

The Impact of the Great Depression



1. Urban Areas (Cities)

- ***A. Workers:***
 - ***Laid off***
 - ***Reduced hours***
 - ***Reduced pay***



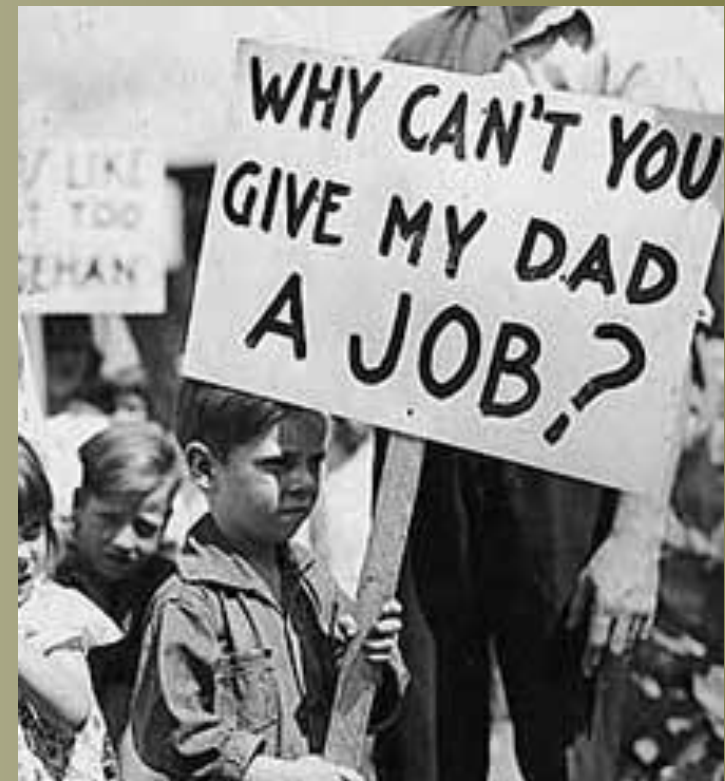
Cities, Workers (cont.)

- **Unemployment 25% in 1933**
- **GNP (Gross National Product-value of US goods/services) was cut in half**



Cities, Workers (cont.)

○ *Daily search for work*



WORK-IS-WHAT-I
WANT-AND-NOT-CHARITY
WHO-WILL-HELP-ME-
GET-A-JOB-7 YEARS-
IN-DETROIT. NO MONEY
SENT AWAY-FURNISH-
REST-OF-REFERENCES
PHONE RANDOLPH 8381 ROOM
455



Cities, Workers (cont.)



B. Struggle to Survive

- *Struggle to support family*
- *Breadlines*
- *Soup kitchens*



Struggle (cont.)



Struggle (cont.)



Brother Can You Spare a Dime?

Lyrics by Yip Harburg, Music by Jay Gorney
Recorded by Bing Crosby (1931)

- Song that reflected the dismay people felt at being jobless in such a great country



See slide 72
for song
lyrics.



C. Hoovervilles

- *1931: NYC homeless about 15,000*

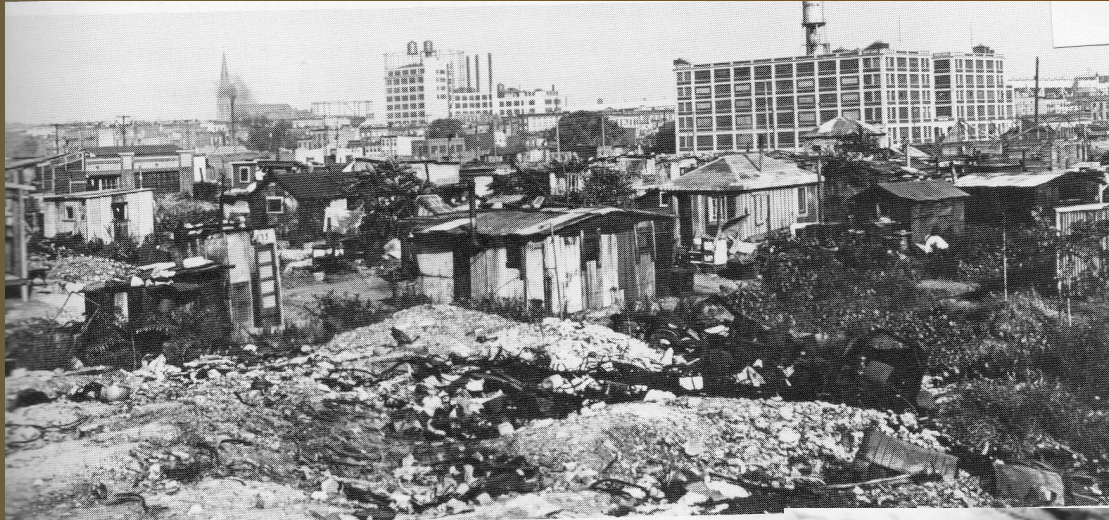


C. Hooverilles

Pres. Hoover's lack of direct relief led to blame



C. Hooverilles



C. Hoovervilles



C. Hoovervilles



D. Reactions

Workers unionized; fought lowered wages
Evicted people formed tenant groups; protested
high rent and evictions



2. Rural Areas

- **A. Farmers**
 - **Farmers in debt; mortgaged farms and possessions**
 - **Land lost value; banks foreclosed and took all assets**



Farm foreclosure sale, ca. 1933. National Archives.

2. Rural Areas, Farmers (cont.)

- *Farm auctions; livestock, household goods sold – farmers lost everything*



B. Reactions

1). Penny Auctions

- *Farmers became activists – demanded end to foreclosures*
- *Intimidated buyers at auctions; prevented banks from making money*



Farmers crowd around the auctioneer at the Von Bonn family auction intimidating real bidders.
This was the first Penny Auction.

2. Rural Areas, Farmers (cont.) B. Reactions

- *2) Radical Farm Protests*
 - *“Farm Holiday” movement – built road blocks to prevent movement of goods*
 - *Dumped milk, turned back cattle*



Farm protesters attempt to block roads leading to markets at Sioux City. They wanted to reduce supplies to raise prices.

