

# “Revolution in the Air”: The Rout of the Bonus Army and Historical Investigations

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Reisterstown, Maryland

## **Identify the source of this statement:**

“Surely a grade of 33 out of 100 on the simplest and most obvious facts of American History is not a record in which any high school can take pride.”

- A. The 2011 report of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results declaring little growth in students' knowledge of history.
- B. A 2007 report entitled *Failing Our Students, Failing America: Holding Colleges Accountable for Teaching America's History and Institutions*
- C. The 2006 (NAEP) report which demonstrated that "Students Gain Only Marginally on Test of U.S. History."
- D. The NAEP report of 2001.
- E. The 1987, NAEP report.
- F. The 1976 *New York Times* test of American youth published under the banner headline—"Times Test Shows Knowledge of American History Limited."
- G. Reports of the 1942 *New York Times* history exam that prompted historian Allan Nevins to write that high school students are "all too ignorant of American History."
- H. All of the above
- I. None of the above

**Answer: I—None of  
the Above**

A 1917 report by professors J. Carleton Bell and David McCollum who tested 668 Texas high school students to determine their sense of history. They discovered:

- 1/3 of students tested could not identify 1776 as the date the Declaration of Independence was signed.
- 1/2 could not identify Jefferson Davis as the President of the Confederacy.

**A Study of the Attainments of Pupils in United States History." *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1917.**

# History in Decline??

**“Ignorance of History Shown by College Freshman”**

*New York Times*, April, 1943

**“History is on the way down and possibly out [of the curriculum].”**

Edgar Bruce Wesley. “Let’s Abolish History Courses.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 1967.

**“History is in crisis...the situation is nationwide, affecting both secondary schools and higher education in every part of the country.”**

Richard S. Kirkendall. “The Status of History in the Schools,” *The Journal of American History*, 1974.

**“...the lamentable state of history in our educational system...”**

Warren Hickman. “The Erosion of History,” *Social Education*, 1979

**“But the importance of a shared memory appears to have lost its foothold in American higher education. As we move forward into the 21st century, our future leaders are graduating with an alarming ignorance of their heritage—a kind of collective amnesia—and a profound historical illiteracy which bodes ill for the future republic.”**

*Losing America’s Memory: Historical Illiteracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2000

**“We learn that there has been little appreciable change in students’ historical knowledge over time...the consistency of these results casts doubts on a presumed golden age of fact retention. Appeals to such an age are more the stuff of national lore and a wistful nostalgia for a time that never was than a reference to a national history whose reality can be found in the documentary record.”**

**Sam Weinberg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts***

# Steps for Developing History Labs

1. Formulate and utilize questions that stimulate investigation of the past
2. Develop and implement a common language for investigating the past
3. Utilize a common structure for investigating the past

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# Learning to Think Historically: A Tool for Attacking Historical Sources

## **Text:**

What is visible/readable--what information is provided by the source?

## **Context:**

What was going on during the time period? What background information do you have that helps explain the information found in the source?

## **Subtext:**

What is between the lines? Must ask questions about:

**Author:** Who created the source and what do we know about that person?

**Audience:** For whom was the source created?

**Reason:** Why was this source produced at the time it was produced?

# Steps for Developing History Labs

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# Developing an Historical Investigation

- Identify the focus question to be posed for your investigation
- Determine the historical sources you will use
- Identify what information the sources provide that would assist students' investigation of the focus question
- Predict the possible interpretations students would develop in response to their investigation of the sources
- How would this investigation help you cover the curriculum?

## "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime," (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? Buddy, 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.  
Say, don't you remember, I'm your pal? Buddy, can you spare a dime?





# Central States of America

## ADJUSTED SERVICE CERTIFICATE

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that pursuant to The World War Adjusted Compensation Act and in conformity with the laws of the United States, the amount herein named, **THREE HUNDRED EIGHT** Dollars, \$ **308.00**, less any indebtedness including interest, lawfully incurred and due hereon, shall become due and payable on the first day of **MARCH**, 19 **31**, to **FRANK AGRIA**, A. 4 **445 218**, whose address is **4015 PALMYRA ST NEW ORLEANS LA 70118**, herein referred to as the veteran,

or, upon the death of the veteran prior to the due date above named, the amount hereinabove stated shall become due and payable to the beneficiary named by the veteran, except that if such beneficiary dies before the veteran and no new beneficiary is named, or if the beneficiary in the first instance has not been named, then the amount as stated will become due and payable to the estate of the veteran.

This Certificate is issued by the Director of the United States Veterans Bureau, hereinafter referred to as the Director, in compliance with Section 501 of Title V of The World War Adjusted Compensation Act and is subject to all the provisions of that Act and regulations prescribed thereunder from time to time by the Director.

The amount due under this Certificate will be paid upon presentation of the Certificate with form "Demand for Payment" appearing on the reverse side thereof, duly executed and certified and accompanied by such proof of identity and right to receive payment as may be prescribed, to the Director, in the City of Washington, District of Columbia, or at such agency or agencies as the Director may designate, and in accordance with such rules and regulations as the Director may prescribe. Execution of form "Demand for Payment" is not a requirement for payment, to an incorporated bank or trust company on account of loans, as authorized in Section 502 of Title V of The World War Adjusted Compensation Act.

The veteran may, with the approval of the Director, change the beneficiary of this Certificate. Change of beneficiary is subject to such regulations as the Director may prescribe.

Neither this Certificate nor any right conferred herein, or incidental thereto, shall be negotiable, or assignable, or serve as security for any loan except as provided in Section 502 of Title V of The World War Adjusted Compensation Act, here set forth:

Sec. 502. (a) A loan may be made to a veteran upon his adjusted service certificate, only in accordance with the provisions of this section.

(b) Any national bank or trust company incorporated under the laws of any State, Territory, possession, or the District of Columbia (hereinafter in this section called "bank"), is authorized, after the expiration of two years after the date of the certificate, to loan to any veteran upon his promissory note secured by his adjusted service certificate (with or without the consent of the beneficiary thereof) any amount not in excess of the loan basis (as defined in subdivision (2) of this section) of the certificate. The rate of interest charged upon the loan by the bank shall not exceed, by more than 2 per centum per annum, the rate charged at the date of the loan for the discount of 90-day commercial paper under section 13 of the Federal Reserve Act by the Federal reserve bank for the Federal reserve district in which the bank is located. Any bank holding a note for a loan under this section secured by a certificate (whether the bank originally making the loan or a bank to which the note and certificate have been transferred) may sell the note to, or discount or rediscount it with, any bank authorized to make a loan to a veteran under this section and transfer the certificate to such bank. Upon the indorsement of any bank which makes a waiver of demand, notice, and protest by such bank as to its own indorsement exclusively, and subject to regulations to be prescribed by the Federal Reserve Board any such note secured by a certificate and held by a bank shall be eligible for discount or rediscount by the Federal reserve bank for the Federal reserve district in which the bank is located. Such note shall be eligible for discount or rediscount whether or not the bank offering the note for discount or rediscount is a member of the Federal Reserve System and whether the certificate is transferred to the bank in the first instance, the veteran or acquires it by transfer upon the indorsement of any other bank. Such note shall not be eligible for discount or rediscount unless it has at the time of discount or rediscount a maturity not in excess of three months exclusive of days of grace. The rate of interest charged by the Federal reserve bank shall be the same as that charged by it for the discount or rediscount of such notes drawn for commercial purposes. The Federal Reserve Board is authorized to permit, or on the affirmative vote of at least five members of the Federal Reserve Board to require, a Federal reserve bank to rediscount, for any other Federal reserve bank, notes secured by a certificate. The rate of interest for such rediscounts shall be fixed by the Federal Reserve Board. In case the note is sold, discounted, or rediscounted, the bank making the transfer shall promptly notify the veteran by mail at his last known post-office address.

