Writing Assignment #3

Read the following material (including the background report) for a PBS discussion of the U.S. Social Security Program:

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/fedagencies/january97/social_security_1-13a.html

Big business in the U.S. opposed the establishment of the federal Social Security program, but President Franklin D. Roosevelt—himself a very wealthy man—provided powerful leadership to establish the program (along with other progressive social programs) during the Great Depression.

Use the PBS materials and chapter four in Robbins (“The Nation-State in the Culture of Capitalism”) to discuss how the nation-state under capitalism regulates economy and society. Specifically, how has Social Security been important not only for the mass of Americans but also for the economy and business? In this context, why is it that there are ongoing attempts to weaken the Social Security program? If such attempts are successful, what might be the consequences for the mass of Americans, as well as for the economy and business?