2. Rural Areas, Farmers (cont.) B. Reactions

- 3) Farmers formed alliances; demanded law*
- Local laws were passed; judges ordered sales anyway (overturned laws)*
 - Led to some violence*



2. Rural Areas, Farmers (cont.) B. Reactions

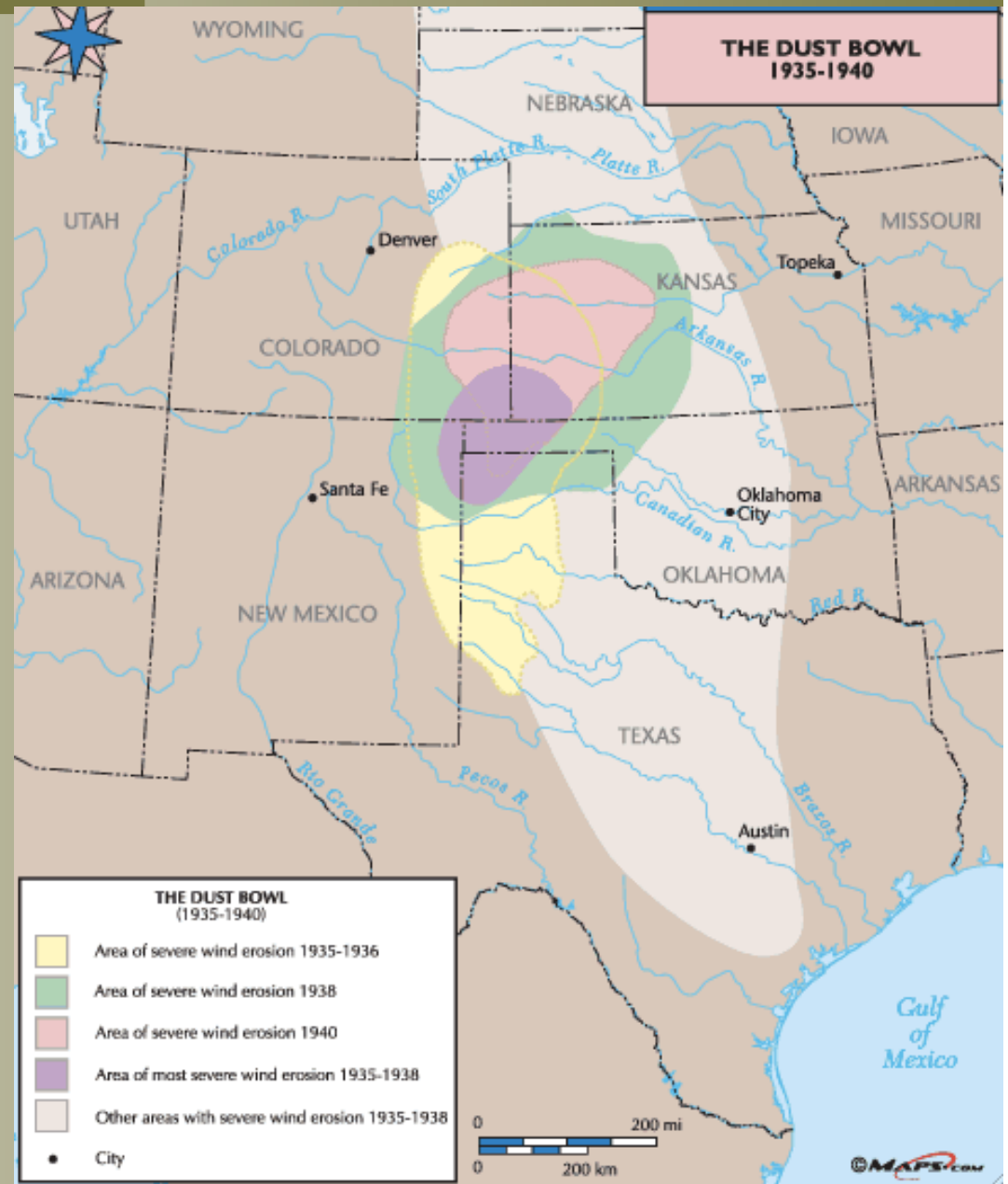
4) Barter economies

- Poor farmers exchanged farm products for goods and services*



C. The Dust Bowl

- Over-farming, drought, and wind led to loss of top soil
- Farms destroyed
- Worst in TX, OK, KS, CO