(c) If the veteran does not pay the principal and interest of the loan upon its maturity, the bank holding the note and certificate may, at any time after maturity of the loan but not before the expiration of six months after the loan was made, present them to the Director. The Director may, in his discretion, accept the certificate and note, cancel the note (but not the certificate), and pay to the bank, in full satisfaction of its claim, the amount of the unpaid principal due it, and the unpaid interest accrued, at the rate fixed in the note, up to the date of the check issued to the bank. The Director shall restore to the veteran, at any time prior to its maturity, any certificate so accepted, upon receipt from him of an amount equal to the sum of (1) the amount paid by the United States to the bank in cancellation of his note, plus (2) interest on such amount from the time of such payment to the date of such receipt, at 6 per centum per annum, compounded annually.

(d) If the veteran fails to redeem his certificate from the Director before its maturity,

Any negotiation, assignment or loan made in violation of any provision of this section shall be void. The loan value of this Certificate increases yearly after the second year. Under the loan table shown below one dollar is taken as a basis and the loan value thereof is shown opposite the yearly periods. To find the loan value of this Certificate at any time multiply the face value by the loan value on one dollar shown opposite the number of years corresponding to the number of years that have elapsed from the effective date of the Certificate.

**TABLE OF LOAN VALUES ON THIS CERTIFICATE**

44 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		5 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		6 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		7 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		8 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		9 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		10 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		11 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		12 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00		13 LOAN BASIS PER \$1.00			
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3	.13289	6	.23839	9	.34777	12	.48390	15	.64127	18	.82860	21	.93359	24	.99993	27	1.00000	30	1.00000	33	1.00000
4	.15645	7	.26651	10	.39108	13	.53359	16	.69984	19	.89000	22	.99993	25	1.00000	28	1.00000	31	1.00000	34	1.00000

Neither this Certificate nor any sum payable to a veteran, or to his estate, or to any beneficiary under this Certificate, nor proceeds of any loan made on this Certificate shall be subject to attachment, levy or seizure under any legal or equitable process, or to National or State taxation.

All rights under this Certificate are effective from the first day of **MARCH**, 19 **31**.

Age **44** Given at the Central Office of the United States Veterans Bureau, in the city of Washington, District of Columbia, this **FIRST** day of **MARCH**, One Thousand Nine Hundred and **THIRTY ONE**.

No. **3705470**

*George E. Smith*  
Director, United States Veterans Bureau.



SPECIAL UNEMPLOYMENT ISSUE

Price 25 Cents

# VETERANS' SERVICE MAGAZINE

NATIONAL EX-SERVICE MENS' HELPING HAND

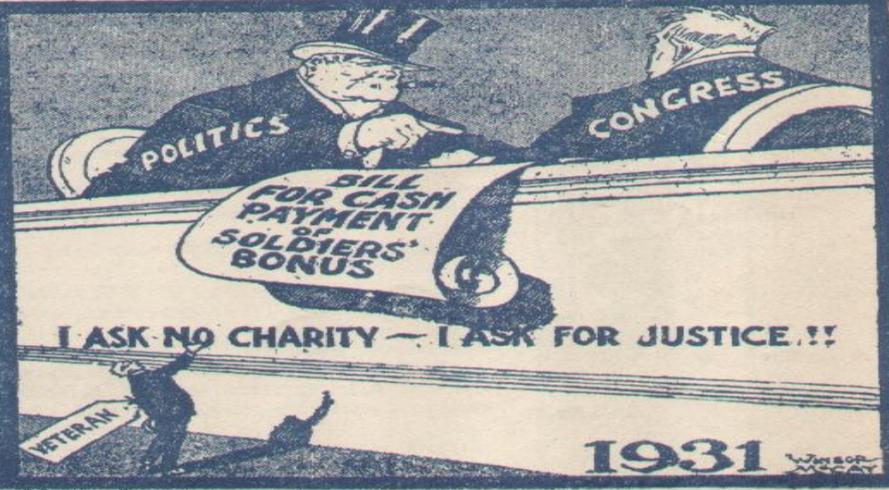
WRITE YOUR  
SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN

THEN

AND

NOW

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S. V. Anderson, Inc.



FAVORING BONUS CASH PAYMENT

THE JOBLESS MUST EAT

**NEGRO RANK and FILE WHITE**

# VETERANS MARCH TO WASHINGTON

TO ARRIVE AT OPENING OF CONGRESS  
**DECEMBER 5th, 1932**  
 TO DEMAND  
**CASH PAYMENT of BONUS**

**MARCH TO BE LED BY RANK AND FILE VETERANS**

Again the veterans are going to march to Washington, to demand immediate full cash payment of the Bonus! This time we will have fighting leadership that won't sell us out. Why are we going to march? Let's see.

**A WINTER OF HUNGER FACES THE VETERANS**

Cold, brutal winter is now on us. Over a million and a half unemployed veterans are hungry; hundreds of thousands of us have no shelter. And there will be more of us in that fix

**RANK AND FILE VETERANS, MARCH TO WASHINGTON!**

All Veterans March to Washington! Veterans' organizations, elect Bonus Marchers. All rank and file veterans, including employed and unemployed veterans, should elect delegated Bonus Marchers. Veterans from shops, mills, mines, factories and Bonus marchers should be elected ship in labor, fraternal and social organizations.

**ELECT CITY RANK AND FILE**

corbis.



