

July-August 2018



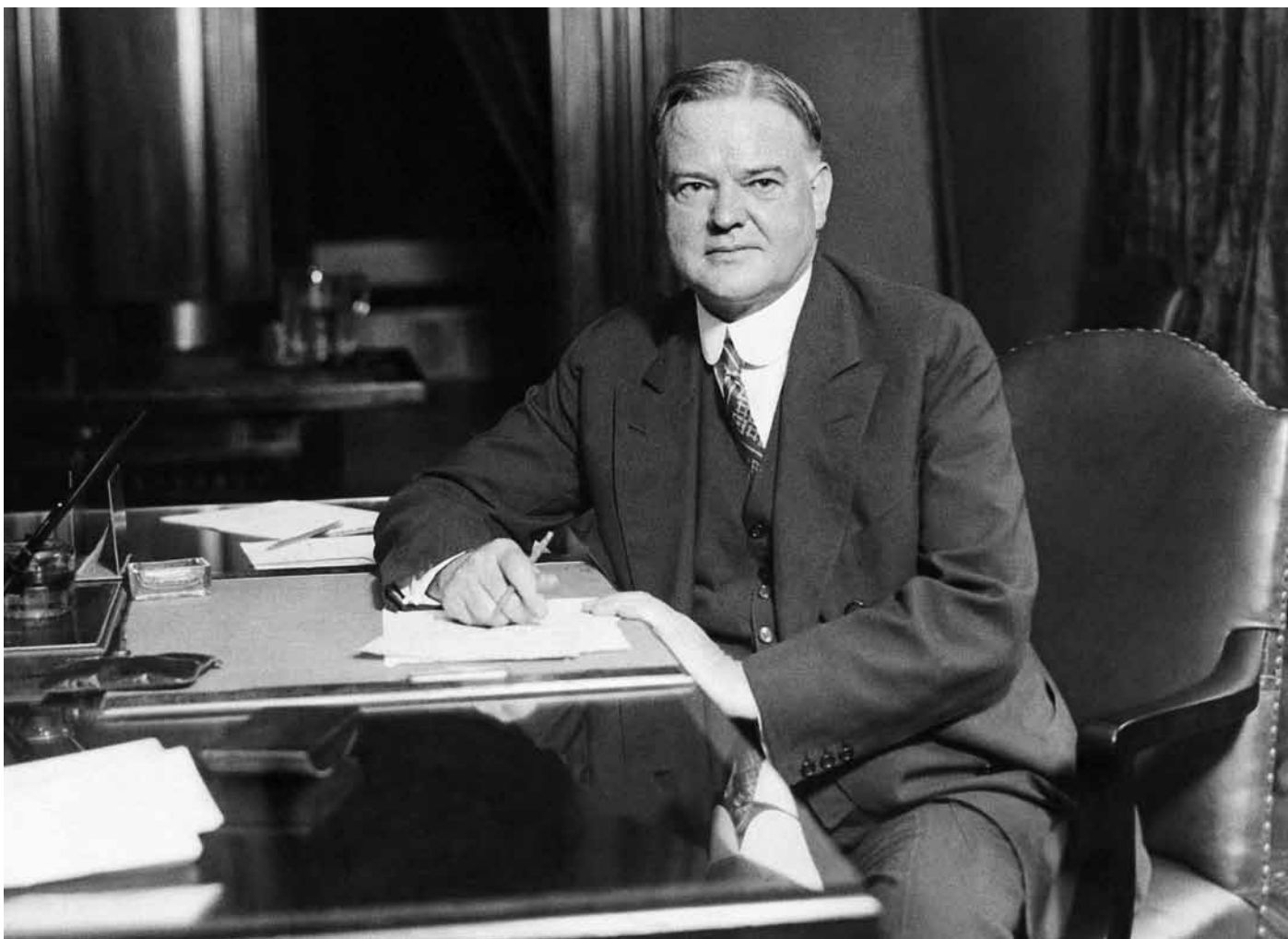
# ZOOM

in on america

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## A MAN WHO SAVED THE LIVES OF MILLIONS



*Herbert Hoover is pictured at his desk in his Washington headquarters, 1928. (AP Photo)*

