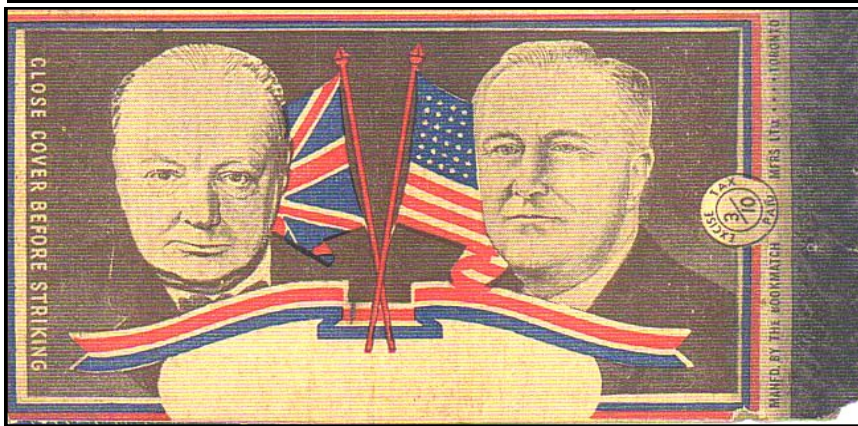


Churchill-



Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945) - Roosevelt entered politics in 1910 and was elected to the New York State Senate as a Democrat. He was reelected in 1912, and supported Woodrow Wilson at the Democratic Convention. Wilson appointed him Assistant Secretary of the Navy, 1913-1920. An energetic, efficient administrator, he

specialized in the business side of naval administration, preparing him for his future role in World War II. His popularity and success resulted in his nomination for vice-president by Democrats in 1920. However, popular sentiment against Wilson's plan for US participation in the League of Nations propelled Republican Warren Harding into the presidency, and Roosevelt returned to private life.

In 1921, Roosevelt contracted poliomyelitis. Despite courageous efforts to overcome his crippling illness, he never regained the use of his legs. In time, he established a foundation to help other polio victims, and inspired and directed the March of Dimes program that eventually funded a vaccine.

In 1928, Gov. Alfred E. Smith became the Democratic candidate for president and arranged for Roosevelt's nomination to succeed him as governor of New York. Smith lost the election to Herbert Hoover; but Roosevelt was elected governor. Following his reelection in 1930, Roosevelt began to campaign for the presidency. Roosevelt's bold efforts to combat the Depression in New York enhanced his reputation. In 1932, Roosevelt won the nomination as the Democratic Party candidate for president. His activist approach and personal charm helped defeat Hoover by seven million votes.

The Depression worsened in the months preceding the inauguration in 1933. Factory closings, farm foreclosures, and bank failures increased, while unemployment soared. Roosevelt faced the greatest crisis in American history since the Civil War. He undertook immediate actions to initiate his New Deal. To halt depositor panics, he closed the banks temporarily. Then he worked with Congress to pass recovery legislation which set up agencies such as the AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Administration) to support farm prices and the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) to employ young men. Other agencies assisted business and labor, insured bank deposits, regulated the stock market, subsidized home and farm mortgage payments, and aided the unemployed. These measures revived confidence in



the economy. Banks reopened and direct relief saved millions from starvation. But the New Deal measures also involved government directly in areas of social and economic life as never before and resulted in greatly increased spending and unbalanced budgets, which led to criticisms of his programs. However, the nation-at-large supported Roosevelt and elected additional Democrats to state legislatures and governorships. Another flurry of New Deal legislation followed in 1935, including establishment of the Works Projects Administration (WPA) which provided jobs for laborers and many others, and the Social Security Act which provided unemployment compensation and a program of old-age and survivors' benefits.

Roosevelt: II

Roosevelt easily defeated Alfred Landon in 1936 and went on to defeat Wendell Willkie in 1940 and Thomas E. Dewey in 1944, becoming the only president to serve more than two terms.

After his overwhelming victory in 1936, Roosevelt took on the Supreme Court, which had declared various legislation unconstitutional, and members of his own party. He proposed adding new justices to the Court, but critics said he was "packing" the Court and undermining the separation of powers. His proposal was defeated, but the Court began to decide in favor of New Deal legislation. During the 1938 election, he campaigned against many Democratic opponents, but this backfired when most were reelected to Congress. These setbacks, coupled with the recession that occurred midway through his second term, represented the low-point in his career. By 1939, Roosevelt was focusing more on foreign affairs with the outbreak of war in Europe. Reform legislation diminished, and the Depression would not fully abate until the nation mobilized for war.

When the war started in 1939, Roosevelt stated that, although neutral, America couldn't remain inactive in the face of Nazi aggression. Accordingly, he tried to make American aid available to Britain, France, and China. He also took measures to build up the military in the face of isolationism.

With the fall of France in 1940, the American mood and Roosevelt's policy changed dramatically. Congress enacted a military draft and Roosevelt signed a "lend-lease" bill in 1941 to furnish aid to nations at war with the Axis. America, though still neutral, was becoming the "arsenal of democracy", as its factories began producing as they had in the years before the Depression. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, in December, brought the nation irrevocably into the war. Roosevelt worked with and through his military advisers, overriding them when necessary, and took an active role in choosing the principal field commanders and in making decisions regarding wartime strategy.

He put through "The Declaration of the United Nations," 1942, in which all nations fighting the Axis agreed not to make a separate peace and pledged a peacekeeping organization (now the UN) upon victory. He gave priority to the western European front and had General George Marshall plan a holding operation in the Pacific and organize an expeditionary force for an invasion of Europe. America and its allies invaded North Africa in November 1942 and Sicily and Italy in 1943. The D-Day landings on Normandy, June 6, 1944, were followed by the allied invasion of Germany six months later. By April 1945 victory in Europe was certain.

The unending stress and strain literally wore Roosevelt out. During a vacation at Warm Springs, Georgia, on April 12, 1945, he suffered a massive stroke and died without regaining consciousness. He was 63 years old. His death came on the eve of complete military victory in Europe and within months of victory over Japan. He was buried in the Rose Garden of his estate at Hyde Park, New York. [<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/fdrbio.html>]