A WESTERN LEADER

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UNSWOOD UNDERWOOD

# B.F.F.



## COMING FOR JUSTICE

## EASTWARD HO!

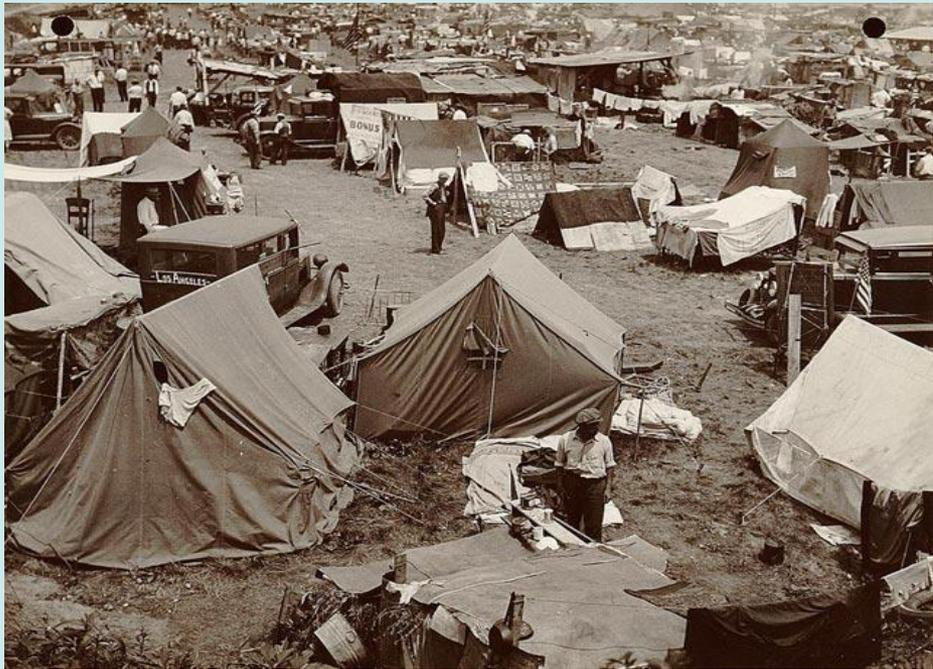


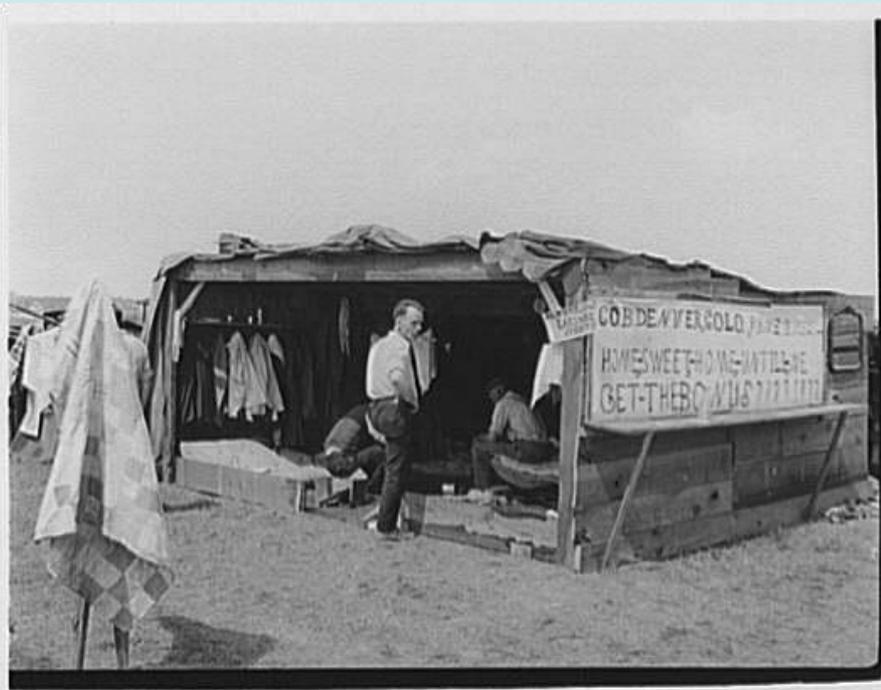
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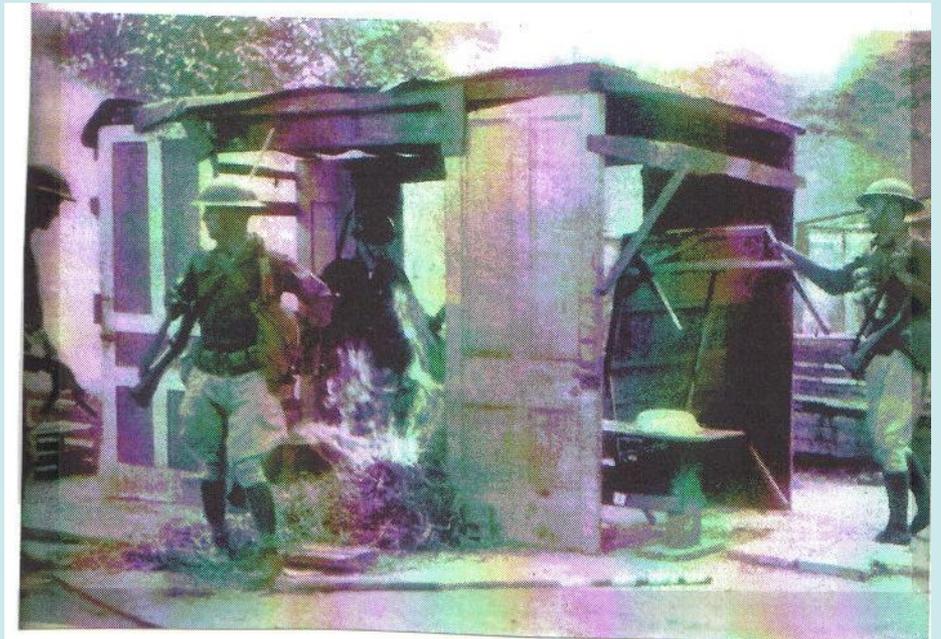
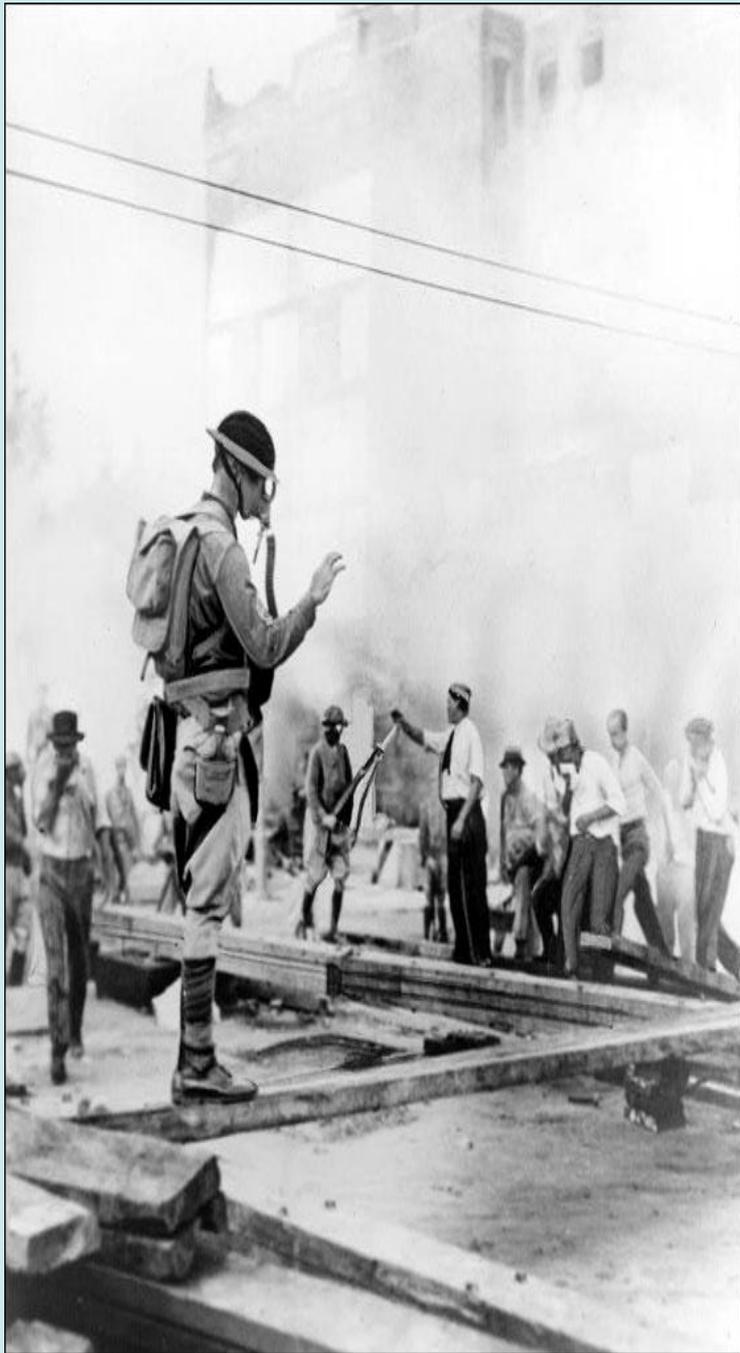