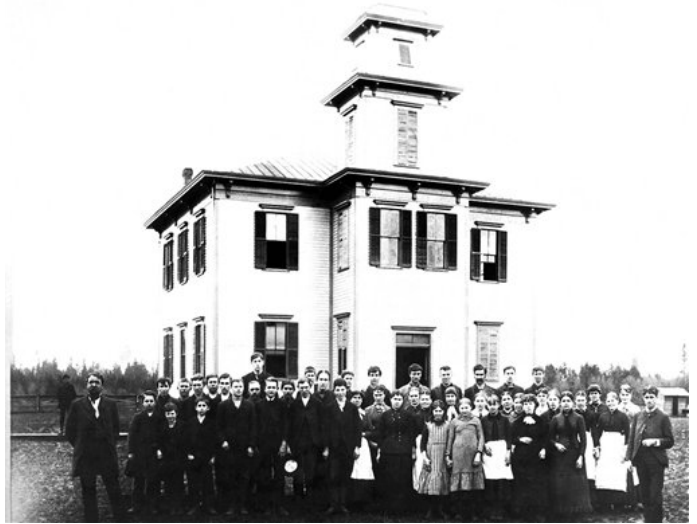
**In this issue: Herbert Hoover**

**Zoom in on America**

## Herbert Hoover: 1874 - 1964

### Early Life:

Herbert Hoover was born on August 10, 1874 in West Branch, Iowa. His family was part of a devout group of Quakers; a religious group which believes the presence of God exists in every person and values industriousness, simplicity, and honesty. His father was a blacksmith and his mother was a teacher. Unfortunately, they passed away and left him orphaned at the age of nine. He was then sent to live with his uncle in Oregon where he attended Quaker schools until ultimately becoming part of the first class to attend Stanford University. He graduated four years later with a degree in geology and set off in pursuit of a career in the mining industry as an engineer. He later went on to marry Lou Henry, fathered two sons, and became a multimillionaire by creating mining businesses throughout the world.



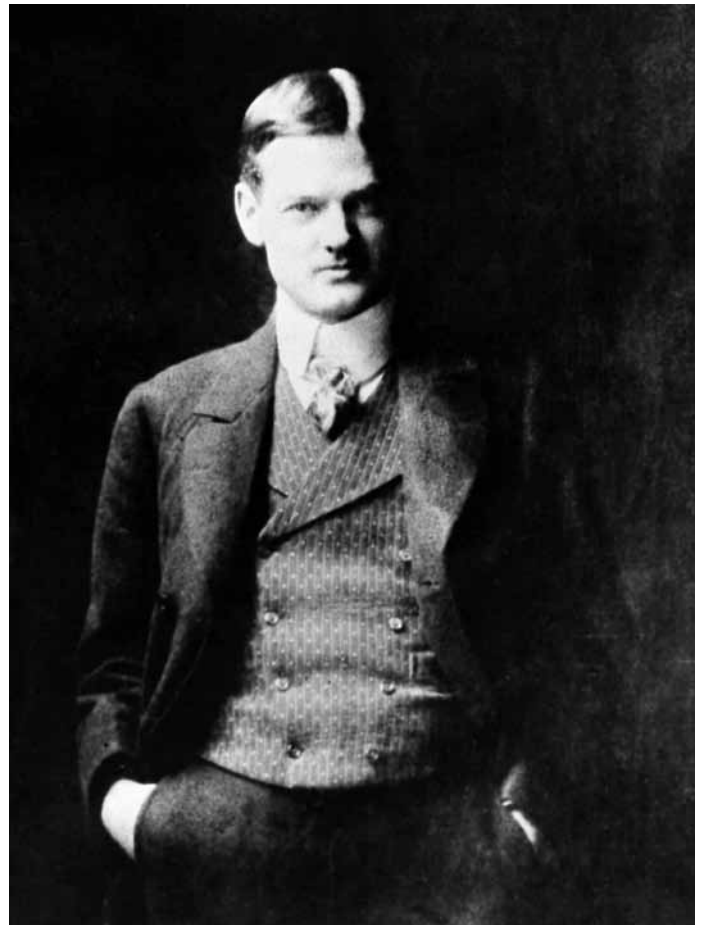
*Photo of Herbert Hoover as a 12 year old boy when he attended the little Quaker school at Newberg, Oregon. At the extreme left is Dr. H. J. Minthorn, Hoover's uncle; and first president and organizer of Pacific College, Newberg. Dr. and Mrs. Minthorn raised the orphaned boy, Herbert, from early childhood. Hoover moved to Newberg, Oregon, to live with Uncle John Minthorn in 1885 and he attended Friends Pacific Academy. (AP Photo)*