C. The Dust Bowl



C. The Dust Bowl



C. The Dust Bowl



C. The Dust Bowl



C. The Dust Bowl



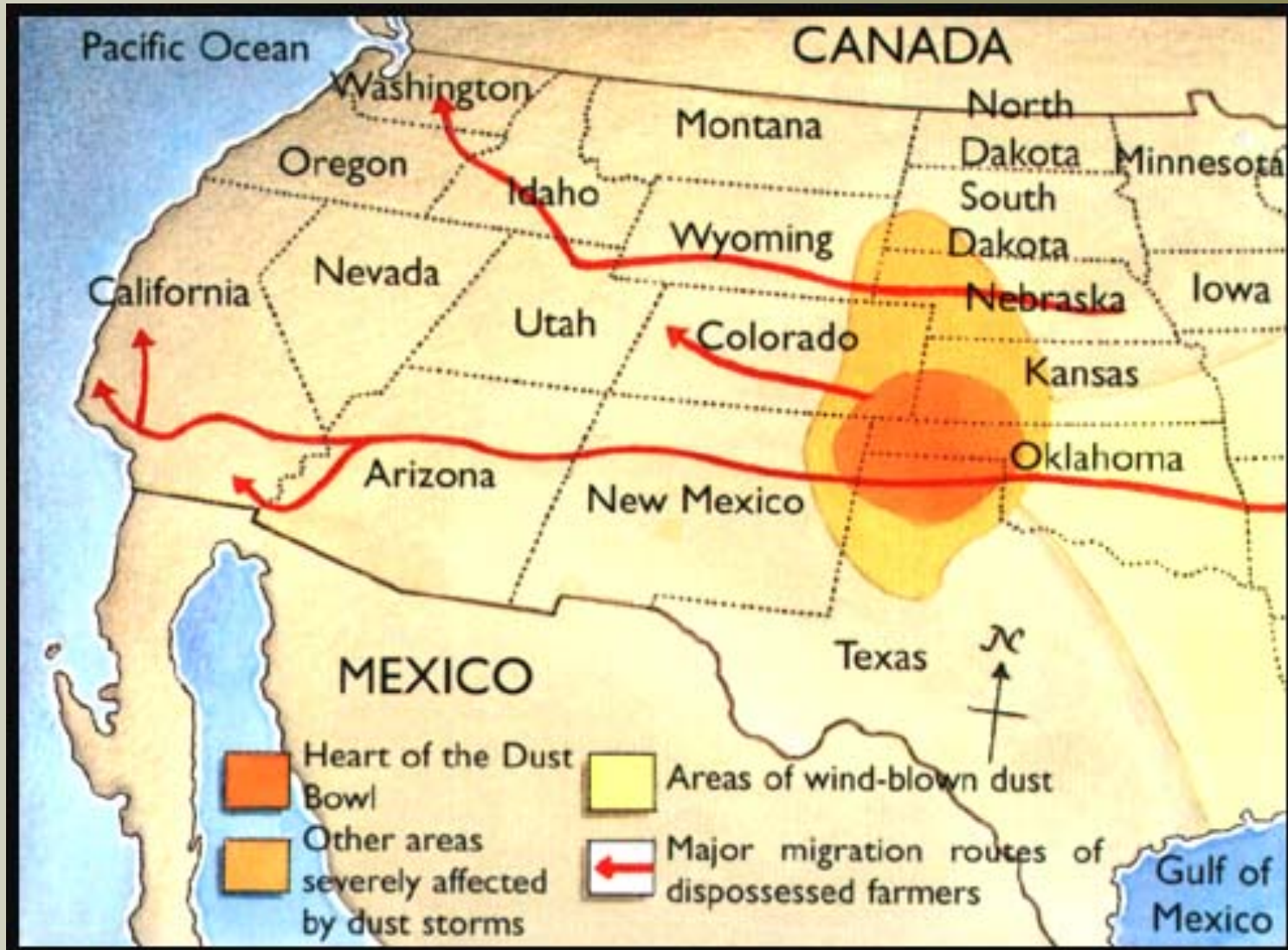
C. The Dust Bowl



More Oklahomans reach Calif. via the cotton fields of Ariz.