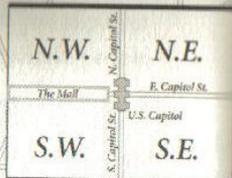
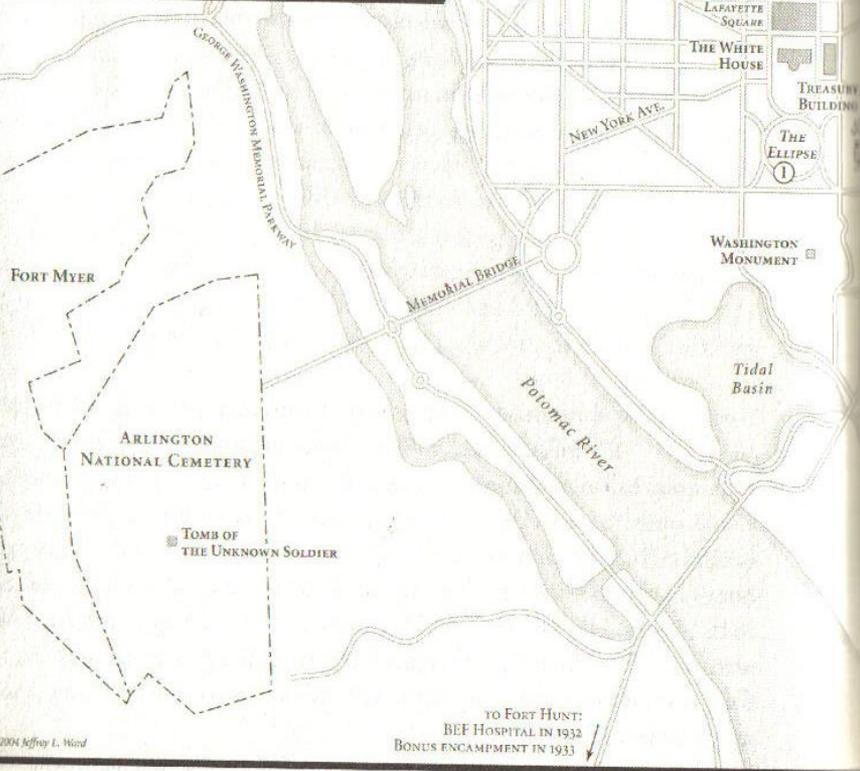




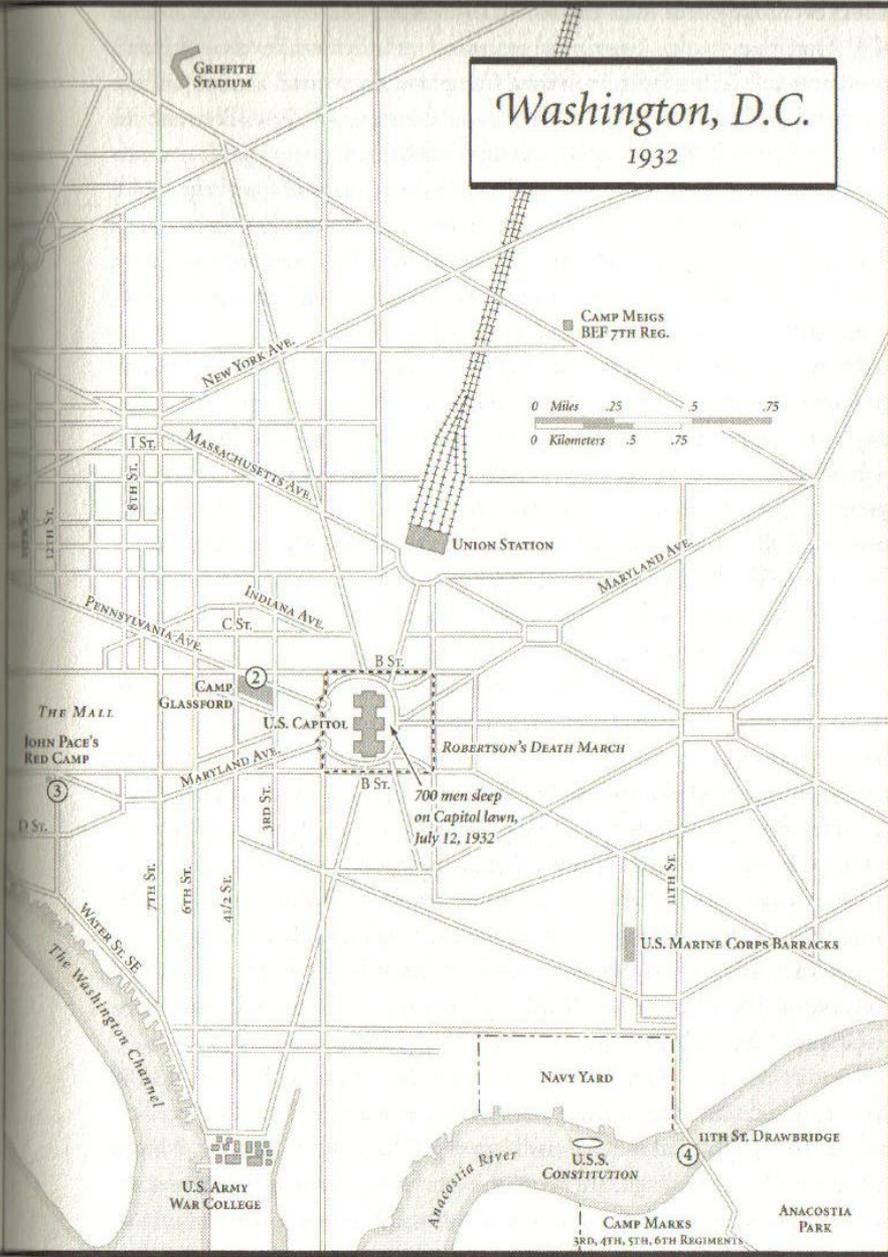


KEY TO THE EVENTS OF JULY 28, 1932

- ① The staging point for the troops from Fort Myer before marching down Pennsylvania Avenue.
- ② Camp Glassford, the site of clashes between the Bonus Army and the police, where Hushka was killed and Carlson fatally wounded. Later in the day this will become the first site from which the veterans are expelled by the Army.
- ③ The Red Camp, site of the second expulsion.
- ④ The 11th St. Bridge crossed by MacArthur for the eviction of the veterans and their families from Camp Marks, Anacostia Park.



