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Who Voted with Hopkins? Institutional Politics and the WPA

Scholars of the politics of public social policy have engaged in contentious debates over “institutional” and “political” theories.¹ Institutional theories hold that U.S. social policy is inhibited by fragmented political institutions and weak executive state organizations. Political theories hold that the United States lacks a left-wing political party and a strong labor movement to push for social policy. Both theories are thus pessimistic about and cannot account for *advances* in U.S. social policy.

But there have been big steps forward in U.S. social policy, most notably during the 1930s and the 1960s. During the New Deal, the Social Security Act was passed—including Old-Age Assistance, old-age and unemployment insurance, and Aid to Dependent Children. Also adopted was the understudied “Works Program.” This program, operated mainly by the Works Progress Administration (WPA), was at the center of New Deal social policy. In its day the WPA cost more and affected more Americans than all the Social Security Act programs combined and was the most prominent political issue in U.S. social policy. The Works Program was authorized before the Social Security Act and was meant to be the centerpiece of a permanent social policy reform. Franklin Roosevelt considered the social security legislation a “companion measure” to the Works Program. By the end of the 1930s, largely because of spending for the Works Program, the United States jumped to world leadership in social policy effort.²

Here we provide a theoretical synthesis that includes both institutional conditions and political actors and can account for both

restrictions on and advances in U.S. policy. Combining institutional and political theoretical arguments has its advantages because each theory is limited in ways that are complementary. Institutional arguments discount the role of political actors in influencing policy; political arguments ignore the possibility that these actors may have impacts that vary according to institutional settings. Our theory, however, does not merely combine existing arguments.

On the institutional side, we argue that democratic procedures have a greater influence on social policy developments than does the centralization of political authority. Public policy is more likely to aid everyday people to the extent that they have a say in politics, for office seekers and holders have to take them into account. We also argue that the relative orientation of a political party system toward either programs or patronage greatly influences social policy. Patronage-oriented parties tend to dampen categorical reforms—especially reforms with national standards, administration, and controls.

On the political side, we argue that the executive and legislative representatives of political parties are most likely to win public spending struggles when they form what we call a “reform-oriented regime.” A reform-oriented regime comprises a president allied with pro-spending groups and a Congress in which left and center legislators dominate. In America for most of the twentieth century, this amounted to the control of the government by Democrats from outside the underdemocratized South and from non-patronage-oriented party systems, augmented by radical third-party legislators. We also argue that social movements can bolster these regimes.

Programs can take forms that might influence their future. It is often argued that programs with many beneficiaries will grow, while restricted programs will decline. We argue, however, that whether a program allows discretion to local polities in directing benefits also influences its fate. Programs providing discretion may win support from representatives from underdemocratized or patronage-oriented polities. But such discretion may also reduce support from other actors—people opposed to unfairness in social policy and patronage-oriented politicians excluded from the spoils.

To appraise our arguments, we consider American social policy by way of the WPA. We examine the WPA’s historical trajectory—the struggles over its size and form from its inauguration in 1935 to its demise in 1943. We also address WPA-related congressional roll-call votes, which are numerous and have never been analyzed as a

whole. We focus on budgetary votes and votes about the character of social policy: whether aid would be generous or stingy, restricted or unrestricted in duration. These program characteristics are important because they influenced both the size and the redistributive character of the WPA. Here we ask: Who supported U.S. social policy in its formative years, when its size and character was being determined? To put it a different way: Who voted with Harry Hopkins, the longtime WPA administrator whom the public associated with the WPA? Each type of evidence supports our arguments, which we turn to next.

The Institutional Politics Theory

Like institutional and state-centered theories of social policy, the institutional politics theory holds that institutional conditions matter for social politics. Most scholars argue that the centralization or fragmentation of political authority is the chief institutional condition that influences the fate of social policy. By contrast, we focus on democratic procedures in political institutions, the orientation of the party system, and the configuration of domestic bureaucracies. Institutional conditions do not often change quickly, however, and cannot explain the historical trajectories of social spending programs and the crucial periods of policy innovations. The “politics” part of the institutional politics theory addresses this gap in theorizing.

Political Institutions and Social Policy

We argue first that greater democracy in political processes promotes redistributive social spending policies. To put it negatively, an underdemocratized polity is a central obstacle to generous, permanent, and automatic social policy. An underdemocratized polity is one in which political leaders are chosen by way of elections, but in which there are great restrictions on political participation, political assembly and discussion, voting, and choices among leadership groups. In an underdemocratized political system there is little electoral reason for politicians to promote policies to aid the less well off, because it is usually the less well off who find themselves on the outside looking in. When poorer people cannot vote, politicians have little incentive to appeal to them by supporting social policies. Other

democratic rights are important in getting politicians to champion social policy. In particular, if everyday people cannot legally or practically assemble and discuss issues, it is difficult to gain information about social policies and to press for them effectively. A democratic polity is also characterized by meaningful choices among parties or factions.³ In underdemocratized polities, politicians will accordingly do more to seek the support of the economically privileged, who generally oppose social spending.

Underdemocratized polities have secondary negative effects on policy. In such polities, pro-spending mass movements will have difficulties in organizing themselves, and they are more likely to be repressed, as they will have few defenders in the state apparatus. When representatives of underdemocratized regimes in federal polities are unable to block the adoption of national social programs, moreover, these representatives are likely to attempt to amend the programs in ways that maximize their control over them and to minimize their impact on distributions of economic and political power.

Second, the degree to which the party system is program-oriented, as opposed to patronage-oriented, will also influence public policy. A key impediment to modern social policy is the dominance of patronage-oriented political parties: hierarchical organizations that seek to win elections and maintain their organizations through individualized benefits to party workers and other supporters. The leaders of such patronage-oriented parties are concerned more with their material position than with ideology or reform. For that reason there is a premium on the survival of the organization, which depends in turn on a cycle of contesting and winning elections and using the spoils of office to reward party workers and contributors.⁴ David Mayhew argues, for instance, that patronage-oriented parties avoid programmatic social policy because they find professional bureaucracies threatening.⁵

Leaders of patronage-oriented parties, however, have other important motives to oppose modern social spending programs. For one thing, programs that provide relatively automatic benefits eliminate a degree of fiscal freedom for political operatives. Money earmarked for individuals who meet abstract criteria cannot be easily diverted to those who contribute to the life of the party. For another, social spending programs rarely provide the often remunerative opportunities provided by soliciting contracts for public business. In addition, it is more difficult for a local politician to take habitual credit for payments guaranteed by law than for holiday turkeys. Au-

automatic social spending, moreover, potentially drains resources from programs that might be deployed with discretion. Finally, patronage-oriented political parties have a motive to discourage and disrupt social movements seeking to promote modern social spending policies.

That said, it does not mean that patronage-oriented politicians will always vote against social policy. Their existence provides a temptation for proponents of social policy to provide patronage opportunities—or discretion in the provision of benefits—within programs. A program with patronage possibilities may win the support of currently powerful patronage-oriented politicians, but will provoke the extreme opposition of political factions not so favored. This sort of compromise also exposes the program to charges of unfairness or corruption and works against it in the long run.

Table 1. U.S. Polities According to Type of Political and Party Systems.