*Reconstructed version of home in which Herbert C. Hoover was born in at West Branch, Iowa. (AP Photo)*



*The photograph shows Herbert Hoover as he appeared when he was about 12 years old. The picture is of a Sunday school class at Pacific Academy, a Quaker institution at Newberg, Oregon. Hoover, is shown at the extreme right of the group. Mrs. Vannie Martin, seated, taught the class. (AP Photo)*



*Herbert Hoover as he looked in 1900. (AP Photo)*

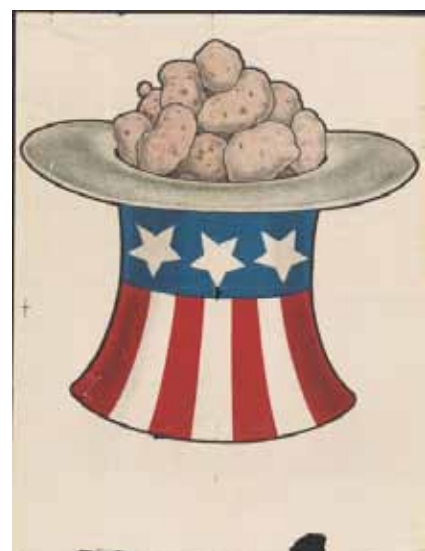
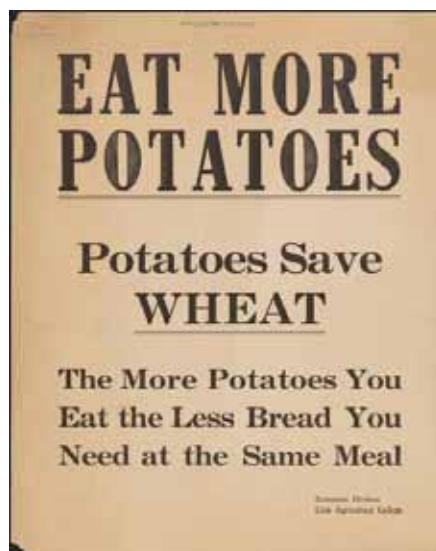
**Humanitarian Efforts:**

Herbert Hoovers' humanitarian contributions began in China during the Boxer Rebellion in 1900. While working as lead engineer in China for a private mining company, Herbert Hoover and his wife found themselves in the middle of the rebellion which besieged 800 westerners in the city of Tientsin. While under heavy fire, Hoover helped direct the creation of barricades, risked his life to save innocent Chinese children caught in the crossfire, and organized relief efforts for trapped foreigners, while his wife helped out in local hospitals. That was just the beginning of Hoover's humanitarian efforts. Years later in 1914, just before his fortieth birthday, Hoover was in London when Germany declared war on France, ushering in World War I. The American Consul General asked Hoover to aid in the effort to bring stranded American tourists home. Hoover and his team successfully returned 120,000 Americans to the United States.

After safely evacuating the American tourists, Hoover organized the Commission for Relief in Belgium. Through this commission, he managed the delivery of supplies and food to the citizens of Belgium, whose country had been overrun by Germany. One of the biggest contributions from the United States, via the Commission for Relief, were sacks of flour. Not only was the flour valuable, but also the sacks themselves, as Belgians repurposed them, transforming the sacks into clothing and household items.

Grateful Belgians also embroidered and decorated some of these sacks and sent them back to the U.S., as thank you notes to Hoover. Tim Walch, Director of the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library and Museum stated that during the First World War, "Many people felt [Herbert Hoover] was personally responsible for feeding them," and Hoover, viewed the returned, decorated flour sacks as a great honor, second only to having schools named after him, which he viewed as the biggest honor of all.

Due to his success in Belgium, Woodrow Wilson appointed Herbert Hoover as head of the United States Food Administration when the U.S. entered World War I in 1917. In this capacity, Hoover successfully cut domestic consumption of foods needed overseas for U.S. troops, while simultaneously avoiding the need to ration food at home. He accomplished this by encouraging Americans to eat less of the foods that could be easily shipped to soldiers in Europe (The book *War Economy in Food*, published in 1918, provided recipes for substitutions in the planning of meals.) After the war ended, Hoover was appointed by President Wilson to head the non-governmental American Relief Administration (ARA). Through this new role, Hoover organized the shipment of food to the millions of starving Europeans whose countries had been ravaged by war. He won further acclaim for these humanitarian efforts and received many letters of thanks for the free lunches (later named "Hoover lunches"), which his efforts enabled.