D. Migration West

- ***Displaced families left farms; many went to CA***



- **Transplanted farmers found little work; low wages out west**

D. Migration West (cont.)

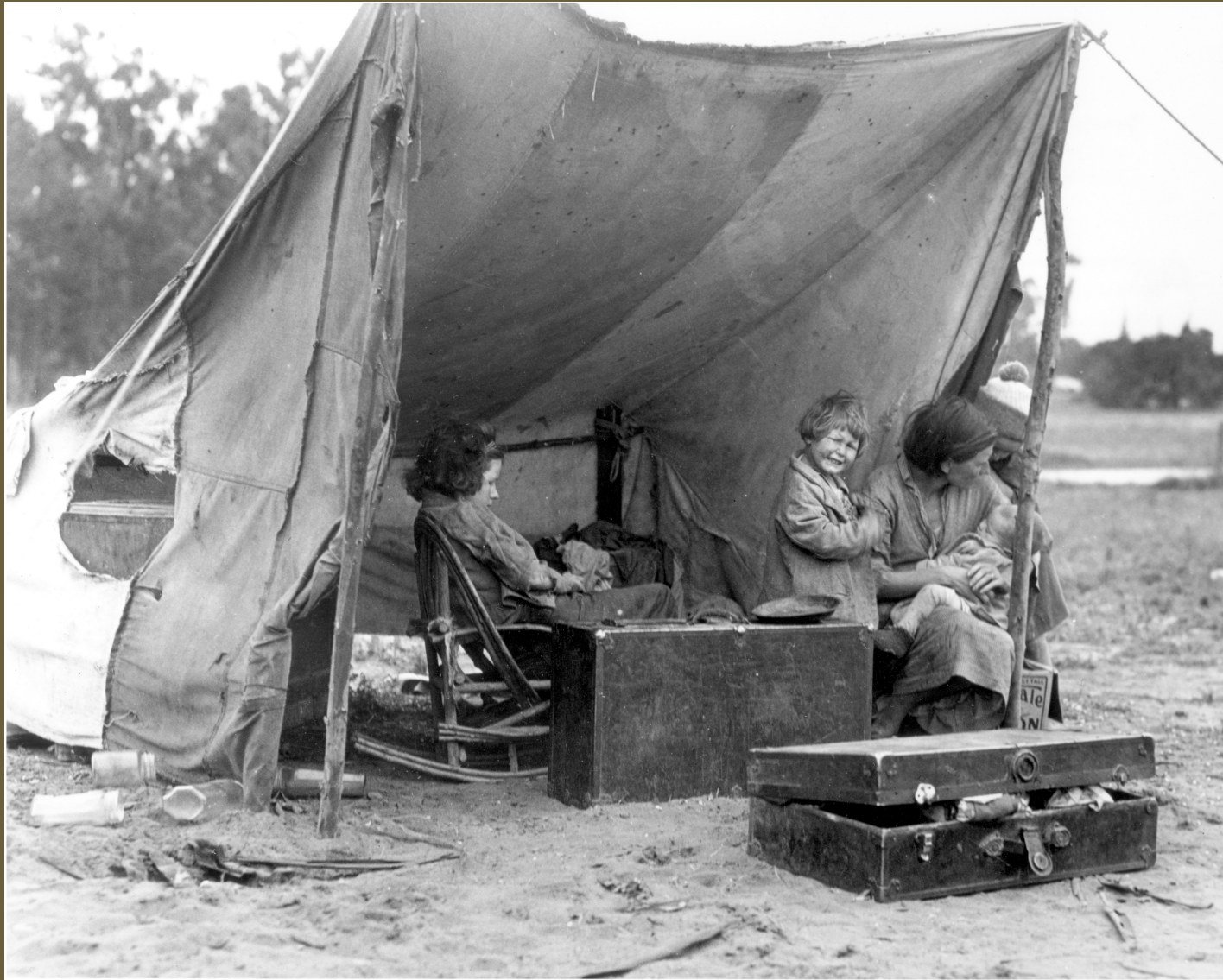


E. Impact of Media

○ *Photojournalist Dorothea Lange captured “soul and spirit” of the times.*

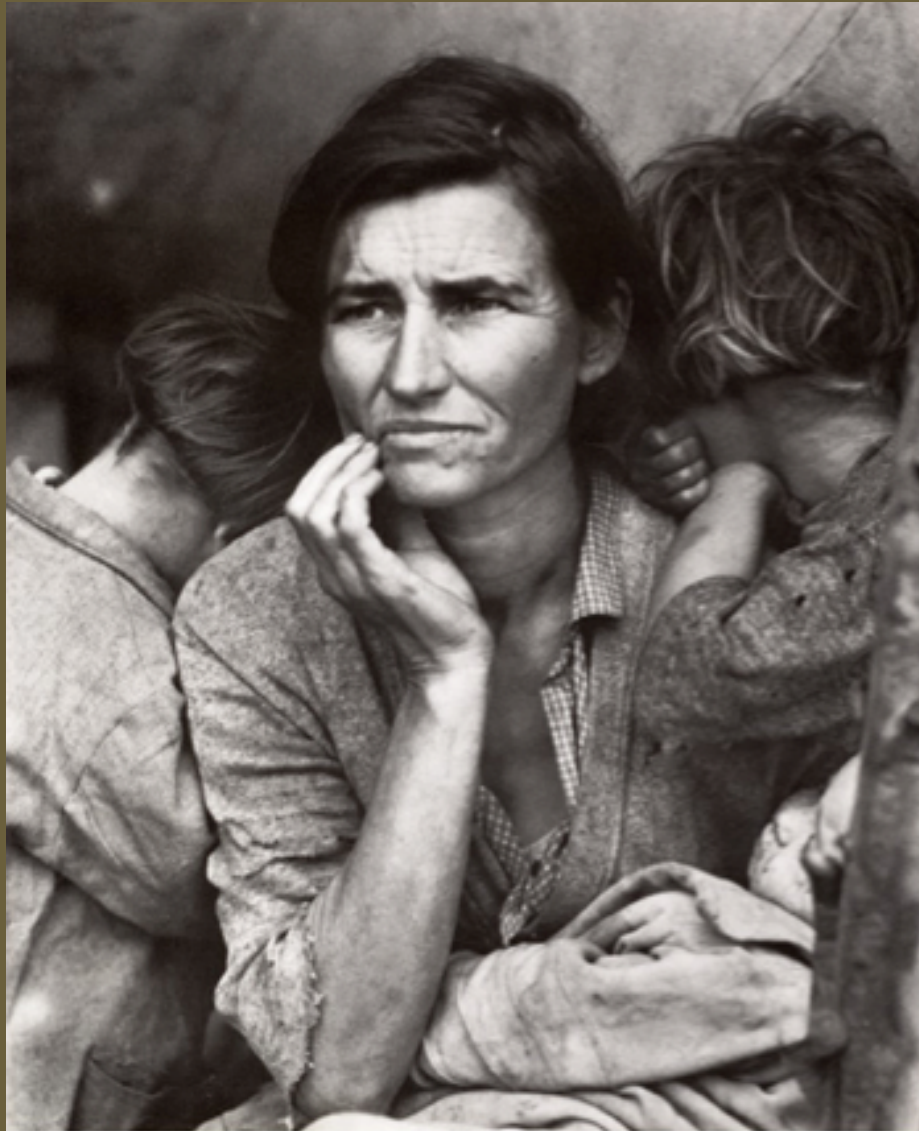


E. Impact of Media



E. Impact of Media

- *“Migrant Mother” (1936) was symbol of the age.*

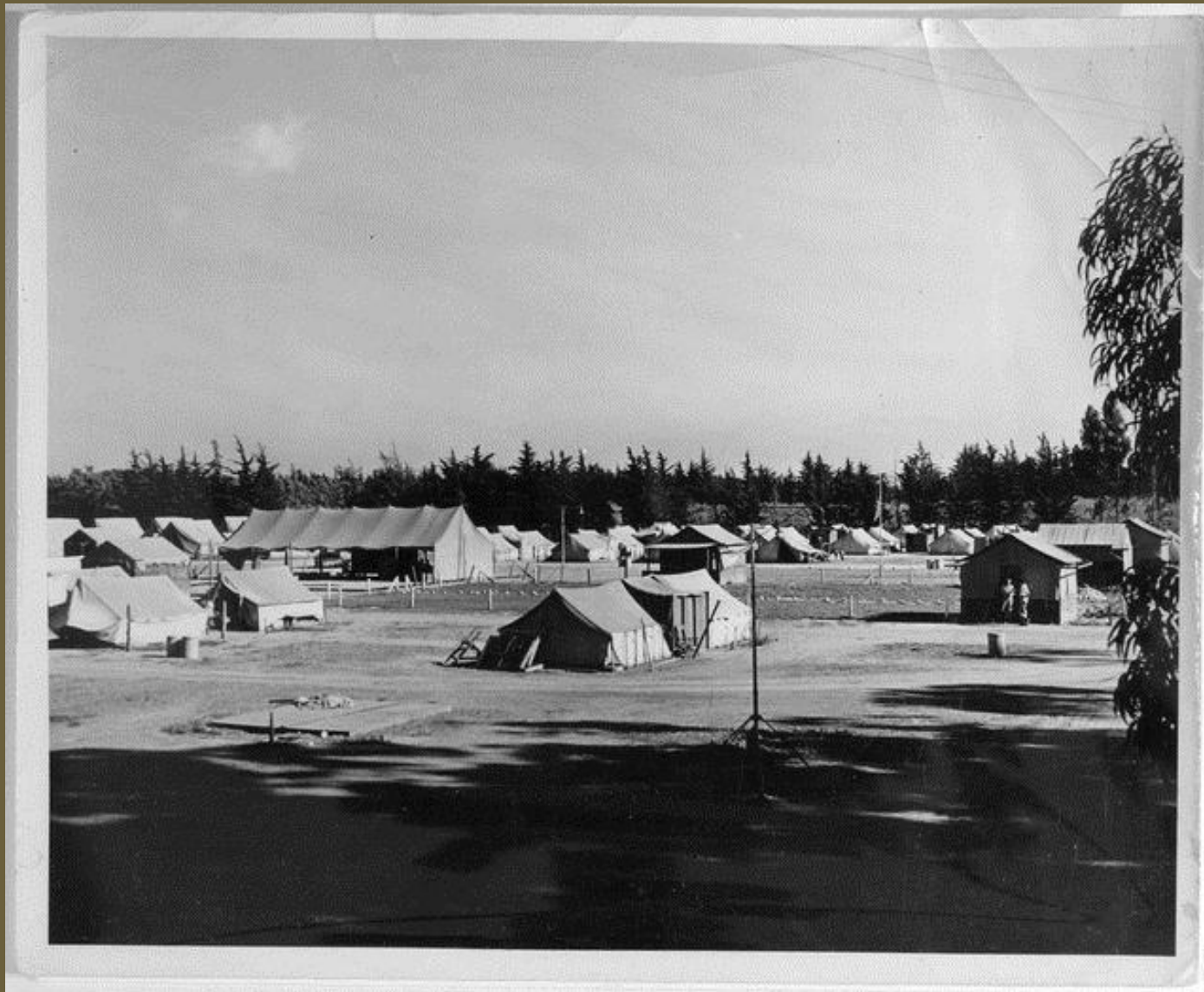






E. Impact of Media

- ***Efforts stirred government to create migrant camps.***

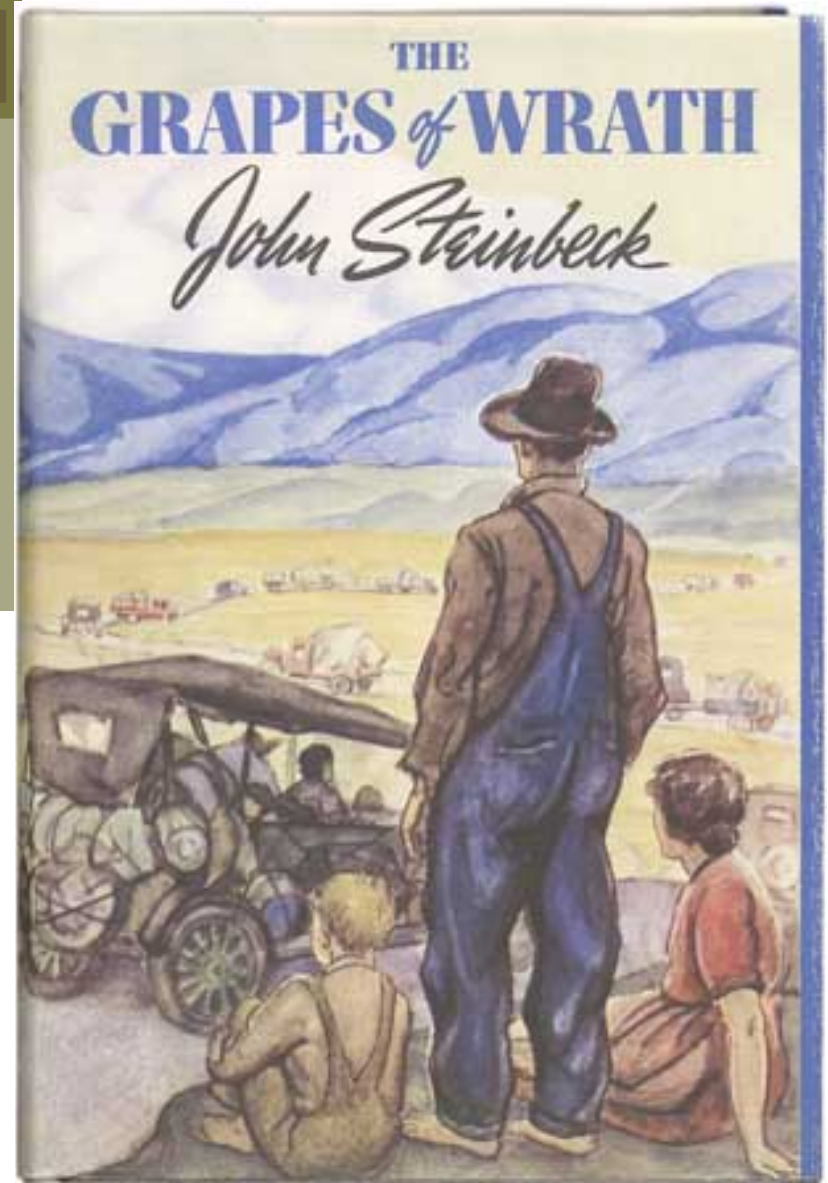