		POLITICAL SYSTEM	
		Extensive Political Rights	Restricted Political Rights
PARTY SYSTEM	Program- Oriented	Open Polity: 24 Western and Assorted States ¹	Under-democratized Polity: 11 Southern States ²
	Patronage- Oriented	Patronage-based Polity: 13 Eastern and Midwestern States ³	Under-democratized, Patronage-based Polity: N/A

¹ Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

² Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia.

³ Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and West Virginia.

A summary of the structure of the American polity as it stood for the first two-thirds of the twentieth century exhibits the predicament faced by advocates of modern social policy. As Table 1 shows, one-half of the forty-eight states harbored underdemocratized political institutions or dominant patronage-oriented political parties. The South was democratically backward, and much of the East and Midwest was a safe haven for patronage party systems. In contrast, most of the West and some parts of the Midwest and East had neither patronage-oriented political parties nor great restrictions on voting rights. These polities, shaded in the figure, were the most promising sites to produce political actors in favor of adequate social spending. The U.S. polity as a whole was in a comparatively unfavorable situation for modern social policy; most Western European polities found themselves closer to the upper left-hand corner.

Political Actors and Social Policy

We argue that the most important actors in the making of social policy are politicians who form what we are calling a reform-oriented regime and who are generally responsible for passing legislation that makes new social policy commitments. This idea is related to partisanship and coalition arguments, but diverges from them. Introduced by John D. Stephens, the social democratic thesis holds that the social democratic parties are central to the adoption and expansion of social policy.⁶ By contrast, Gosta Esping-Andersen and Ann Shola Orloff argue that wider coalitions of political actors—including expert advocacy organizations, civic associations, farmers' organizations, organized labor, and social movements—are responsible for the adoption of social policy.⁷

“Reform-oriented regimes” are more broadly drawn than social democratic regimes, but more narrowly defined than expert-labor or farmer-labor political coalitions. These regimes include the political control of the instruments of government by centrist and liberal parties as well as left-wing parties. These political actors and parties are defined by their connection to pro-spending advocates, including expert, labor, and other organizations. Such regimes are expected to encourage spending legislation of all sorts to reach the political agenda and, more important, to *pass* public spending legislation and to prevent restrictions on social policy to pass.

We argue that reform-oriented or “pro-social spending” regimes are possible in the American setting and that the Democratic party

is central to such regimes. Unlike the claim that the Democrats constitute a center party, however, we argue that an American pro-spending regime requires more than Democrats controlling the White House and holding majorities in both the House and Senate. In the nonparliamentary United States, representatives can break from the party line without risking the fall of the government or the loss of their seats. More important, though, even after its alliance with the labor movement, the Democratic party was not so much a unified center party as a hodgepodge of ideologically divergent organizations not all equally likely to favor social spending. For the reasons noted above, Democrats from underdemocratized districts are expected to prevent social spending proposals when they can, and when they cannot, to try to stall or diminish these proposals. Democrats from patronage-oriented parties will support social policy only to the extent that it is subject to their manipulation. Although it has been difficult and infrequent, a reform-oriented or pro-social-spending political regime can take power in the American setting.

The election of a reform-oriented president and large contingents of pro-spending legislators sends clear and persistent signals throughout the political system about social spending possibilities. Left-leaning political appointees in the administration are more likely to demand dramatic spending initiatives. Policy bureaucrats are more likely to press new or long-standing proposals. Pro-spending members of Congress are likely to make renewed efforts on behalf of their own favored programs, devise new ones, or jump on the bandwagon of administration-sponsored programs. State-oriented challengers are likely to redouble efforts to promote programs that might benefit their constituents. The incentives to press for social spending efforts are high, because these efforts are more likely to succeed. The efforts are more likely to succeed because reform-oriented regimes can pass new legislation despite opposition.

We also argue that social movements can promote public social spending.⁸ Unlike others, however, we hold that social movements may advance public spending under two conditions: if the polity's structure is conducive and if the movement has a great following and has established a political presence for itself. By a political presence we mean devoting significant resources and efforts to influencing elections or legislation, or both. We expect well-organized challengers with well-developed political resources—such as having worked for the election of legislators—to be able to induce state actors and legislators to sweeten their proposals to favor groups

represented by well-organized challenges. Such challengers may also aid the passage of new bills. For instance, movements might prevent Democrats in patronage party organizations from defecting from the pro-spending line of the national party or induce the support of representatives from parties opposed to social policy. In those ways challengers can help to buttress a reform-oriented or pro-spending coalition for their issues of concern when social spending forces are already well represented. However, we expect challengers to have a more limited impact than reform-oriented regimes, affecting only those issues of direct concern to the challenger.

Explaining the Historical Trajectory of the WPA

The WPA was the largest and most generous U.S. social spending program, but its ability to gain funding and its nature changed significantly over time. Interesting in its own right, the WPA also provides an excellent opportunity to appraise our theoretical claims. We do so first by comparing expectations based on our claims to the historical trajectory of the WPA. Across its history, the WPA, the president, and Congress made a series of budgetary and program-design choices. Our expectations are that the best times for social policy and the WPA would be when a reform-oriented regime was in power—when the president was committed to social policy and endorsed by the electorate and pro-spenders in Congress outnumbered anti-spenders. If the political forces are divided, we expect mixed results for social policy and the WPA—advances when and where the pro-spending impulses were greatest and declines when and where they were weakest.

The Rise of the Reform-Oriented Regime and the Creation of the WPA, 1935–1936

Franklin D. Roosevelt was a Democrat with a strong impulse to social policy reform. His party background mattered. Democrats in Congress led the fight for emergency relief during the Republican Herbert Hoover's presidency, and the nation's strongest social policy advocate, Senator Robert Wagner, was a New York Democratic leader. The party supported unemployment insurance and old-age pensions in its 1932 platform. Most of all, the Democratic party was not, like the Republican party, wedded to policies of low taxation

and to industrial and financial interest groups. More than that, Roosevelt had been an earnest champion of social policy reform as the governor of New York. He had presided over the passage of its old-age pension legislation and the reorganization of its Department of Welfare, as well as being an innovator in providing emergency relief through the Temporary Emergency Relief Administration. For these reasons, Roosevelt received support from many pro-spending people and groups. Finally, unlike Al Smith, the 1928 nominee and also a former governor of New York, Roosevelt did not depend on the support of the conservative, business-oriented wing of the party, led by Jouett Shouse and John J. Raskob, and so was freed from any obligation to limit social policy as this wing of the party desired.⁹ Roosevelt was given a mandate by the voters to act on his pro-social policy views, amassing 57.4 percent of the vote received by himself and Hoover. Roosevelt lost only six states in running up a victory in the electoral college of 473 to 59.¹⁰

The president needed pro-spending congressional majorities to support social legislation. To assess the status of Congress, we divide legislators into four groups based on our conceptual categories. We refer to the legislators we expect to be most favorable to social policy—new, permanent, national, and generous commitments to citizens—as “very probable pro-spenders.” This group includes legislators from radical third parties, Democrats elected in democratized states with programmatic parties, and Democrats or Republicans affiliated with radical third parties. “Probable pro-spenders” are expected to be somewhat less staunch supporters of social policy and include Democrats from states dominated by traditional, patronage parties and the very few Democrats who also won the Republican nomination and thus ran as Democrats and Republicans. “Probable anti-spenders” are defined as Republicans from open, democratic states and the few Republicans who also won the Democratic nomination. Finally, “very probable anti-spenders” includes representatives from underdemocratized political institutions, typically Democrats, as we expect them to oppose generous social policy.¹¹ We expect legislators in places with powerful labor movements to be more in favor of generous WPA programs, other things being equal. Because we have data on labor movements only for the state level in the late 1930s and not by House districts, we omit this issue for now. Tables 2 and 3 provide basic data on congressional alignments and show that the House and Senate largely tracked one another in spending orientations, but with the House being somewhat more volatile in its changing balances of pro- and anti-spending forces.

