



In 1940, Franklin D. Roosevelt decided to run for an unprecedented third term, breaking the tradition set by George Washington that limited Presidents to eight years in office. The election of 1940 was happening as the United States was emerging from the Great Depression and World War II was raging in Europe. Roosevelt said:

“With the situation in Europe getting worse by the day and our own economy still struggling to regain its prosperity I feel it is unwise to switch horses midstream.”

The election was another victory for FDR, but was much closer than suggested by the results. Roosevelt won with 27 million votes, Wendell Wilkie had 22 million. Many isolationists voted for Wilkie because they felt FDR was pulling us into the war in Europe while others felt his decision to run for a 3<sup>rd</sup> term showed he was gaining too much power. In the end, Roosevelt believed the election again showed that the American people agreed with and they supported his New Deal.

1. Who were the candidates in the 1940 Election?
2. How many states did FDR win? How many did his opponent win?
3. Why was FDR making history in the 1940 election?
4. What did FDR mean when he said, “...it is unwise to switch horses midstream.”
5. Why was this election closer than FDR’s two previous victories?
6. What did Roosevelt feel the election results revealed?