**Washington, D.C.**  
1932



- Herbert Hoover President of the United States
- Pelham Glassford Police Chief in Washington DC
- General Douglas MacArthur Commander of United States Military
- Major Dwight Eisenhower Assistant to General MacArthur
- Patrick Hurley Secretary of War
- Walter Waters Leader of the Bonus Marchers
- General George Van Horn Moseley General MacArthur's Chief of Staff
- John Pace Leader of the Communist Protesters

President  
Herbert  
Hoover



General Douglas  
MacArthur



DC Police  
Commissioner  
Pelham  
Glassford



**Source 1: This telegram was sent during the height of the Bonus March on the day of their forced removal.**

Washington, D. C.  
July 28, 1932  
2:55 P.M.

TO: General Douglas MacArthur, Chief of Staff, U. S. Army.

The President has just informed me that the civil government of the District of Columbia has reported to him that it is unable to maintain law and order in the District.

You will have United State troops proceed immediately to the scene of disorder. Cooperate fully with the District of Columbia police force which is now in charge. Surround the affected area and clear it without delay.

Turn over all prisoners to the civil authorities.

In your orders insist that any women and children who may be in the affected area be accorded every consideration and kindness. Use all humanity consistent with the due execution of this order.

PATRICK J. HURLEY

Secretary of War

**Source 2: This Presidential Press Release was issued on July 29, 1932, and was delivered the day after the Bonus Army was forcibly removed from Washington.**

- July 29, 1932

The President said:

"A challenge to the authority of the United States Government has been met, swiftly and firmly.

"After months of patient indulgence, the Government met overt lawlessness as it always must be met if the cherished processes of self-government are to be preserved. We cannot tolerate the abuse of Constitutional rights by those who would destroy all government, no matter who they may be. Government cannot be coerced by mob rule.

"The Department of Justice is pressing its investigation into the violence which forced the call for Army detachments, and it is my sincere hope that those agitators who inspired yesterday's attack upon the Federal authority may be brought speedily to trial in the civil courts. There can be no safe harbor in the United States of America for violence.

"Order and civil tranquility are the first requisites in the great task of economic reconstruction to which our whole people now are devoting their heroic and noble energies. This national effort must not be retarded in even the slightest degree by organized lawlessness. The first obligation of my office is to uphold and defend the Constitution and the authority of the law. This I propose always to do."

**Source 3: Dwight Eisenhower, At Ease: Stories I Tell To Friends. 1967. A memoir published 26 years after the removal of the Bonus Army.**

As quickly as the order was announced to us, General MacArthur decided that he should go into active command in the field. . . I told him that the matter could easily become a riot and I thought it highly inappropriate for the Chief of Staff of the Army to be involved in anything like a local or street-corner embroilment. (Of course, this was no "street-corner" matter -- but it still did not require the presence of the Chief of Staff in the streets)\* General MacArthur disagreed, saying that it was a question of Federal authority in the District of Columbia, and because of his belief that there was "incipient revolution in the air," as he called it, he paid no attention to my dissent.

Instructions were received from the Secretary of War, who said he was speaking for the President, which forbade any troops to cross the bridge into the largest encampment of veterans, on the open ground beyond the bridge.

These instructions were brought to the troop by Colonel Wright, Secretary of the General Staff, and then by General Mosely of the Assistant Secretary's office. In neither instance did General MacArthur hear these instructions. He said he was too busy and did not want either himself or his staff bothered by people coming down and pretending to bring orders.

**Source 4: Excerpt from General George Van Horn Moseley's unpublished autobiography, One Soldier's Journey. Gen. Moseley was Deputy Chief of Staff in 1932. The selection below was probably written between the years 1936 and 1938.**

Sometime after the troops had completed their mission on Pennsylvania Avenue, and before they crossed the Anacostia Bridge with the view of cleaning out the camp on the other side, Mr. Hurley, the Secretary of War, directed me to inform General MacArthur that the President did not wish the troops to cross the bridge that night, to force the evacuation of the Anacostia Camp. I left my office, contacted General MacArthur, and as we walked away, alone, from the others, I delivered that message to him and discussed it with him. He was very much annoyed in having his plans interfered with in any way until they were executed completely. After assuring myself that he understood the message, I left him. As I told him, I was only instructed to deliver the message to him, and having done that I returned to my office. Later I was asked from the White House if I had delivered the message, and assured that I had. Still later, I was instructed to repeat the message and assure myself that General MacArthur received it before he crossed the Anacostia Bridge. I sent Colonel Clement B. Wright, then Secretary to the General Staff, to repeat the message to MacArthur, and explain the situation as I had it from the White House. Colonel Wright contacted General MacArthur immediately, and explained the situation to him fully. As I now recall, Colonel Wright reported to me that the troops had not crossed the Anacostia Bridge, but were advancing on, the bridge. In any event, General MacArthur went on with his plan, carrying it through, compelling the complete evacuation of the large Anacostia Camp, which held most of the veterans. A mission of this kind is a very disagreeable one for the Army, but it was executed with precision and efficiency, and entirely without bloodshed.

## **Source 5: Douglas MacArthur's *Reminiscences*, 1964. A Memoir published 32 years after the removal of the Bonus Army.**

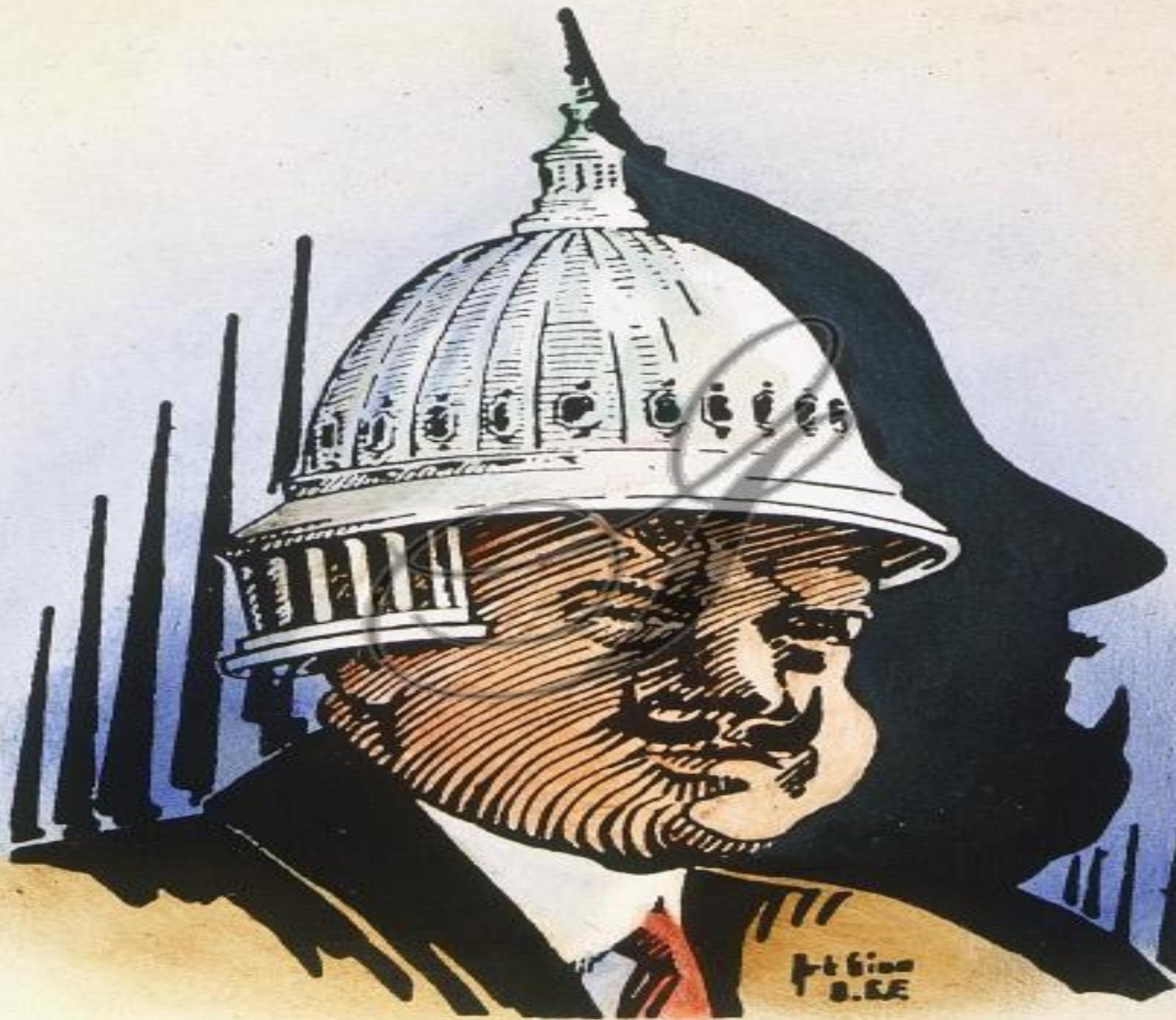
For two fruitless months the (bonus marchers) lived in abject squalor making their daily marches to the Capitol, to the White House, and to all of the sacrosanct federal buildings where they hoped to loosen the purse strings of government. In the end, their frustration, combined with careful needling by the Communists, turned them in a sullen, riotous mob.