Table 2. Pro- and Anti-Social-Spending Contingents in the U.S. Senate, 1931-1944.

Year	Pro-Spending Members		Anti-Spending Members		Size of Pro-Spending Contingent
	Very Probable	Probable	Probable	Very Probable	
1931-1932	19	9	29	39	Small
1933-1934	27	12	21	36	Medium/Small
1935-1936	28	21	20	27	Medium
1937-1938	33	24	14	25	Large
1939-1940	30	21	17	28	Medium
1941-1942	26	19	21	30	Medium
1943-1944	20	16	28	32	Medium/Small

Source: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789-1991* [computer file] (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1992).

Note: The term "spender" refers to an orientation to generous, permanent, automatic social spending programs with national standards. For specific definitions, see the text. The size of the pro-spending contingent is a judgment based on the relative sizes of each grouping.

Table 3. Pro- and Anti-Social-Spending Contingents in the U.S. House of Representatives, 1931-1944.

Year	Pro-Spending Members		Anti-Spending Members		Size of Pro-Spending Contingent
	Very Probable	Probable	Probable	Very Probable	
1931-1932	28	90	108	206	Small
1933-1934	95	127	52	161	Medium
1935-1936	99	135	44	157	Large
1937-1938	106	142	44	143	Large
1939-1940	90	86	73	186	Medium
1941-1942	72	107	73	183	Medium
1943-1944	68	57	88	222	Small

Source: Congressional Quarterly, *Guide To U.S. Elections* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly, 1985), pp. 766-785.

Note: The term "spender" refers to an orientation to generous, permanent, and automatic social spending programs with national standards. For specific definitions, see the text. The size of the pro-spending contingent is a judgment based on the relative sizes of each grouping.

From this perspective, the rise of a reform-oriented regime occurred not after Roosevelt was first elected in 1932 but after the elections of 1934. In 1932, the pro-spending factions in both the House and Senate were in a minority. The 1934 elections returned a Congress in which very probable or probable pro-spenders outnumbered their anti-spending counterparts for the first time. After that election, in the House the pro-spenders had a majority of twenty-three, and in the Senate the majority was two.

On January 4, 1935, soon after the elections, Roosevelt introduced what he called the Works Program and other economic security measures. He called for the replacement of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), the temporary organization and program to deal with the immediate relief crisis, and offered work for wages. The joint resolution authorizing the appropriation for the Works Program was placed before Congress on January 21, 1935. With an initial appropriation of \$4.9 billion, the resolution gave the president authority to fund all manner of work projects and public works. It was enacted eleven weeks later and approved by the president on April 11. Harry L. Hopkins, the Federal Emergency Relief Administrator, was placed in charge of what was called the Works Progress Administration (WPA), which soon became synonymous with the program. In September, work relief took off, and by February 1936 the WPA was employing more than three million workers. In fiscal 1936, work programs accounted for 82 percent of U.S. social spending and 3.1 percent of GNP—approximately six times greater than all U.S. social spending efforts in fiscal 1929.¹²

The WPA met its goals of providing work for wages and reducing the ranks on emergency relief by selecting and funding labor-intensive works projects proposed mainly by state and local authorities. The Works Program was to employ almost exclusively able-bodied workers, one per family, and some 90 percent of workers were to be taken from the relief roles. Eligibility for relief was decided at the local and state level. The WPA paid cash wages in standardized amounts—not sundry cash and in-kind aid designed to fulfill a “budget deficiency” as did the FERA.¹³ The WPA provided an open-ended source of support—there was no time limit beyond which recipients could receive WPA work. Although WPA projects by law could not compete with private companies, the fact that there were no initial time limits for WPA work meant that workers were not forced to take private jobs that might be less favorable.

The administration was able to craft a policy on wages that made it possible to fund as adequately as possible as many workers as possible without driving down private wages. The WPA repaid work with a monthly “security” sum. This sum was set at relatively high “decency and health” standard that was deleted from the social assistance programs of the Social Security Act.¹⁴ To gain the support of organized labor, which did not want to be undercut by low-wage WPA workers, the WPA agreed that the number of hours required to obtain the security sum would be determined by the “prevailing” wage rate for a given type of work.¹⁵ The hourly wage rate for the WPA determined how generous social policy would be.

Hopkins and Roosevelt sought to avoid as much as possible patronage politics and the sorts of local control that would induce unfairness into the WPA, but these features were also a part of the program’s initial form. Notably, by Senate amendment all major state-level officials of the WPA required Senate confirmation, and through courtesy procedures the appointees were typically congenial to at least one of the state’s senators.¹⁶ This is perhaps not surprising as the pro-spending majority would not have been possible without Democratic legislators from patronage-oriented parties.

A Bolstered Reform-Oriented Regime and Social Policy Advances, 1937–1938

The reform-oriented regime was reinforced in the elections of 1936. The Democratic platform, written by Roosevelt, advanced a kind of Declaration of Independence for American social policy and pushed the party to the left.¹⁷ Roosevelt also sought and gained the support of many progressive, pro-social-policy organizations. The president built up the Women’s Division of the Democratic National Committee (DNC), led by Mary Dewson and was advised by an informal Black Cabinet, led by Mary McLeod Bethune of the National Youth Administration, as well as reaching out to African Americans via the Good Neighbor League. The Labor Division of the DNC was led by Daniel Tobin of the Teamsters, and the Congress of Industrial Organizations created organizations to aid the president’s reelection. Roosevelt made electoral agreements with Minnesota’s Farmer-Labor party and Wisconsin’s Progressive party.¹⁸ Roosevelt won with 60.8 percent of the two-party vote, capturing all states but Maine and Vermont,¹⁹ and was accompanied by a larger contingent of reform-oriented members of Congress than before. In the Senate,

eight “pro-spenders” joined the ranks, and in the House fourteen were added.

After these tremendous victories, the administration had relatively free rein to advance social policy and did so. Although appropriations bills for the WPA sometimes drew controversy, the administration always prevailed. For instance, Roosevelt asked for \$1.5 billion for the WPA for fiscal year 1938, and in May 1937 an appropriations subcommittee led by Representative Clifton A. Woodrum (D-Va.) voted 5–4 to cut Roosevelt’s request by \$500 million. After the president declared the cut intolerable, the full committee reversed the subcommittee 23–14.²⁰ Later the administration and Congress reinforced social policy through the WPA. In April 1938, to combat an economic downturn, Roosevelt called for greatly increased spending and a larger role for the WPA, including an additional \$1.25 billion. Roosevelt again easily thwarted attempts by Representative Woodrum’s committee to limit the WPA. A Special Senate Committee to Investigate Unemployment and Relief also endorsed the WPA, despite the implementation of new unemployment compensation programs.²¹ In addition, the WPA was fortified administratively, with WPA administrative employees gaining civil-service status, bringing nearer the prospect of a rationalized and permanent WPA.²² Employment under the WPA reached 3.35 million in November. The WPA was the centerpiece of American social policy efforts that in fiscal year 1939 eclipsed the efforts of Britain, the longtime world leader in this category.²³

Policy Controversy in a Divided Congress, 1939–1942, and the Fall of the WPA, 1943

The 1938 elections weakened the reform-oriented regime, however. The size of the pro-spending contingent in the House declined by 82 members and fell into a minority for the first time since 1934. This did not mark the rise of an anti-social policy Congress, however, as famously claimed by James T. Patterson.²⁴ For the congressional pro-spending contingent remained moderately powerful, as it still held a majority of six in the Senate. And for that reason we would expect social policy to be able to continue, but with greater challenges to it than before.