E. Impact of the Media (cont.)

**John Steinbeck wrote about this
in *The Grapes of Wrath*
(1939)**

***Follows a destitute family as
they migrate west***



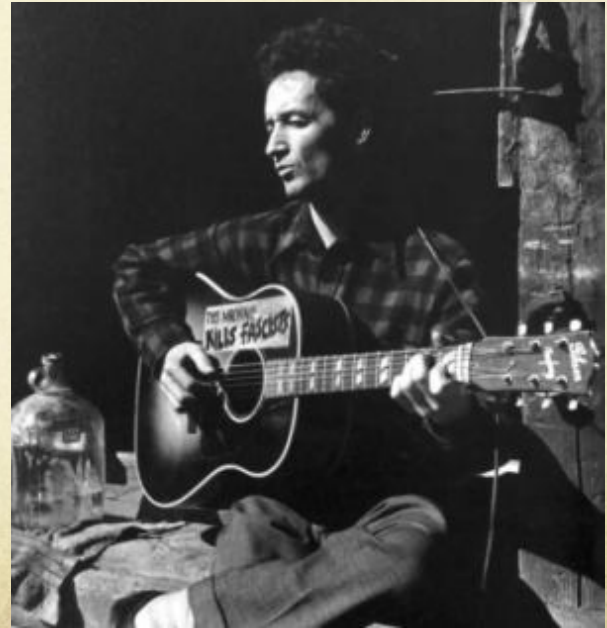
(Film 1940)

Woodie Guthrie – folk singer

Guthrie wrote the song “This Land is Your Land” in critical response to Irving Berlin’s “God Bless America*,” which Guthrie considered unrealistic and complacent. Guthrie varied the lyrics over time, sometimes including more overtly political verses in line with his sympathetic views of communism than appear in recordings or publications.



