Role Of Federal Government

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Introduction

The United States is a nation founded on the principles of freedom and the individual's sanctity. These principles are the very basis of the high global status that the country holds. In this context, the government of the United States, headed by the president, ensures the provision of these basic rights to its citizens. The American Declaration of Independence sets the guidelines for governing the American lands. The United States is a democratic country that ensures the safety and security of the citizens all the while ensuring their liberty and freedom. Throughout history, U.S. Presidents and their policies have played an important role in transforming the ideas about the role of the federal government in the lives of American citizens.

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Franklin Delano Roosevelt has the honor of being the President for the longest tenure, from 1933 to 1945. He played a crucial role in changing American society and politics. His tenure was marked by the Great Depression and the devastation of the Second World War, with Germany and Japan on the rise. All these circumstances and Roosevelt's presidential policies in response to them make him an important figure in the history of the United States. His introduction of the "New Deal" in response to the Great Depression can be regarded as the foremost form of a system of social welfare. The economic recession had adversely affected American society, with a vast majority of men out of jobs, which in turn impacted their families as they suffered from hunger and deprivation. The policies introduced by Roosevelt in the form of the New Deal were meant to counter the recession. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was established as a result, providing 500 million U.S. dollars for the relief of the citizens. On the same note, Roosevelt also focused on providing jobs to the enormous population of the unemployed through the Civil Works Administration.

The Wagner Act, introduced in 1935, promoted labor unions. Furthermore, the Works Progress Administration was also established, providing jobs to the unemployed. He was responsible for the introduction of the Social Security system. Moreover, he proved himself to be an effective leader in protecting the citizens from losing their savings by establishing the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. President Roosevelt, through his policies, changed the ideas about the involvement of the federal government in the lives of the citizens.

Ronald Reagan

Ronald Reagan was elected the President of the United States in 1980, serving from 1980 to 1989. As the president, his foremost challenge was to mitigate the effects of the great economic recession. In this context, his presidential policies laid emphasis on the reduction of government spending, regulations, and taxes. He was a strong believer in the concept of the free market (National Archives, 1787).

At the time of his election, the United States was suffering from high rates of inflation and economic recession. Therefore, President Reagan took an aggressive approach to combat inflation by reducing the income tax rate of the top tax bracket from 70 to 28 percent. Similarly, the corporate tax rate was also cut from 48 to 34 percent. Moreover, his policies included a reduction in government spending as well as the deregulation of businesses and industries. The Federal Reserve was also directed to reduce the money supply to mitigate inflation.

President Reagan's measure of cutting tax rates proved to be highly effective in the growth of the gross domestic product, a trend that continued for several years. The positive effects of the economic policies are evident from the growth of the American economy during his time, with a growth in 1983 of 4.6 percent, 7.3 in 1984 and 4.2 in 1985. This economic growth, in turn, assisted in reducing unemployment in the country. His deregulation of prices and the introduction of the free market were also applauded as an important step towards stabilizing the American economy. Thus, as an effective president, Reagan played a vital role in transforming the role of the federal government.

Barack Obama

Barack Obama was the first African American to be elected as the President of the United States. Serving from 2009 to 2017, his tenure saw profound changes in social, technological and demographic spheres. He firmly believed in the equality of all human beings, thus playing a pivotal role in the civil rights of the citizens. Also, he focused on the medical needs of the citizens and introduced Obamacare (Library of Congress, n.d.).

At the time of his election and assuming office, the United States economy was in a precarious position. The economic recession resulted in millions of U.S. citizens losing their jobs and homes. Hence, one of the first steps taken by President Obama was to introduce a stimulus package of 800 million U.S. dollars. This measure proved highly effective in reducing the rate of unemployment from 10 percent in the initial days of his tenure to less than 5 percent today. Moreover, he was also responsible for improving the global image of the United States, especially in the nations of Europe. The invasion of Iraq, led by his predecessor, had tarnished the American image.

Moreover, during his tenure, numerous social issues were brought to the forefront. Marijuana was legalized in eight American states. In terms of social issues of equality, President Obama's policies

were successful in overturning the previous ban on same-sex marriage. As a result, marriage equality was ensured through the legalization of same-sex marriage all across the United States. Thus, President Obama and his policies can be regarded as vital in changing the ideas about the involvement of the federal government in the lives of U.S. citizens.

Conclusion

Throughout the history of the U.S., the role of the government has evolved. Over the passage of time, the federal government has had an increasing role in U.S. citizens' lives. President Roosevelt was the first one to introduce a social welfare system and made the government responsible for the social welfare of the citizens. Similarly, Presidents Reagan and Obama also played important roles in defining the federal government's role in the lives of American citizens (National Archives, n.d.).

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