Not surprisingly, in 1939 the WPA suffered its first important defeats at the hands of Congress, and the resistance was based in the House. In his budget message, Roosevelt asked for an \$875 million

deficiency appropriation to carry the WPA through the 1939 fiscal year. Woodrum's appropriations subcommittee cut \$150 million from the request, and the House ratified the cut. For the first time, the WPA did not gain all the funds it requested. The bill also nullified Roosevelt's order giving WPA administrative employees civil-service status.²⁵ That year Woodrum's committee and the House also adopted two key restrictions on the form of WPA benefits, altering the nature of U.S. social policy. The House imposed an eighteen-month time limit on the receipt of WPA work and adopted a requirement that all WPA workers work 130 hours per month, in effect abolishing prevailing wage rates.²⁶ Together these provisions made the WPA and U.S. social policy less generous and more restrictive. In January, between 50,000 and 100,000 AFL construction workers went on strike over this issue, and in July between 50,000 and 65,000 WPA workers participated in a one-day strike sponsored by the Workers' Alliance. Senate-based attempts that year to repeal the provisions through amendments failed, however. As a result the WPA lost labor support.²⁷

Despite these congressional setbacks, the WPA remained important and even advanced where the Roosevelt administration could move on its own. In his budget message of 1939, Roosevelt claimed that extraordinary expenditures, including funds for the WPA, were to be a permanent part of the budget.²⁸ Also, in the wake of the Executive Reorganization Act of 1939, Roosevelt's first reorganization plan renamed the WPA the Work Projects Administration and incorporated it as a permanent bureau in the newly created Federal Works Agency.²⁹ Some 2.1 million workers remained on the rolls of the reorganized WPA in December 1939.

When Roosevelt decided to run for a third term, war was on his mind, even as he took credit for a record of recovery and reform.³⁰ Although Roosevelt's bid for a second reelection in 1940 did not receive the kind of overwhelming reception his first one did, Roosevelt's triumph in 1940 was impressive. He won with 54.8 percent of the popular vote and overwhelmed his Republican opponent, Wendell Willkie, in the electoral college, 449 to 82.³¹ The reform alignment in Congress was largely the same, as the pro-spenders increased their ranks by three in the House, but lost six members in the Senate.

As a result, the WPA pressed on. In the wake of war rearmament and lower unemployment, Roosevelt demanded less money for the WPA, but he received what he requested. Roosevelt's request in

fiscal year 1941 for \$975 million to cover eight months passed Congress easily.³² In May 1941, when Roosevelt asked for an appropriation of \$875 million for fiscal year 1942, he also called for the repeal of an eighteen-month time limit for WPA work. The House and Senate passed the full amount and rescinded the time limit on a close vote.³³ But that was the WPA's last hurrah.

The 1942 elections were disastrous to social policy advocates. A conservative congressional coalition was elected for the first time under Roosevelt. The numbers of anti-spenders jumped to more than 300 in the House, with a majority of 185, and the pro-spenders lost their majority in the Senate. Also, Roosevelt had become more concerned with war than domestic policy. Given the WPA's expense and ambition—there were plans to expand it to provide the minimum wage or prevailing wages for a full working week to anyone unemployed—the WPA had more opposition than other social programs. Soon after the elections Roosevelt conceded to conservatives and called for the WPA's "honorable discharge."³⁴ By the middle of 1943, the policy of work for wages was finished.

In short, the historical trajectory of the WPA confirms our expectations. The program was created under a reform-oriented regime in 1935. A pro-social-policy Democrat was in the White House, and a pro-spending grouping in Congress outnumbered Republicans and Democrats from underdemocratized parts of the polity. The WPA was reinforced after the elections of 1936 reaffirmed and extended this regime. Although there were electoral setbacks in 1938 and the pro-spenders lost their majority in the House, Roosevelt remained in office and concerned with social policy, pro-spenders were still relatively well represented, and the WPA remained substantial. But 1939 also saw the WPA's first political defeats, begun in the House, on issues of appropriations and the form of the program. The WPA was ended when the president became less focused on domestic policy and, more important, when pro-spending congressional forces were decimated after the 1942 elections.³⁵

Why the Depression Does Not Explain the WPA

Some scholars argue that it took the Great Depression to jolt the U.S. political system into action on public spending and that economic crises generally give political and state actors in capitalist societies more room to maneuver on policy than usual.³⁶ It is true

that the WPA had its heyday in the Depression. That said, the crisis had only an indirect effect on the formation of an American work policy. For one thing, the pace of U.S. policy reform did not closely track the rhythms of the crisis. The Depression quickly forced millions of people out of work and steadily worsened until the inauguration of Franklin Roosevelt in March 1933. At that point, more than one-quarter of the workforce was unemployed, and the gross national product had dipped almost one-third from 1929 levels. However, the Hoover administration dragged its heels on short-term relief. The Roosevelt administration, moreover, did not propose permanent reforms until the worst of the Depression was over and the reform-oriented regime was in place.

For another, the Depression was worldwide and similarly severe in many industrial democracies, but few of them saw their public policies restructured. Britain, for instance, was a world leader in public spending on the eve of the Depression, but with various gaps in its social policy, including a restrictive Poor Law and no family allowances. All the same, British policy during the Depression broke very little with political or economic orthodoxy. There were no public works programs, no public employment programs, no nationalized social insurance innovations, and not even much deficit spending. British social spending efforts were largely flat during the 1930s, whereas American social spending efforts increased more than twelve times between fiscal 1929 and fiscal 1938.³⁸

The main trouble with the thesis, though, is that there was no necessary connection between economic crisis and social policy reform. The social effects of the Depression might have been addressed solely by way of relief funds provided to states and localities. Roosevelt could have extended some version of the explicitly temporary Federal Emergency Relief Administration to ride out the Depression. But instead he famously discredited that “dole” as a “narcotic, a subtle destroyer of the human spirit,” while embracing the Committee on Economic Security’s call to devise a permanent work program.³⁹ What is more, as war broke out Roosevelt’s National Resources Planning Board, his top domestic planning agency, proposed an expansion of the program for postwar America. But both plans and board were killed by a conservative Congress. At best the Depression aided U.S. social policy by discrediting many Republican political incumbents. But as the case of Britain shows, this effect was largely inadvertent.