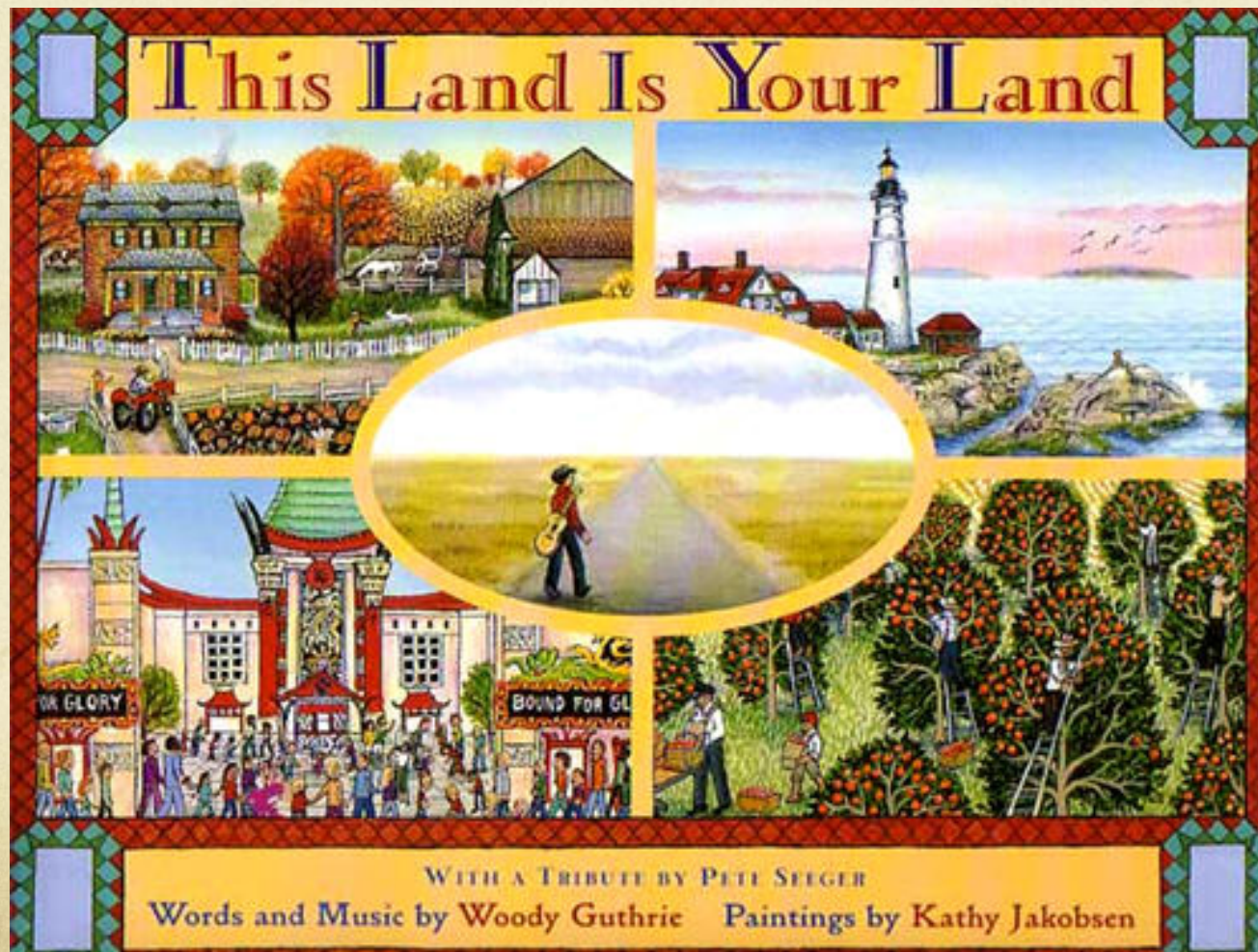
*Lyrics are on slide 82



THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

by Woody Guthrie

Written in 1939



THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

words and music by Woody Guthrie

Chorus:

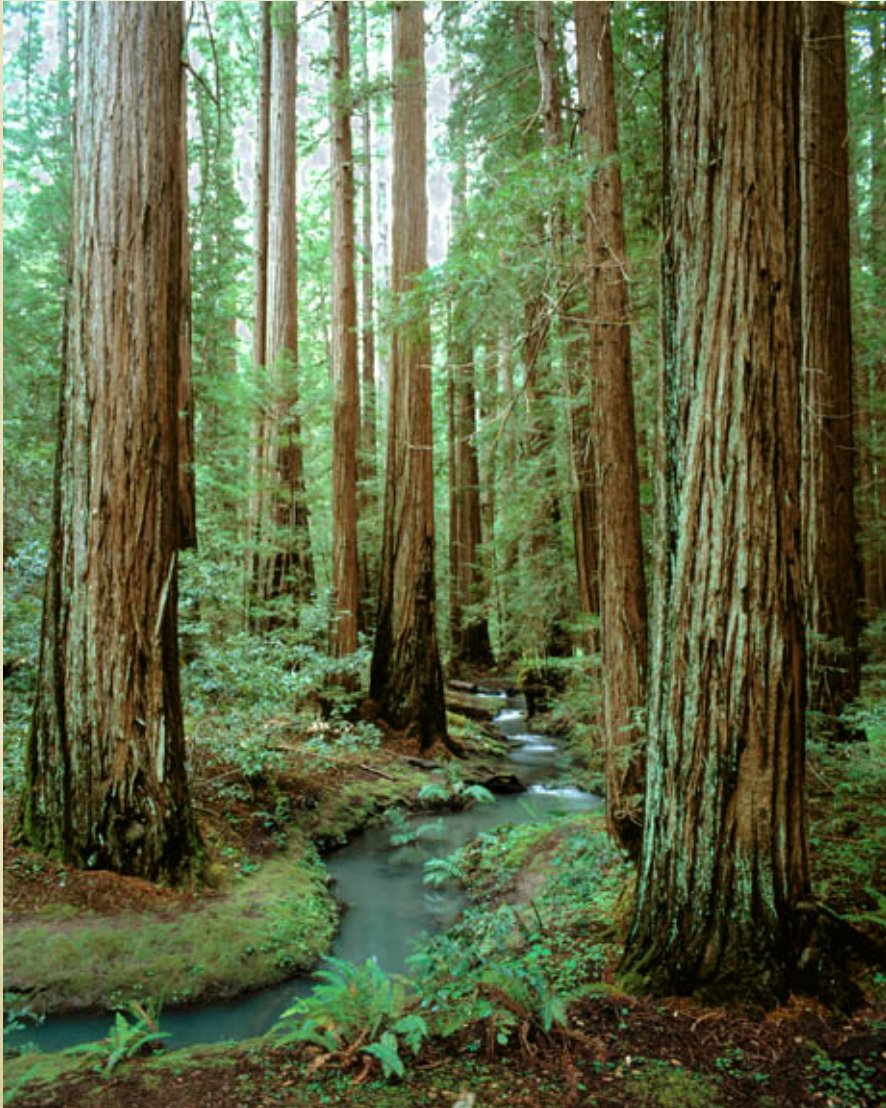
This land is your land and this land is my land

From California, to the New York Island



From the redwood forest, to the gulf stream waters

This land was made for you and me



As I went walking that ribbon of highway
I saw above me that endless skyway



I saw below me that golden valley

This land was made for you and me





Photo by C. Ambrose

I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my
footsteps

To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts

And all around me a voice was a-sounding

This land was made for you and me



There was a big high wall there that tried to stop me

A sign was painted said: Private Property

But on the back side it didn't say nothing--

This land was made for you and me



When the sun comes shining as I was strolling
The wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
A voice was chanting as the fog was lifting
This land was made for you and me



This land is your land and this land is my land
From California, to the New York Island
From the redwood forest, to the gulf stream waters
This land was made for you and me



"This Land is made for you and me"

not recorded:

In the squares of the city - In the shadow of the steeple

Near the relief office - I see my people

And some are grumblin' and some are wonderin'

If this land's still made for you and me.