WWI posters from the Department of Agriculture

## Presidency:

Herbert Hoover's continued success and popularity earned him the appointment of Secretary of Commerce under President Warren Harding, and continued under President Calvin Coolidge. His success in this position led him to become the Republican presidential nominee in 1928. He went on to win the presidential election with a record number of electoral votes: 444-87. Unfortunately, just a few months after Hoover's election to the presidency in 1929, the stock market crash struck and the Great Depression hit the United States. Unable to come up with a solution to save the nation and the economy, Hoover lost the presidential election of 1932 to Franklin D. Roosevelt. After being ousted from the presidency, Herbert Hoover returned to his work as a humanitarian.

The assistance Herbert Hoover extended throughout the term of his presidency and throughout his entire life was recognized and appreciated in many countries through-

out the world. Marie Curie expressed such gratitude after President Hoover presented her with 1 gram of radium, as a gift from the American people to enable the great scientist to continue her research. She stated:

"Mr. President, in my native land, your name is revered for having saved, by your humanitarian work, a large part of the young generation. Your kind work of today will add to the gratitude of the Polish people toward you. In accepting this precious gift, which will hasten the opening of the Radium Institute in Warsaw, I offer you and my American friends, my most profound thanks. My laboratory in Paris will keep in close relation to the Warsaw Institute, and I will like to remember the American gifts of radium to me as a symbol of enduring friendship binding your country to France and to Poland."



Herbert Hoover campaigning, 1928. Photo Library of Congress



Two grandmothers (Mrs. H. Foster Bain, pilot, and Mrs. Samuel Dolbear, both of New York,) campaign for the re-election of President Herbert Hoover by taking off from Floyd Bennett Field in the Brooklyn borough of New York, October 3, 1932. (AP Photo)



Madame Marie Curie with U.S. president Herbert Clark Hoover on October 30, 1929 (AP Photo)



American aviatrix Amelia Earhart and U.S. President Herbert Hoover walk on the White House lawn prior to receiving the National Geographic Medal in honor of her transatlantic flight, June 21, 1932, in Washington, D.C. (AP Photo)

## Herbert Hoover's Efforts in Poland:

World War I left Poland destitute and in desperate need of aid from outside sources such as those organized by Herbert Hoover both during and after the war. The movement of people across its borders led to increased exposure to diseases such as tuberculosis, typhus, and cholera. Polish citizens were even more vulnerable to disease as a result of their lack of access to food, shelter, and clothing. Some of the hardest hit were the Polish children; twenty-nine thousand of which were left orphaned as a result of the war, disease, and famine.

In 1919 when Hoover first visited Poland, he was greeted by 25,000 children who had walked to Warsaw barefoot to thank him for the aid provided by the American Relief Administration. Upon witnessing their extreme poverty, Hoover ordered 700,000 pairs of shoes and 700,000 overcoats to be sent to Poland before winter came. The delivery of even more shoes and coats continued over the next two years as well. After the Russian invasion of Poland in 1920, the American Relief Administration further extended its aid to Poland in order to supply half a billion meals to starving Poles by 1922. Milk was carefully distributed to

the children and poorest members of society, while evaporated and condensed milk was shipped in for the infants.

Yet before Poland and its children could fully recover from the devastation of WWI, the country was crippled again by the second World War. Following Hitler's invasion of Poland in 1939, Herbert Hoover created the Commission for Polish Relief. Through Hoover's collection of funds and cooperation with charities, governments and health organizations, the commission was able to deliver 150 tons of clothing and blankets within its first few months of operating. By 1940, the commission had organized several kitchens which were serving 200,000 meals a day. Even after Germany declared war on the United States, the commission continued its work by aiding Polish refugees who had fled their country.

Despite significant aid efforts, in January of 1943, the average child in Poland consumed only 540 calories per day. The end of WWII left Poland at the edge of starvation and with over one million orphaned children. Ninety percent of Polish children were malnourished and thirty percent had also contracted tuberculosis. Thankfully, Herbert Hoover and other humanitarians continued their efforts after the war and Poland and its children were ultimately nourished back to health so they could rebuild their nation.