Explaining Who Voted For and Against the WPA

To examine our arguments further, we analyze key roll-call votes on the WPA. Although the analyses above give an overall picture of potential or likely coalitions in favor of social spending, they do not address who actually voted for and against the WPA. When push came to shove, who supported the WPA on the key issues of its appropriations and on the contested aspects of the form of the program? Following the literature on congressional voting, we selected votes according to how highly contested and important they were. This process yielded fifteen Senate votes from a universe of fifty-one.⁴⁰ There were fewer House votes, thirty-three in all, and for various reasons they were not as closely contested, but we briefly discuss a few important ones. The population of votes is detailed in the appendix.⁴¹

We divide the Senate votes on the WPA into three main categories: budget, wage rates, and time limits. The budgetary votes indicated whether the WPA would get sufficient funding to operate in the ways that it planned to spend its appropriations. The issues of wage rates and time limits confronted how the WPA spent its appropriations and thus the nature of American social policy. As noted above, in 1939 Congress eliminated prevailing wage rates and limited WPA recipients to eighteen-month terms of employment. These restrictions were adopted when the anti-spending contingent in the House outnumbered the pro-spending contingent. We consider two votes that sought to restore prevailing wage rates and three votes seeking to eliminate the time limit.

In Table 4, we divide up the Senate, circa summer 1939, into groupings derived from our theoretical arguments. In these analyses we are able to exploit available statewide information on labor movements, notably their strength in numbers and the political strength of their state federations of labor. Near the end of the 1930s, the only time period for which data are available, fifteen states had relatively strong labor movements by these criteria, which perhaps provide a conservative estimate.⁴² We start with six categories that closely fit our analytical distinctions. But because there are few senators in one of the categories, because there are only minor conceptual differences between some categories and the adjoining ones, and for ease of discussion, we employ four categories as before. The top category includes those senators from open polities—the upper-left corner of Table 1—that also had Democratic- or left-party affili-

ations and a strong labor movement in the state. The bottom category includes senators from underdemocratized parts of the polity. The other two are more mixed types. The categories are somewhat different from the previous ones, given the additional information on labor movements, and thus the categories have different titles. Despite the differences in name, the first group is expected to be very probable pro-spenders, the second is expected to be probable pro-spenders, the third probable anti-spenders, and the fourth very probable anti-spenders.

In what follows we call Democrats and third-party legislators from democratic polities and non-patronage-oriented party systems with strong labor movements the *open, democratic left*, whose members are expected to be very probable supporters of the WPA. Members of the next group are expected to be probable supporters, as these senators either had a Democratic or third-party affiliation or represented a state with a strong labor movement. This group, called *some forces* for policy advances, mainly includes Democrats from open parts of the polity without strong labor movements as well as Democrats from the patronage part of the polity, some of which also had strong labor movements. The few Republicans in states with strong labor movements are also included in this category.⁴³ The next group, probable opponents of the WPA, includes senators from democratized polities who had no impetus to advance policy according to our criteria—neither powerful labor movements in their state nor a Democratic or left-party affiliation. This group is called *no forces* for policy advances and is dominated by Republicans. The final group, very probable opponents of the WPA, is called *underdemocratized* and includes senators from underdemocratized polities, invariably Democrats from the South, where voting rights were restricted.

Results: The WPA's Budget, Prevailing Wage Rates, Time Limits, and Others

In our analyses of roll-call votes, we rely on Rice's index of cohesion, which indicates the degree to which members of a group vote in concert. It is calculated as the difference between the percentage of legislators in a given group in favor of a given proposal and the percentage in the same group who are opposed.⁴⁴ For purposes of

Table 4. Senators' Political Profiles, According to Institutional And Political Categories, July 1939.

Category/Type	Democratized Polity	Patronage Based	Left or Center Polity	Labor Party Movement	Senators in Category
I. Open, democratic left	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	20
IIa. Open, one force for policy advances	Yes	No	*	*	17
IIb. Patronage, force or forces for policy advances	Yes	Yes	*	*	20
IIIa. Open, no forces for policy advances	Yes	No	No	No	13
IIIb. Patronage, no forces for policy advances	Yes	Yes	No	No	4
IV. Under-democratized	No	--	--	--	22

Notes: "Democratized polity" refers to the right to vote, as manifested in relatively high voting participation as well as choices between parties. "Patronage-based polity" refers to whether a state had centralized, patronage-oriented, electioneering organizations. "Left or Center party" refers to whether the senator belonged to the Democratic party or a left-wing third party. "Labor Movement" refers to whether the state's labor movement was large in membership and politically powerful. (See text for definitions.) For Type IIa, the asterisk (*) indicates that the senator is a member of a left or center party or represents state with strong labor movement, but not both. For Type IIb, the senator is a member of a left or center party or represents state with strong labor movement, or both.

Type I. Adams (D-CO), Ashurst (D-AZ), Bone (D-WA), Downey (D-CA), Gillette (D-IA), Hayden (D-AZ), Herring (D-IA), E. Johnson (D-CO), King (D-UT), LaFollette (PROG-WI), Lundeen (FARM-LAB-MN), McCarran (D-NV), Murray (D-MT), O'Mahoney (D-WY), Pittman (D-NV), Schwartz (D-WY), Schwollenbach (D-WA), Shipstead (FARM-LAB-MN), E. D. Thomas (D-UT), Wheeler (D-MT).

Type IIa. Brown (D-MI), Bulow (D-SD), Burke (D-NE), Chavez (D-NM), D. Clark (D-ID), Frazier (D-ND), Gerry (D-RI), Green (D-RI), Hatch (D-NM), Holman (R-OR), H. Johnson (R-CA), Lee (D-OK), McNary (R-OR), Norris (IND-NE), J.W. Thomas (D-OK), Walsh (D-MA), Wiley (R-WI).

Type IIb. Barkley (D-KY), J. Clark (D-MI), Davis (R-PA), Donahey (D-OH), Guffey (D-PA), Holt (D-WV), Hughes (D-DE), Logan (D-KY), Lucas (D-IL), Maloney (D-CT), Mead (D-NY), Minton (D-IN), Neely (D-WV), Radcliffe (D-MD), Slattery (D-IL), Smathers (D-NJ), Truman (D-MO), Tydings (D-MD), Van Nuys (D-IN), Wagner (D-NY).

Type IIIa. Austin (R-VT), Borah (R-ID), Bridges (R-NH), Capper (R-KS), Gibson (R-VT), Gurney (R-SD), Hale (R-ME), Lodge (R-MA), Nye (R-ND), Reed (R-KS), Tobey (R-NH), Vandenberg (R-MI), White (R-ME).

Type IIIb. Barbour (R-NJ), Danaher (R-CT), Taft (R-OH), Townsend (R-DE)

Type IV. Andrews (D-FL), Bailey (D-NC), Bankhead (D-AL), Bilbo (D-MS), Byrd (D-VA), Byrnes (D-SC), Caraway (D-AK), Connally (D-TX), Ellender (D-LA), George (D-GA), Glass (D-VA), Harrison (D-MS), Hill (D-AL), McKellar (D-TN), Miller (D-AK), Overton (D-LA), Pepper (D-FL), Reynolds (D-NC), Russell (D-GA), Sheppard (D-TX), Smith (D-SC), Stewart (D-TN).

comparison, being “in favor” is defined as siding with the WPA’s position on the vote. Thus a group that voted completely on the side of the WPA would score 100 and one that voted entirely against the WPA’s position would score -100.