Through the month of June the tension mounted. . . . At night, morose men squatted by burning campfires listening silently to the endless speeches, always tinged with the increasing violence of Communist propaganda.

The (bonus march) was actually far deeper and more dangerous than an effort to secure funds from a nearly depleted federal treasury. The American Communist Party planned a riot of such proportions that it was hoped the United-States Army, in its efforts to maintain peace, would have to fire on the marchers. In this way, the Communists hoped to incite revolutionary action. Red organizers infiltrated the veteran groups and presently took command from their unwitting leaders.

As the violence increased, Pelham Glassford . . . twice consulted with me about calling on the Army for assistance. Both times I advised against it. But on July 28th the crisis was reached. A mob of 5,000 strong began to move up Pennsylvania Avenue toward the Treasury Building and the White House. The police were outnumbered five to one. Glassford was mauled and stripped of his police superintendent's gold badge, gunfire broke out, two men were killed, and a score or more badly injured. It was evident that the situation had gotten beyond the control of the local authorities.

Not a shot was fired, (by the federal troops). The sticks, clubs, and stones of the rioters were met only by tear gas and steady pressure. By 9:30 p.m. the area was cleared as far as the Anacostia Flats. The show of force, the excellent discipline of the troops, and the proper use of tear gas had turned the trick without serious bloodshed. At Anacostia Flats I received word from the Secretary of War, as we were in the midst of crossing the river, to suspend the operation at my discretion. I halted the command as soon as we had cleared the bridge, but at that moment the rioters set fire to their own camp. This concluded the proceedings for the night.



Ft Gino  
B.S.E

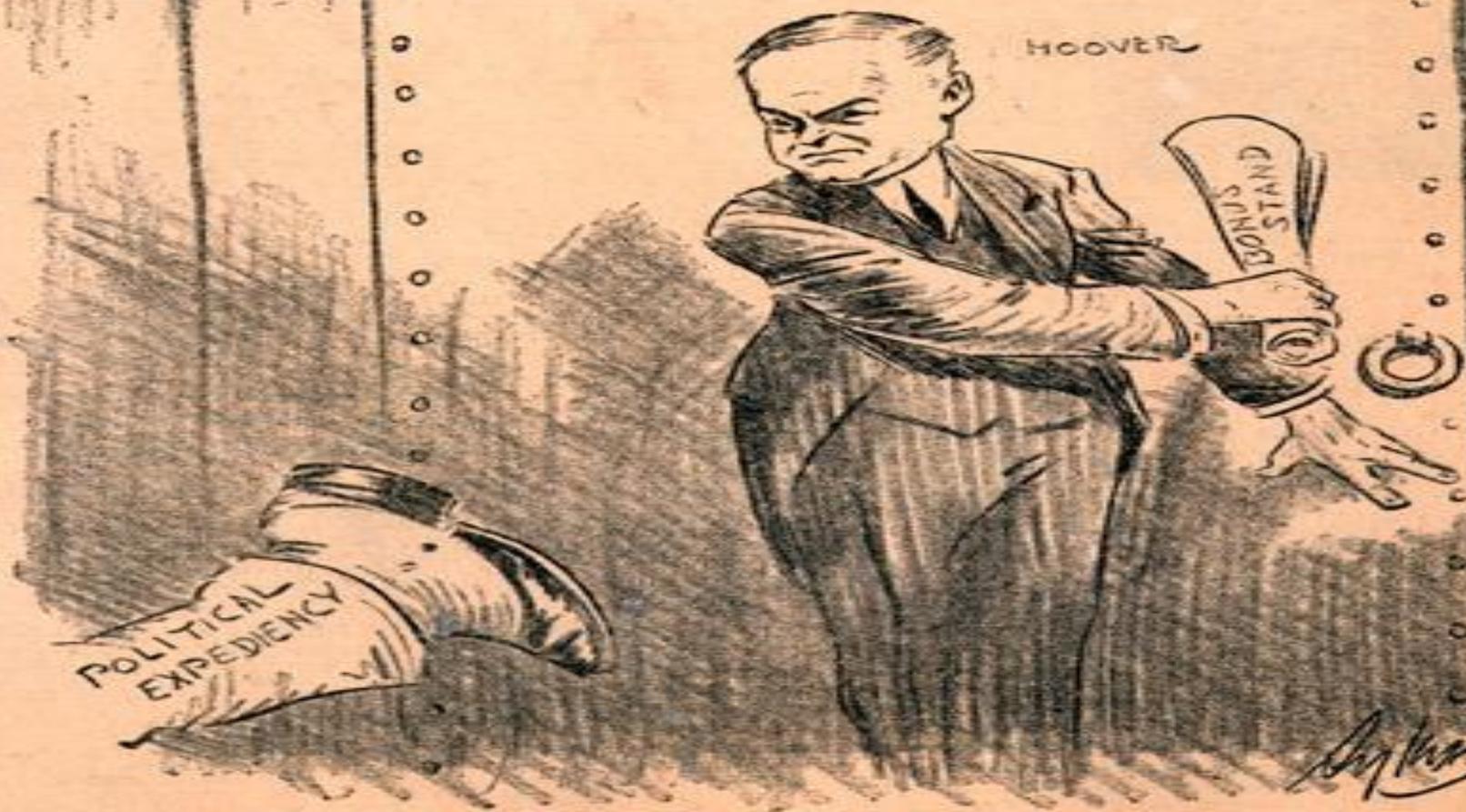
Well Done!

