely! "Is your faith in your future more firmly grounded?" Yes.

And now the negatives. "Have you lost any rights of freedom of action or choice?" None whatsoever, but I have gained some greater freedom under the New Deal—But let the Government continue to appoint and manage The [New] Dealers, and not listen to the clamoring of the Old Crowd...

John Pauer
Sacramento, Calif.

Source: Lawrence W. Levine and Cornelia R. Levine, eds., *The People and the President: America's Conversation with FDR* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2002), 103.