Table 5 presents signed cohesion scores for the budgetary votes. The open, democratic left began with high cohesion in favor of spending, but this declined over time. The some-forces group showed somewhat weaker support, with a cohesion score of 38 on the first spending vote, but with declining cohesion afterward. The no-forces group, consisting largely of Republicans, persistently opposed the WPA’s budget. On what seems unexpected on its face, the underdemocratized part of the polity was generally favorable to the WPA on budgetary votes, though with a consistent decline in support over time.⁴⁵

Table 5. Cohesion Scores, Five Senate Votes on the WPA’s Budget, 1935-41

	\$2 billion reduction, March 1935	\$15 million reduction, February 1937	\$150 million increase, January 1939	\$50 million increase, April 1939	\$375 million increase, June 1941	Total
Open, Democratic Left	65	37	40	16	8	33
Some Forces	38	0	13	-14	-14	5
No Forces	-50	-64	-88	-87	-67	-71
Under-democratized	53	29	0	-41	-20	4

Note: A negative sign indicates that the majority of the faction voted against spending (either against increases or for reductions).

The other types of votes help to explain this result. That is because these votes—on the generosity and duration of aid—address the nature of social policy and can show which groups supported relatively generous and open-ended social policy. The open, democratic left cohesively supported prevailing wages (53), as Table 6 indicates. That group stood in stark contrast to the underdemocratized group, which was strongly in opposition with extremely high cohesion (-89) against the payment of prevailing

wages. The some-forces group supported prevailing wages with low cohesion (7), whereas the no-forces group opposed prevailing wages with somewhat stronger cohesion (-29).

Table 6. Cohesion Scores, Three Senate Votes on Prevailing Wage Rates for the WPA, 1939.

	Refers Prevailing Wage Amendment to Education and Labor Committee, July 1939	Reinstates Prevailing Wages, Amendment to Lending Bill, July 1939	Reinstates Prevailing Wages, Amendment to Deficiency Appropriation Bill August 1939	Total
Open, Democratic Left	20	68	70	53
Some Forces	-24	-3	48	7
No Forces	-87	6	-6	-29
Under-democratized	-87	-100	-79	-89

Note: A negative sign indicates that the majority of the faction voted against prevailing wages.

The results are similar regarding time limits on WPA work—the 1939 provision that made the WPA more restrictive. As Table 7 shows, the open, democratic left showed fairly strong average cohesion (46) in rejecting time limits for WPA work. Standing in contrast was the underdemocratized part of the polity, which moved with similar cohesion in the opposite direction (-44). The other groups were in the middle. The some-forces group sought to reject the time limits with moderate cohesion (17), while the no-forces group did not (-5).

As for the other four close and important Senate votes, three were referenda on the WPA as a whole. The outcome of these votes provides additional support for our perspective. Each occurred in 1937 or 1938, when a reform-oriented regime was in power, and each resulted in a victory for the WPA.⁴⁶ One vote, regarding Represent-

Table 7. Cohesion Scores, Three Senate Votes on Time Limits for WPA Work, 1939 and 1940.

	Eliminates Time Limit, Amendment to Lending Bill, July 1939	Eliminates Time Limit, Amendment to Deficiency Appropriation Bill, August 1939	Eliminates Time Limit, June 1940	Total
Open, Democratic Left	65	67	6	46
Some Forces	20	38	-10	17
No Forces	0	-18	9	-5
Under-democratized	-38	-41	-53	-44

Note: A negative sign indicates that the majority of the faction voted for time limits (against eliminating time limits).

tative Woodrum's amendment to prohibit deficiency appropriations, impeded the ability of the WPA to meet its goals and was opposed by the administration.⁴⁷ A bid to repeal it in 1938 divided the Senate Democrats in expected ways. The repeal was supported with medium cohesion by both the open, democratic left (18) and the some-forces group (37), but was opposed by the no-forces group (-20), and with high cohesion by the underdemocratized group (-73).⁴⁸

In the House, there were fewer votes, and only three that were really close. Because we cannot ascertain the strength of labor movements across congressional districts, we examine four analytically less precise categories: Democratic or radical third-party representatives from the open parts of the polity; Democrats from patronage-oriented polities; Republicans; and representatives, almost invariably Democrats, from the underdemocratized part of the polity. Again these groups, similar to those in Table 3, are arrayed according to our expectations regarding their probable support or opposition to the WPA. The closest vote was the only one on time limits—a 1941 amendment to eliminate them that won by four votes. Democrats

and third-party representatives from the open part of the polity opposed time limits (62), as did patronage-oriented Democrats (46), while the underdemocratized and Republicans favored limits (-24 and -32, respectively).⁴⁹

Who Voted With and Against Hopkins

Overall cohesion rates address the big picture, but which senators supported and opposed the WPA's policy of prevailing wages rates and unlimited aid when it was under attack in 1939? Who attempted to reverse the House legislation to alter the nature of the program and who stood against them?⁵⁰ In Table 8, we juxtapose senators who voted for the WPA with those who voted against it. Specifically, the table includes those senators who never crossed the WPA on prevailing wage rates and time limits and those who never failed to cross the WPA on these issues. (To be eligible for consideration, a senator had to have voted at least once on each issue.) All told, there were twenty-six senators who stood with the WPA in this way and thirty who stood against it.

The staunchest supporters of the WPA were from the open, democratic left. Of the twenty-six diehards, half fit this description. Steadfast for the WPA were the radical third-party senators—the Progressive Robert M. La Follette Jr. of Wisconsin and both Farmer-Labor senators from Minnesota. So, too, were ten Democrats from the open part of the polity with strong labor movements. In all, 65 percent (thirteen of twenty senators) of the democratic left supported WPA policy in this unequivocal way, and three others from this group provided relatively strong support.⁵¹ Another five of the diehard supporters were Democrats from the open part of the polity, though in states without strong labor movements by our means of measuring it. A sixth was Senator George Norris, an Independent from Nebraska.

Of the final seven steadfast supporters of the WPA, six were Democrats from states with patronage-oriented political party systems, a minority of the nineteen senators who fit this description. The views of patronage-oriented Democrats toward the WPA depended mainly on whether the administration ran it through the regular Democratic organization. Even when the administration did so, factions were often displeased. In Illinois, for instance, Roosevelt favored the organization of Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Chicago over Governor Henry Horner's, based downstate. Where there were plau-

Table 8. Staunch Senate Supporters and Opponents of the WPA on Wages and Time Limits.

Supporters	Type	Opponents	Type
Ashurst (D-AZ)	1	Bailey (D-NC)	4
Bone (D-WA)	1	Byrd (D-VA)	4
Gillette (D-IA)	1	Byrnes (D-SC)	4
La Follette (PROG-WI)	1	Connally (D-TX)	4
Lundeen (FARM-LAB-MN)	1	George (D-GA)	4
McCarran (D-NV)	1	Glass (D-VA)	4
Murray (D-MT)	1	Harrison (D-MS)	4
Pittman (D-NV)	1	McKellar (D-TN)	4
Schwartz (D-WY)	1	Miller (D-AK)	4
Schwellenbach (D-WA)	1	Russell (D-GA)	4
Shipstead (FARM-LAB-MN)	1	Sheppard (D-TX)	4
E. D. Thomas (D-UT)	1	Smith (D-SC)	4
Wheeler (D-MT)	1	Stewart (D-TN)	4
Brown (D-MI)	2	Austin (R-VT)	3
Davis (R-PA)	2	Bridges (R-NH)	3
Frazier (D-ND)	2	Gurney (R-SD)	3
Lee (D-OK)	2	Hale (R-ME)	3
Lucas (D-IL)	2	Taft (R-OH)	3
Maloney (D-CT)	2	Tobey (R-NH)	3
Mead (D-NY)	2	Townsend (R-DE)	3
Neely (D-WV)	2	White (R-ME)	3
Norris (IND-NE)	2	Bulow (D-SD)	2
Slattery (D-IL)	2	Burke (D-NE)	2
J.W. Thomas (D-OK)	2	Clark (D-ID)	2
Wagner (D-NY)	2	Hatch (D-NM)	2
Walsh (D-MA)	2	Holman (R-OR)	2
		Tydings (D-MD)	2
		Hayden (D-AZ)	1
		Herring (D-IA)	1
		King (D-UT)	1

Source: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789-1991* [computer file] (Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1992).

