Franklin Delano Roosevelt, commonly known by his initials FDR, was the 32nd President of the United States and the only president to be elected to four terms in office, serving from 1933 until his death in 1945. His unprecedented length of service was a result of the extraordinary challenges he faced, including the Great Depression and World War II. Roosevelt's leadership during these tumultuous times reshaped the American government and its role in the economy through the New Deal, a series of programs, public work projects, financial reforms, and regulations. The New Deal included the creation of the Social Security system, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the FDIC, fundamentally transforming American society. Before becoming president, Roosevelt faced a personal crisis that would shape his character and political style. In 1921, at the age of 39, he contracted poliomyelitis, which resulted in permanent paralysis from the waist down. Despite his disability, Roosevelt refused to retire from public life. He taught himself to walk short distances in braces and was careful to be seen standing or sitting in public, to avoid the perception of helplessness. His struggle with polio and his determination to overcome it inspired many and helped forge a connection with the American people, who saw in him a fighter who would not give up in the face of adversity. Roosevelt's foreign policy before World War II was marked by a strong commitment to isolationism, reflecting the mood of the American public. However, as the threat of fascism grew in Europe, he began to push for greater support for the Allies, navigating the delicate balance between public opinion and the need to prepare for a possible conflict. This led to initiatives such as the Lend-Lease Act, which allowed the U.S. to supply military aid to foreign nations during the war, and ultimately changed the course of American foreign policy from isolationism to internationalism, setting the stage for the United States' role as a global superpower after the war. Roosevelt was a masterful communicator, using the emerging technology of radio to speak directly to the American people through his 'Fireside Chats.' These informal talks made complex issues accessible and were crucial in building public support for his New Deal policies and later for the war effort. His reassuring voice and conversational style made listeners feel as if the president were in their living room, discussing the nation's problems like a neighbor. The Fireside Chats are considered a pioneering moment in the use of mass media for political communication. FDR's leadership style was characterized by his willingness to experiment during the Great Depression. He famously said, 'It is common sense to take a method and try it. If it fails, admit it frankly and try another. But above all, try something.' This approach led to the New Deal's 'alphabet soup' of agencies, such as the WPA (Works Progress Administration), which provided jobs for millions of Americans, and the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps), which put young men to work on environmental conservation projects. This pragmatic and experimental mindset helped to stabilize the economy and provided relief to suffering Americans. In international affairs, Roosevelt played a pivotal role in the planning of the United Nations, even though he did not live to see its official establishment. His vision for a post-war world in which nations worked together to prevent future conflicts laid the groundwork for the UN's creation. The Atlantic Charter, a policy statement issued in 1941 that defined the Allied goals for the post-war world, was a key step in this process and is considered a foundational document for the United Nations. Roosevelt faced significant opposition from the Supreme Court to his New Deal programs, with several key components being struck down as unconstitutional. In response, he proposed the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937, which would have allowed him to appoint up to six additional justices to the Court. This 'court-packing' plan was met with widespread criticism and was seen as an attempt to undermine the judiciary's independence, ultimately failing to pass. However, the political pressure did result in the Court becoming more receptive to New Deal legislation. Roosevelt's tenure saw significant advancements in civil rights, although it was a complex and often contentious part of his legacy. While he supported some measures that benefited African Americans and other minority groups, he also made compromises that upheld segregationist policies to maintain support from Southern Democrats. Notably, his wife Eleanor Roosevelt became a vocal advocate for civil rights and often pushed the administration towards greater racial equality. The contradictions of his civil rights record reflect the deep-seated tensions in American society at the time. FDR's relationship with the press was a balancing act of accessibility and control. He held more press conferences than any president before or since, meeting with reporters twice a week, but also imposed strict rules that allowed him to manage the narrative. Reporters were not allowed to quote him directly without his permission, a practice that enabled Roosevelt to test out ideas and gauge reaction without committing to a position. This strategy helped him maintain a positive public image and keep the press on his side for most of his presidency. Franklin D. Roosevelt's death on April 12, 1945, came just months into his fourth term and only weeks before the surrender of Germany in World War II. He died of a cerebral hemorrhage while at the 'Little White House,' his retreat in Warm Springs, Georgia, a place where he had found relief for his polio symptoms. Vice President Harry S. Truman was sworn in to succeed him, inheriting the final stages of the war and the complex task of rebuilding the post-war world. Roosevelt's sudden death shocked the nation and marked the end of an era in American politics.