

TEACHER'S GUIDE  
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**MISSION 5: "Up from the Dust"**

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**Article on Hoover's Veto of the Relief Bill**

*Throughout the Great Depression, Republican and Democratic politicians disagreed on how best to handle the nation's economic crisis. Democratic politicians, like Speaker of the House John Nance Garner and Senator Robert Wagner, argued that the federal government should take an active role and intervene in the Depression. The Wagner-Garner Relief Bill, which proposed spending over 2 billion dollars on unemployment relief, was an example of their position. Republican President Herbert Hoover, however, believed that the Depression would be short lived and the economy would right itself through private business and charity. The following newspaper article from 1932 outlines Hoover's reason for vetoing the unemployment bill.*

Garner Relief Bill Measure Vetoed

WASHINGTON – President Hoover today sent to Congress a prompt and vigorous veto of the \$2,122,000,000 Wagner-Garner unemployment relief bill.

The vetoed bill immediately was referred to the House Ways and Means Committee with the Democratic leadership making no attempt to override the veto.

The president's veto message was dispatched from the White House less than 10 minutes after the bill, passed by both houses in advance of this long threatened veto, had been signed by Garner and Vice-President Curtis.

Mr. Hoover said the Wagner-Garner bill "Violates every sound principle of public finance and government."

"Never before has so dangerous a suggestion been seriously made to our country," the president said.

Mr. Hoover urged enactment of a compromise relief bill which he said should be changed around the proposal he had made previously.

"With the utmost seriousness," Mr. Hoover said, "I urge the Congress to enact a relief measure but I cannot approve the measure before me, as it is with possibility of special privileges, so impractical of administration, so dangerous to public credit and damaging to our whole conception of governmental relations to the people as to bring far more distress than it will cure."

Source: "Garner Relief Bill Measure Vetoed," *Sweetwater Daily Reporter*, Sweetwater, Texas, July 11, 1932, pg. 1.

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