4. Discrimination Increases

- *Americans competed for shrinking job market.*
- *Women lost jobs to men.*
- *Rise in hostilities to minorities*



4. *Discrimination Increases*

- *Mexicans were now looked upon as outsiders; lost jobs to whites*
- *Ironically made them more dependent on public assistance*



4. *Discrimination Increases*



4. *Discrimination Increases*

- *400,000 Mexicans and Mexican-Americans were “repatriated” (deported) to Mexico*
- *Some “volunteered” to go to avoid deportation*



4. *Discrimination Increases*



Discrimination Increases

- *African Americans found it harder to find jobs*



Discrimination Increases

- *African American tenant farmers pushed off land first*
- *Formed tenants' unions and held rallies*



Discrimination Increases

- *Lynching had been on the decline; now increased*



Rubin Stacy, lynched in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 1935

Discrimination Increases

- *1930 lynching photo caused reaction*
- *Teacher, Abel Meeropol (a.k.a. Lewis Allen), wrote poem “Strange Fruit” to express his horror at the lynchings...*



Billie Holiday

- Blues singer of the 20s and 30s; famously sang “Strange Fruit” – became song of social activism



Strange Fruit
written by Lewis Allen
sung by Billie Holiday

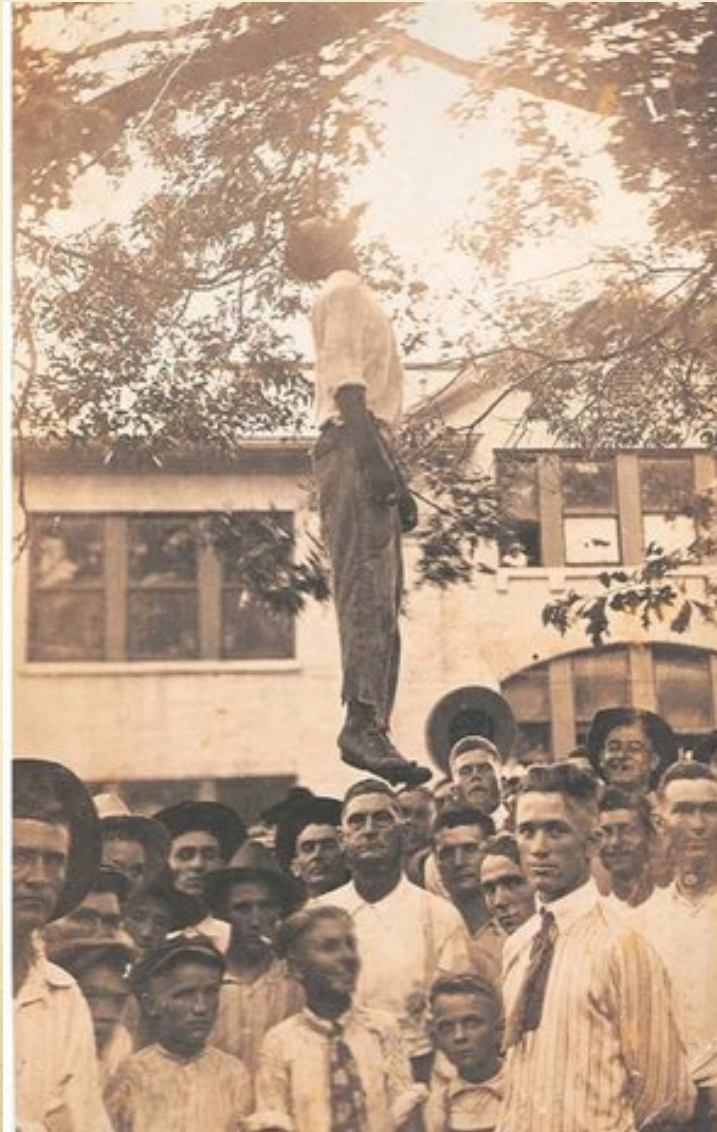
- **Southern trees bear a strange fruit,**
- **Blood on the leaves and blood at the root,**
- **Black bodies swingin' in the Southern breeze,**
- **Strange fruit hangin' from the poplar trees.**



- **Pastoral scene of the gallant South,**



- **The bulging eyes and the twisted mouth,**



- **Scent of magnolia sweet and fresh,**



- **Then the sudden smell of burnin' flesh,**



- **Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck,**
- **For the rain to gather, for the wind to suck,**



- **For the sun to rot, for the tree to drop,**
- **Here is a strange and bitter crop.**



- Lynchings were not prosecuted regularly until the 1960s
- The economic situation would be addressed by the New Deal



Brother Can You Spare a Dime?

Lyrics by Yip Harburg, Music by Jay Gorney

Recorded by Bing Crosby (1931)



They used to tell me I was building a dream, and so I followed the mob, When there was earth to plow, or guns to bear, I was always there right on the job.



They used to tell me I was building a
dream, with peace and glory ahead,
Why should I be standing in line, just
waiting for bread?



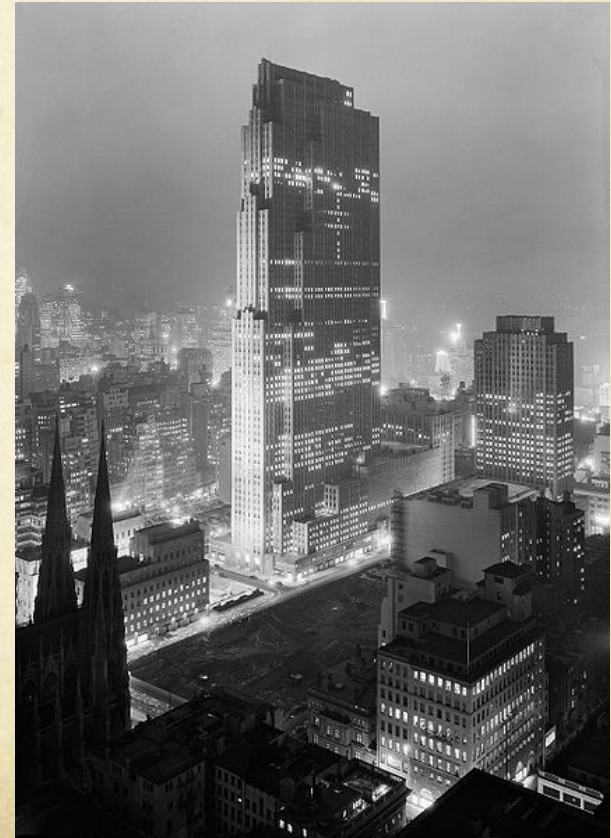
Once I built a railroad, I made it run, made
it race against time.