Lodz, a city in central Poland, is shown during World War I (AP Photo)



Herbert Hoover, then-director of American Relief, is shown at right, January 8, 1919 in Poland. At left is Marshall Jozef Pilsudski of Poland. In the center is Msgr. Ratti, who became Pope Pius XI. (AP Photo)



Photo courtesy of Herbert Hoover Presidential Library



Photo courtesy of Herbert Hoover Presidential Library

### Herbert Hoover's Million Dollar Dinner:

One of Herbert Hoover's most notable charity events was the Invisible Guest Dinner, which he organized in 1920, to raise funds for Poland in the aftermath of World War I. Hoover arranged a banquet at a New York hotel, with an entry price of \$1000 per person. The meal was intentionally modest; guests sat at wooden tables and food was served on metal plates without napkins. The dinner was based on the typical ration for a Polish child, with a monetary worth of only twenty-two cents. The meal consisted of potatoes, rice, and a cup of cocoa. Hoover also had a chair placed in the center of a wooden table to symbolize an absent child's life. A candle was then placed on the chair to represent the child's fate coming to an end. This dinner was an enormous success, as it raised one million dollars in aid for the Polish people and was thereafter called the Million Dollar Dinner.

### Poland Says Thank You to Herbert Hoover:

While the Polish people expressed their gratitude toward Herbert Hoover in a wide variety of ways, one of the most noteworthy campaigns was a series of letters. After World War I, the Polish people organized a collection of signatures and messages from communities and organizations across the entire nation in hopes of collecting one million signatures to create an album. The pages for this album were mailed, at first, to the Polish government and Parliament, but eventually they reached schools, orphanages, and even the smallest of villages. Each of the pages were designed by local artists, signed, and returned to Warsaw. The result was 111 volumes containing 30,000 pages and 5.5 million signatures. This enormous expression of gratitude was delivered to the United States in 1926. The volumes of letters have been given a special place in the Library of Congress ever since.



Top: Herbert Hoover at the Invisible Guest dinner

Bottom: A Certificate of Participation.

Photos courtesy of Herbert Hoover Presidential Library

Photos courtesy of Herbert Hoover Presidential Library

# ACTIVITY PAGE

July-August 2018  
TRIVIA QUESTION

How much did each guest pay for the meal at the Invisible Dinner?

Send the answer (with your home address) to: [KrakowAIRC@state.gov](mailto:KrakowAIRC@state.gov)

The 4th, 9th and 11th correct answer will be awarded with a book prize

Deadline: September 15, 2018

May-June 2018

Answer:

To build Alaska energy future

The winners are:  
Karolina from Gaj, Zbigniew from Zdunska Wola, and Anna from Radom

CONGRATULATIONS!!!  
The prize will be sent to you by mail.



Zoom is online at [www.usinfo.pl/zoom/](http://www.usinfo.pl/zoom/)

Free subscription  
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[KrakowAIRC@state.gov](mailto:KrakowAIRC@state.gov)

American Information  
Resource Center  
Krakow  
Konsulat Generalny USA  
ul. Stolarska 9,  
31-043 Krakow  
[KrakowAIRC@state.gov](mailto:KrakowAIRC@state.gov)

## Exercise 1. Speaking.

Work with another student. Read the Herbert Hoover quotes and decide which one resonates the most with you and why.

1. "What the country needs is a good big laugh. ... If someone could get off a good joke every ten days, I think our troubles would be over."
2. "Older men declare war. But it is youth that must fight and die."
3. "Being a politician is a poor profession. Being a public servant is a noble one."
4. "Words without actions are the assassins of idealism."

## Exercise 2. Reading. Read the paragraph below and circle the definite and indefinite articles.

"Mr. President, in my native land your name is revered for having saved, by your humanitarian work, a large part of the young generation. Your kind work of today will add to the gratitude of the Polish people toward you. In accepting this precious gift, which will hasten the opening of the radium institute in Warsaw, I offer you and my American friends my most profound thanks. My laboratory in Paris will keep in close relation to the Warsaw institute, and I will like to remember the American gifts of radium to me as a symbol of enduring friendship binding your country to France and to Poland."

## Exercise 3. Speaking. Here are two more posters from the Department of Agriculture from WWI. Work with another student and each of you discuss one of the posters. Do you agree with the messages promoted by the posters?



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One of the Kitchens at Biale. Photo courtesy of Herbert Hoover Presidential Library