*Reflex Post 15 Sept 1932*

By Sykes

U.S.  
TREASURY

HOOVER



***The Memoirs of Herbert Hoover: Volume 3: 1929-1941, The Great Depression. Macmillan Company, 1952***

Probably the greatest coup of all was the distortion of the story of the Bonus March on Washington in July 1932...Many Democratic speakers in the campaign of 1932 implied that I had murdered veterans on the streets of Washington.

The story was kept alive for twenty years. I, therefore, deal with it at greater length than would otherwise be warranted. As abundantly proved later on, the march was in considerable part organized and promoted by the Communists and included a large number of hoodlums and ex-convicts determined to raise a public disturbance. ...In the midst of this riot the District Commissioners, upon Glassford's urging, appealed to me. They declared that they could not preserve order in the Capital, that the police were greatly outnumbered, and were being overwhelmed. With the same right of call on me as municipalities have on the governor of any state, they asked for military assistance to restore order. At my direction to Secretary of War Hurley, General Douglas MacArthur was directed to take charge. General Eisenhower (then Colonel [actually major]) was second in command. Without firing a shot or injuring a single person, they cleaned up the situation. Certain of my directions to the Secretary of War, however, were not carried out. Those directions limited action to seeing to it that the disturbing factions returned to their camps outside the business district. I did not wish them driven from their camps, as I proposed that the next day we would surround the camps and determine more accurately the number of Communists and ex-convicts among the marchers. Our military officers, however, having them on the move, pushed them outside the District of Columbia...

...The misrepresentation of the bonus incident for political purposes surpassed any similar action in American history. Not only did Roosevelt use the incident in the 1932 campaign, but Democratic orators also continued to use it for twenty years after, despite all the refutations and proof to the contrary. I was portrayed as a murderer and an enemy of the veterans. A large part of the veterans believe to this day that men who served their country in war were shot down in the streets of Washington by the Regular Army at my orders — yet not a shot was fired or a person injured after the Federal government took charge...



UNITED STATES SAVINGS BOND

200

200

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TWO HUNDRED DOLLARS

ISSUE DATE  
WHICH IS THE FIRST DAY OF



To

MR. AND MRS. AMERICA

EVERYWHERE

U. S. A.

MONTHS      YEARS

ISSUING AGENT'S

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1882      1945

"EVERY SINGLE MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD IS A PARTNER IN THE MOST TREMENDOUS UNDERSTANDING OF NEW AMERICAN HISTORY"

THIS BOND IS ISSUED UNDER AUTHORITY OF THE SECOND LIBERTY BOND ACT, AS AMENDED, AND IS SUBJECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS STATED ON THE BACK HEREOF. IT WILL BE VALID ONLY WHEN ENSCRIBED AND DATED, AND DELIVERED BY AN AUTHORIZED AGENT WITH RECEIPT OF PAYMENT THEREFOR.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT  
WASHINGTON



Morganthau Jr.  
Secretary of the Treasury

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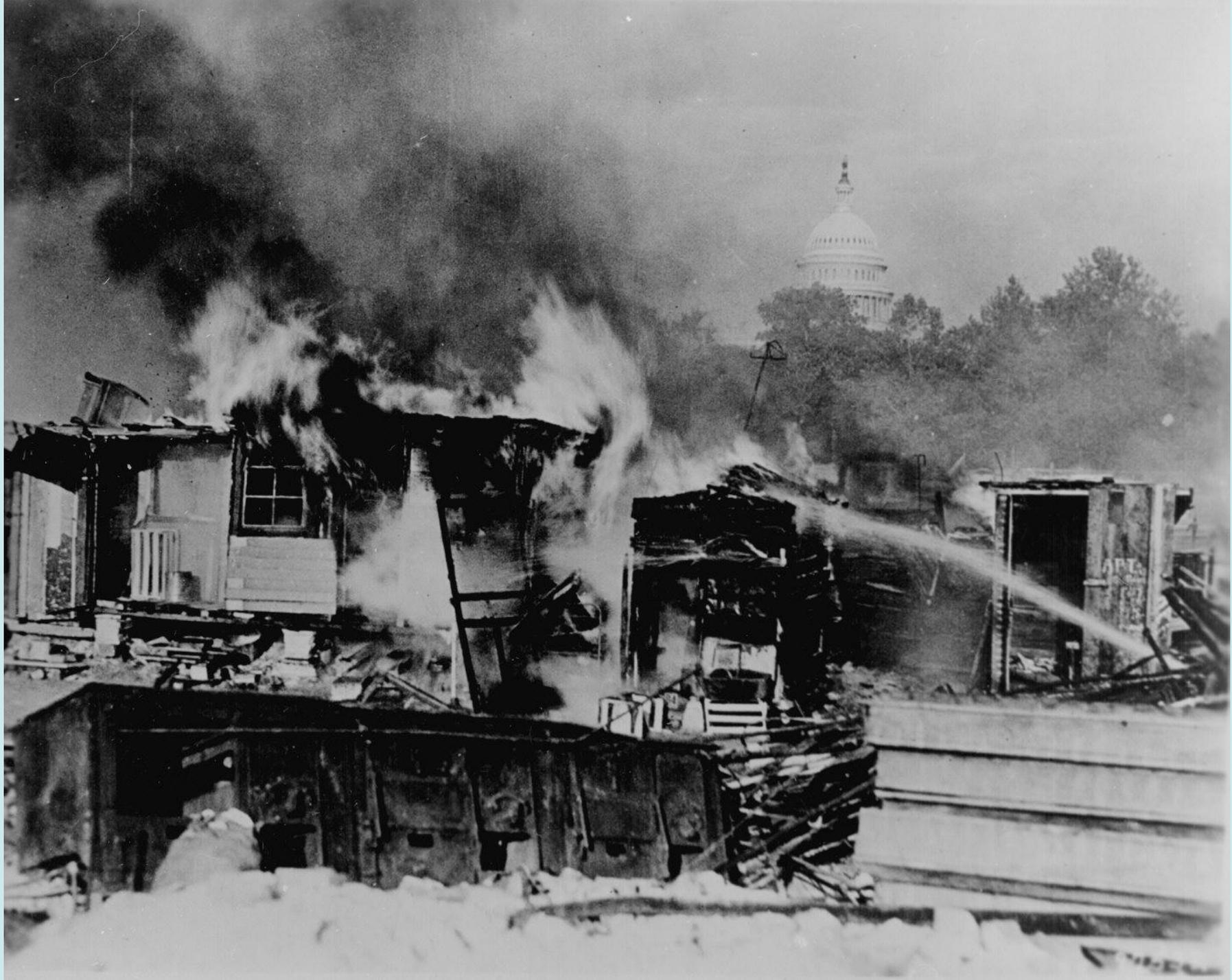
NON-NEGOTIABLE