Once I built a railroad; now it's done.
Brother, can you spare a dime?

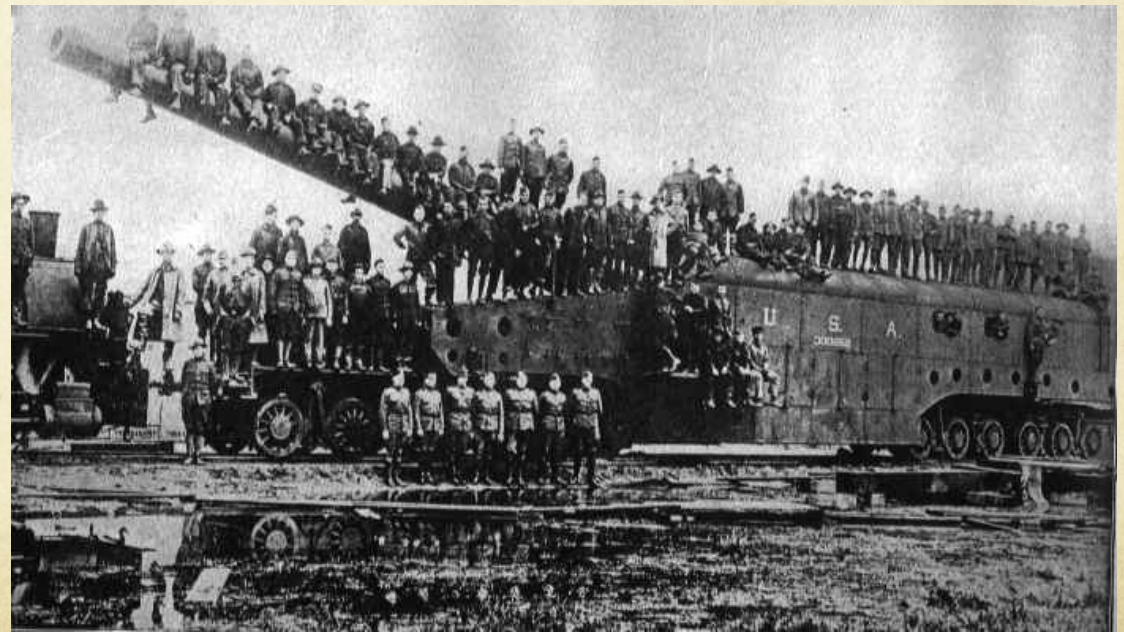


Once I built a tower, up to the sun, brick,
and rivet, and lime;

Once I built a tower, now it's done. Brother,
can you spare a dime?

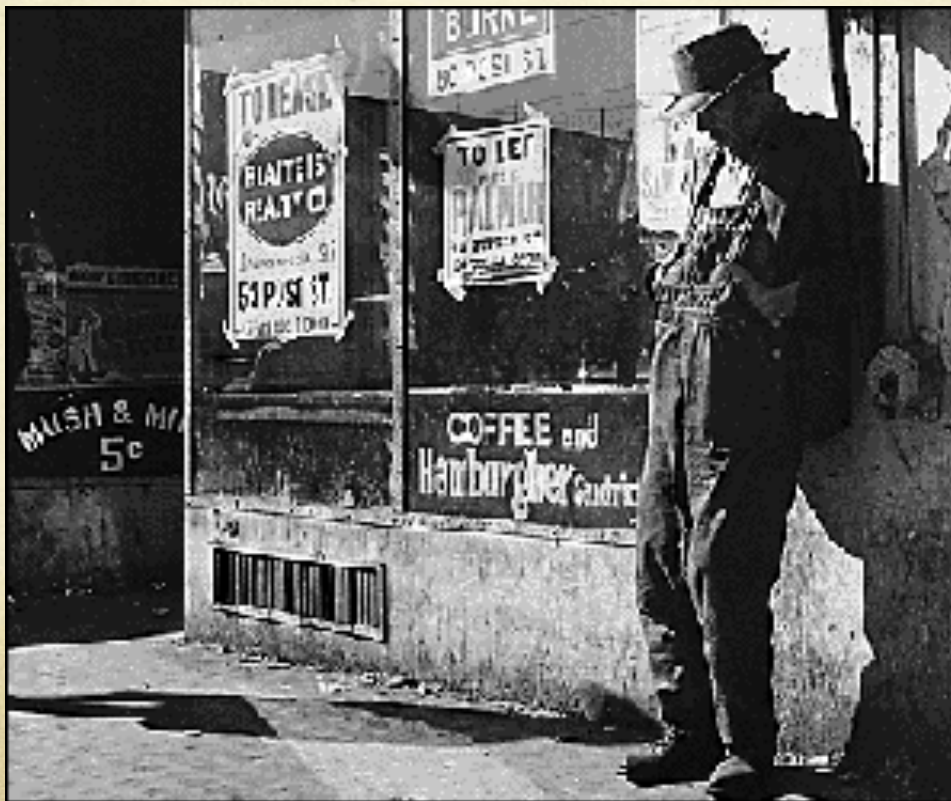


Once in khaki suits, gee, we looked swell,
Full of that Yankee Doodly Dum,
Half a million boots went slogging through Hell,
And I was the kid with the drum!



Say, don't you remember, they called me Al; it was Al all the time.

Why don't you remember, I'm your pal? Say, Buddy, can you spare a dime?



Once in khaki suits, ah, gee, we looked swell,
Full of that Yankee Doodly Dum,
Half a million boots went slogging through Hell,
And I was the kid with the drum!



Oh, say, don't you remember, they called me Al;
it was Al all the time.

Say, don't you remember, I'm your pal? Buddy,
can you spare a dime?



General Outdoor Adv Co

WORLD'S HIGHEST STANDARD OF LIVING



*There's no way
like the
American Way*

God Bless America

(written by Irving Berlin; sung by Kate Smith)

While the storm clouds gather far across the sea,
Let us swear allegiance to a land that's free,
Let us all be grateful for a land so fair,
As we raise our voices in a solemn prayer.

God Bless America, Land that I love.
Stand beside her, and guide her.
Through the night with a light from above.
From the mountains, to the prairies,
To the oceans, white with foam
God bless America, My home sweet home.