science, human welfare, and other personal frontiers.

However, others since the twentieth century have claimed that the frontier is closed. Franklin Delano Roosevelt believed this to be true and claimed, "Our last frontier has long since been reached, and there is practically no more free land" ("Commonwealth Club Speech," p. 1175). In the past whenever economic hardships arose, a new section of the west would be opened and people could just pick up and move. During this time people earned their wealth from both services they performed and straight from the soil. Industrialization changed all of this. An open frontier meant equal opportunity for all. Franklin D. Roosevelt felt that industrialization had reduced the equality of opportunity causing classes and oppression. He stated, "a glance at the situation today only too clearly indicates that equality of opportunity as we have known it no longer exists" (Roosevelt, "Commonwealth Club Speech," p. 1175). He called the west a "safety valve" that no longer existed for those put out of work "by the Eastern economic machines" (Roosevelt, "Commonwealth Club Speech," p. 1175). Since there was no longer a tangible frontier where people were capable of setting out to till their own land and become self-sufficient, he felt it was time for the government to begin assisting people so they could reach their full potential. He stated, "We have come to a dear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence" (Roosevelt, "A Second Bill of Rights," p. 1190-1191). This self-reliance had become impossible due to oppression and the end of westward expansion.

The debate over the American frontier continues to this day. Advertising companies try to reach American consumers be appealing to their sense of an existing pioneer spirit. Levi Jeans has created a new campaign titled "Go Forth" which consists of phrases written by Walt Whitman from his poems "Go Forth" and "Pioneer, O Pioneer." These ads speak directly to the heart of Americans that the frontier is still open and that it is up to us to go and find it. Even the names of current products attempt to capture this spirit. For example, Ford has named one automobile the Explorer and another the Frontier. Yet it seems that as much as Americans would like to believe in this open frontier, the reality for most of them is that it is closed. This was apparent in the election of President Barack Obama. Though he never directly states that the frontier is closed, he follows the ideas established by Franklin D. Roosevelt that people are no longer able to be self-sufficient and that the government needs to step in to create an equality of opportunity. In a speech in September, 2009 Obama discussed the American spirit as "our self-reliance, our rugged individualism, our fierce defense of freedom and our healthy skepticism of government" ("Obama calls for congress to face health care challenge," 2009). However, this was accompanied by a belief that "in this country, hard work and responsibility should be rewarded by some measure of security and fair play; and an acknowledgment that sometimes government has to step in to help deliver on that promise" (Obama, "Obama calls for congress to face health care challenge," 2009).

This idea correlates with the second major idea about American individualism that has been continuously debated throughout history: the role of government. One side of the debate argues that any government interference hampers individualism. Many on this side take a Darwinist view of society, basing success on survival of the fittest. Through this view, inequality is a natural result of the struggle of life and thus it is fair. William Graham Sumner felt that there was nothing but "fallacy and a superstition in the notion that 'the state' owes anything to anybody except peace, order, and the guarantees of rights" (p. 705). In his opinion, no one had the right to demand that some people solve the problems of other people, including the government. The poor, according to Sumner, had not been able to satisfy their own desires and "in their view they have a right, not only to pursue happiness, but to get it" (p. 706). In this view, government support of this nature will lead only to people relying on the government and not striving to be their best, because there will no longer be a need to do so. If the person who works the hardest and is the most successful has their property taken from them to be given to someone that does not work hard, it becomes evident that "poverty is the best policy" (Sumner, p. 707). Sumner believed that individualism is only possible when a person is completely self-reliant. He stated, "The free man in a free democracy [is free only] when he cut off all the ties by which he might have made others pull him up. He must take all the consequences of his new status. He is, in a certain sense, an isolated man" (Sumner, p. 709). He believed that any person that accepted assistance from another was not an independent person.

Another way to consider this social Darwinism is Andrew Carnegie's Law of Competition. He stated that while this competition "may be sometimes hard for the individual, it is best for the race, because it insures the survival of the fittest in every department" (Carnegie, p. 732). He also felt that individualism meant succeeding on your own, not having a brotherhood or laboring for others. Ralph Waldo Emerson agreed with this idea. He believed that only a person that did not accept any outside support was strong and would succeed. In accordance he stated, "Is not a man better than a town?" (Emerson, "Self-Reliance," p. 476). Any government action to support people, according to this side of the debate, was an infringement on the fundamental rights of society. In *The Conscience of a Conservative*, Barry Goldwater claimed that, "people's welfare depends on individual self reliance, rather than on state paternalism" (p. 1257). He believed that the Constitution was designed to prevent the government from expanding their authority in this way and that every person should be responsible for their own development.

The opposing side of this debate is that individualism cannot occur without governmental assistance. This side rejects the idea of social Darwinism and even views avoidable inequality as incompatible with American individualism. One of the greatest proponents for this side was Franklin Delano Roosevelt. He repeated