Note: 1=Open, Democratic Left; 2=Some Forces; 3=No Forces; 4=Under-democratized. (See text for complete description.) Supporters include senators who voted for prevailing wages at least once in three votes and never voted against them *and* voted against time limits at least once in two votes and never voted for them. Opponents include senators who voted against prevailing wages at least once in three votes and never voted for them *and* voted for time limits at least once in two votes and never voted against them. The prevailing wage votes (76-66, 76-86, and 76-97) were taken in July and August 1939. The time limit votes (76-87 and 76-99) were taken in July 1939 and June 1940.

sible alternatives to patronage Democrats, moreover, Roosevelt and Hopkins sometimes supported them. In New York City, Roosevelt turned against the Tammany machine and ran the WPA through Fiorello La Guardia, the Fusion Reform candidate whose city was granted a separate relief unit. In many other states, the Roosevelt administration neither was allied with the existing patronage party organizations nor was able to delegate the WPA to a pro-New Deal political alternative.⁵²

The Republican-dominated no-forces group was prominent among those steadfastly opposed to the WPA. Eight of the eighteen senators from the no-forces group were opponents of the WPA on wages and time limits. The only Republican that supported the WPA on wage rates and time limits was Senator James J. Davis of Pennsylvania. However, he was representing a state with a powerful labor movement and received labor support.⁵³

As expected, legislators from the underdemocratized part of the polity were stalwarts against the prevailing wage rates and for the time limit. Of the thirty steadfast opponents of the WPA on these issues, thirteen were from the underdemocratized part of the polity. Of the other nine senators in this category, four had one or fewer votes on the side of the WPA, with Hattie Caraway of Arkansas missing all five votes. And none of the others in this category appears in the steadfast supporter column of the table.

Conclusion

Synthesizing insights from institutional and political theories, we argue that specific institutional circumstances—an under-democratized political system and a patronage-oriented political party system—inhibit social policy. The American political system was a difficult one for advocates of modern social policy, in that one-half of the forty-eight state-level polities were either underdemocratized or patronage-oriented. We also theorize the political actors that most greatly influence social policy and make possible the negotiation of these obstacles. We argue that partisan political regimes pass social policy and that it is possible for a reform-oriented regime to take power in the American setting. In practice, such a regime requires a Democratic president allied with pro-spending groups and a congressional majority of Democrats outside the underdemocratized South and representatives of radical third parties. These regimes can

be buttressed on specific issues by well organized and politically active social movements, such as the labor movement in the case of the WPA.

The arguments find support in our examination of the historical trajectory of the WPA. The WPA was created and funded when a reform-oriented regime took power in 1935. The WPA was advanced after Roosevelt wrote a pro-social-policy Democratic platform, won by a landslide, and brought with him additional pro-spenders in Congress. The pro-spenders' ranks in Congress were reduced after the elections of 1938, and the WPA was diminished, as Congress added time limits to aid and dropped prevailing wage rates. The WPA met its demise when congressional pro-spenders dwindled in numbers after the 1942 elections, in a period in which the President was no longer focusing mainly on social policy. America's adoption of the WPA and modern social policy were not direct responses to the Depression. Other countries did not react the same way to the crisis, and the WPA was meant by administration policy experts as a permanent reform—to replace the dole of the temporary Federal Emergency Relief Administration and to complement the economic-security legislation for those deemed unemployable.

In the voting analyses, the group we deem to be the most probable pro-spenders—senators from open polities and with Democratic or third-party affiliations and representing strong labor movements—supported the WPA more strongly than did others. The grouping put up the strongest fight against the ending of prevailing wages and the introduction of time limits when the reformers' ranks declined in 1939. Those senators considered probable pro-spenders, subject to hypothesized forces in favor of social policy, supported the WPA, but less strongly. Those senators with no expected reasons to press social policy, mainly Republicans, opposed the WPA, increasingly solidly. Although senators from underdemocratized polities supported the WPA's budget in its early years, they were steadfast opponents to the WPA on issues of wages and time limits.

This episode of social policy reform also indicates that it was possible to enact a relatively extensive and generous social policy in the United States. Great advances were made under the rule of the Democratic party, allied with an emerging labor movement and other groups in favor of social policy. The greatest gains were made when Democrats outside the underdemocratized parts of the polity were at their peak strength. The other major period of reform of U.S. social

policy, the mid-1960s, when Medicare and Medicaid were adopted and Social Security was advanced, also came when a New Deal Democrat took the White House with a powerful mandate and Democrats, backed by an even more powerful labor movement, had overwhelming margins in Congress. In 1964, Lyndon Johnson won the presidency with 61 percent of the popular vote, swamping the Republican Barry Goldwater in the electoral college, 486 to 52, with Goldwater winning only five states of the Deep South and his home state, Arizona. The Democrats dominated the Senate by a margin of 68 to 32, with 30 Democrats from the open part of the polity. In the House, Democrats also held a more than two-to-one majority, 295 to 140, minimizing the influence of Democrats from underdemocratized districts.⁵⁴ Policy innovations soon followed.

Yet the findings here also suggest that the United States polity was structured in ways to inhibit the development of a strong, centralized, and generous social policy, as U.S. work and relief programs were becoming over time. The manner in which the WPA was constructed was a concession to Democrats in patronage-oriented parties, and this worked to the disadvantage of the program's long-term prospects. And the provision of a generous and extensive social policy was predicated on the left being able to predominate almost endlessly in the open parts of the polity. When Democrats lost strength there, as was inevitable in a two-party democracy, the WPA met its demise. Less ambitious programs, such as social insurance and means-tested grants-in-aid, survived and form the core of an American social policy that is relatively insubstantial.

Appendix. WPA Roll-Call Votes, 1935–1942

Date	Session/ Bill #	Y–N	Brief Description
Senate			
02/21/35	74-24*	HJR 117 44–43	Establishes prevailing wages.
03/12/35	74-32	HJR 117 32–56	Prohibits use of funds on military material.
03/15/35	74-34*	HJR 117 38–50	Establishes prevailing wages.
03/15/35	74-35	HJR 117 83–02	Wage rate should not “depress prevailing wages.”
03/19/35	74-36	HJR 117 21–66	Reduces appropriation from \$4 to \$1 billion.
03/19/35	74-37	HJR 117 30–57	Limits appropriation to one year period.
03/19/35	74-38+	HJR 117 30–57	<i>Reduces appropriation from \$4 to \$2 billion.</i>
03/20/35	74-40*	HJR 117 33–44	Requires that \$500 million be spent on school construction.
03/20/35	74-41	HJR 117 55–25	Requires no more than \$30 million be spent on school maintenance.