NO BUILDING  
IN PROGRESS

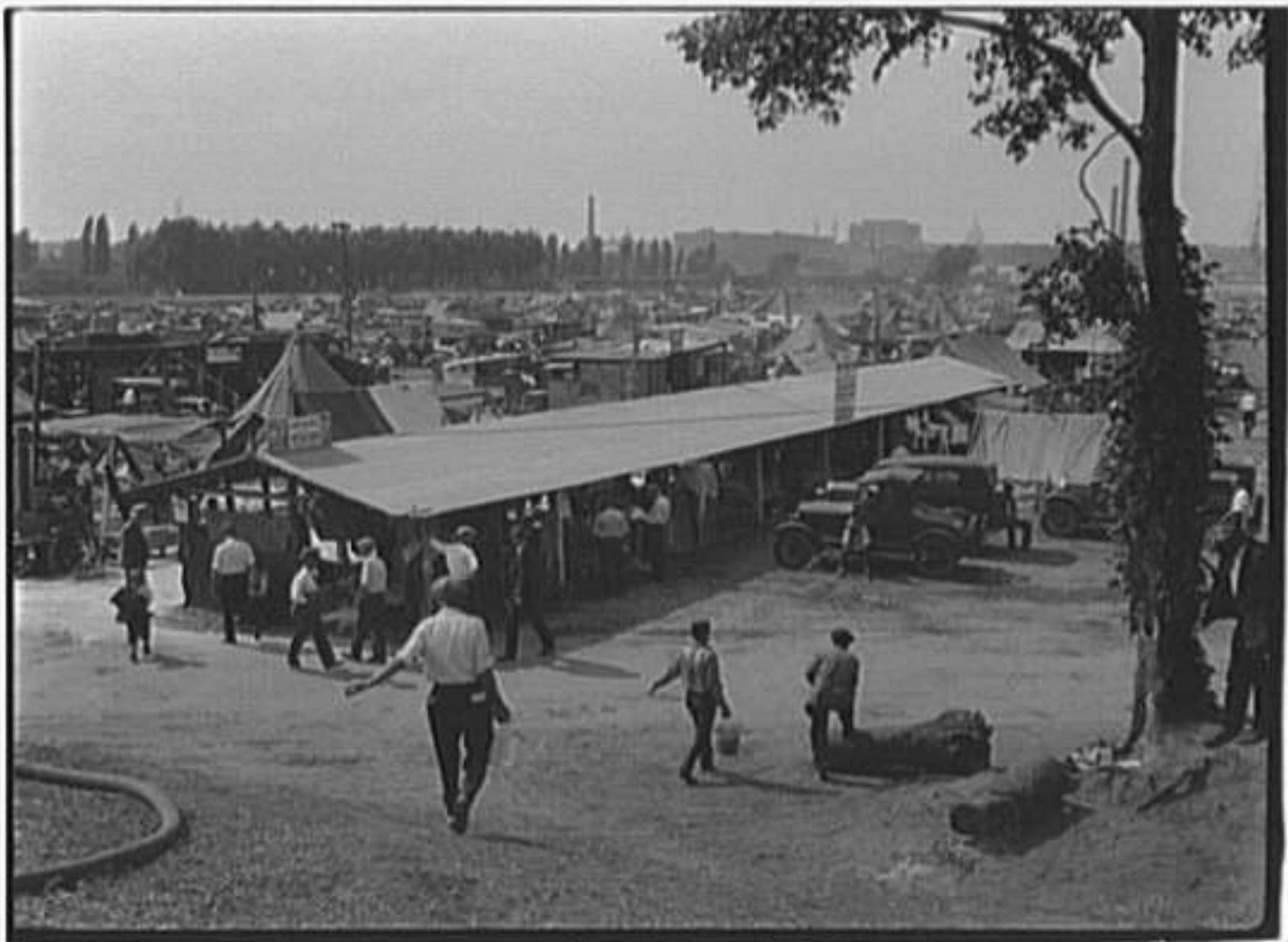
Penn Ave Camp  
So. Div. B.E.F.  
Dec 6-27-32

#1  
Block bounded by Penn Ave., 3d & 4 1/2 Sts. N.W.



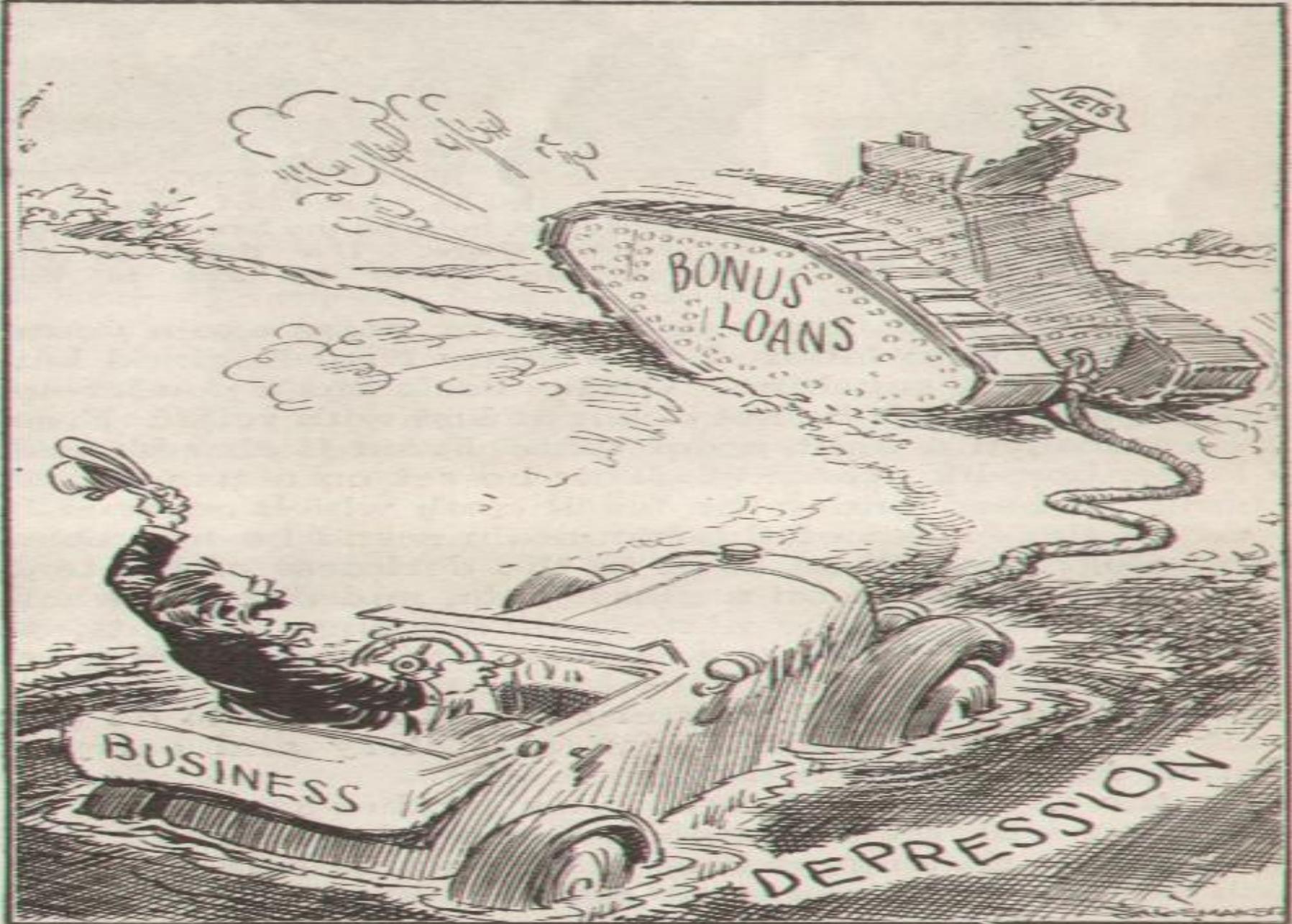












IF IT ONLY WORKS

By Shoemaker, in the *Chicago Daily News*