03/21/35 74-42	HJR 117 08-77	Increases appropriation from \$4 to \$9 billion.
03/23/35 74-45	HJR 117 68-16	Passage of work relief bill, HJR 117.
03/23/35 74-50	HJR 117 66-13	To agree to conference report on HJR 117.
06/01/35 74-192	HR 12624 14-57	Turns work relief administration over to the states.
02/02/37 75-16	HR 3587 36-42	<i>Reduces deficiency appropriation from \$790 to \$775 million.</i>
06/15/37 75-41	HJR 361 25-53	Restricts initiation of new projects with allocated but unspent funds.
06/21/37 75-42	HJR 361 34-49	<i>Sets 25% minimum for local project contributions.</i>
06/21/37 75-43	HJR 361 25-58	Prohibits initiation of projects without available funds for completion.
06/22/37 75-44	HJR 361 30-48	<i>Turns work relief administration over to the states.</i>
02/21/38 75-117	HJR 596 58-22	To consider HJR 596, making additional work relief appropriations.
02/22/38 75-118	HJR 596 22-53	Increases deficiency appropriation from \$250 to \$400 million.
02/22/38 75-119	HJR 596 38-36	<i>Repeals provision requiring WPA to avoid budget shortfalls.</i>
02/23/38 75-120	HJR 596 25-47	Sets 25% minimum for local project contributions.
02/23/38 75-121	HJR 596 68-01	Passage of HJR 596, making additional work-relief appropriations.
06/02/38 75-165	HJR 679 17-56	Reduces PWA and CWA appropriation, increases WPA appropriation.
06/02/38 75-166	HJR 679 37-40	<i>Prohibits use of work relief positions to influence elections.</i>
06/03/38 74-169	HJR 679 21-51	Turns relief administration over to the states.
06/03/38 75-171*	HJR 679 41-27	Stipulates minimum work-relief wage of \$40.
06/03/38 75-172*	HJR 679 24-43	Gives civil-service status to WPA administrative employees.
06/03/38 75-173*	HJR 679 33-35	Prevents use of work-relief funds for political purposes.
06/03/38 75-174*	HJR 679 32-33	Prohibits use of work-relief positions to influence elections.
06/03/38 75-175	HJR 679 15-51	Limits administrative expenses to 5 percent.
06/03/38 75-176	HJR 679 60-10	Passage of HJR 679, making work-relief appropriations.
01/27/39 76-13	HJR 83 46-47	<i>Increases deficiency appropriation from \$725 to \$875 million.</i>
04/11/39 76-29+	HJR 246 28-49	<i>Increases second deficiency appropriation from \$100 to \$150 million.</i>
06/28/39 76-55	HJR 326 51-24	Requires local contribution of 25 percent.
06/28/39 76-58	HJR 326 66-03	Congress requires list of employees making at least \$1,000 per year.
06/28/39 76-59*	HJR 326 33-36	Requires that hires and layoffs be based on "relative needs."
07/05/39 76-66+	S 2765 21-52	<i>Refers prevailing wage-rate issue to Education and Labor Cmte.</i>

07/28/39 76-86	S 2864 38-40	Reinstates prevailing wage rates, 2/3 required.
07/28/39 76-87	S 2864 43-32	Eliminates 18-month time limit, 2/3 required.
08/04/39 76-97	HR 7642 40-31	<i>Allows amendment to reinstate prevailing wage rates, 2/3 required.</i>
08/04/39 76-98*	HR 7642 40-31	Allows amendment to reinstate prevailing wage rates, 2/3 required.
08/04/39 76-99	HR 7642 39-31	<i>Allows amendment to eliminate 18-month time limit, 2/3 required.</i>
08/04/39 76-101	HR 7642 18-42	Allows amendment to restore Federal Theater Project, 2/3 required.
06/13/40 76-214	HJR 544 69-07	Provides WPA will continue to be organized by state, not by region.
06/14/40 76-215	HJR 544 25-52	Increases WPA appropriation by 50 percent in tandem with defense.
06/15/40 76-218	HJR 544 29-42	<i>Eliminates the 18-month time limit.</i>
06/19/41 77-59	HJR 193 31-26	Prevents regional centralization of accounting and auditing.
06/19/41 77-60+	HJR 193 22-31	<i>Increases appropriation from \$875 million to \$1.25 billion.</i>
06/30/41 77-64	HJR 193 27-24	To recede from amendments preventing regional centralization of accounting and auditing.
06/25/42 77-157	HJR 324 22-32	Scales down, rather than eliminating, regional offices.

 House of Representatives

01/23/35 74-15	HJR 117 257-142	To order the previous question on a closed rule for debate.
01/23/35 74-16	HJR 117 249-147	Passage of a closed rule for debate.
01/24/35 74-18	HJR 117 127-278	Provides that all WPA rules be published for 30 days before effective.
01/24/35 74-19	HJR 117 100-303	Returns relief administration to localities.
01/24/35 74-20	HJR 117 329-78	To pass HJR 117.
03/26/35 74-39	HR 174 265-108	Sends HJR 117 to conference committee after Senate amendments.
03/26/35 74-40	HR 174 263-106	Tables motion reconsidering vote on sending HJR 117 to conference.
04/01/35 74-42	HJR 117 258-71	To recommit the conference report to the conference committee.
04/05/35 74-44	HJR 117 317-70	To agree to the conference report.
04/29/36 74-187	HR 493 243-98	Tables request that FDR release letter from NYC WPA Administrator.
05/11/36 74-197	HR 12624 90-287	Returns relief administration to localities, requires 25% contribution.
06/01/37 75-52	HJR 361 271-107	Increases work relief appropriation from \$1 billion to \$1.5 billion.
06/01/37 75-54	HJR 361 147-231	Stipulates minimum expenditures for highways and secondary roads.
06/01/37 75-55	HJR 361 97-274	Caps WPA annual salaries at \$10,000 (reducing Hopkins's salary).
06/01/37 75-56	HJR 361 79-296	Returns relief administration to localities.
06/01/37 75-57	HJR 361 327-44	Passage of HJR 361, making relief appropriations.

02/16/38 75-115	HJR 596 354-23	Passage of HJR 596, making supplemental relief appropriations.
03/01/38 75-117	HJR 596 342-09	Disagrees with conference report on employment of aliens and authorization of fertilizer projects.
05/12/38 75-145	HJR 679 89-308	Returns relief administration to localities.
05/12/38 75-146	HJR 679 329-70	Passage of HJR 679, making relief appropriations.
06/14/38 75-165	HJR 679 297-74	To agree to the conference report on HJR 679.
01/13/39 76-12	HJR 83 397-16	Passage of HJR 83, making additional relief appropriations.
02/02/39 76-16	HJR 83 252-140	Concurs with Senate amendment striking regional wage equalization.
03/27/39 76-37	HR 30 351-27	To order previous question on congressional investigation of the WPA.
03/31/39 76-39	HJR 246 131-276	Reduces appropriation from \$825 million to \$780 million.
03/31/39 76-40	HJR 246 292-110	Passage of HJR 246, making relief appropriations.
06/16/39 76-69	HJR 326 373-21	Passage of HJR 326, making relief appropriations.
05/23/40 76-167	HJR 544 356-21	Passage of HJR 544, making relief appropriations.
06/13/41 77-48	HJR 193 169-165	Eliminates 18-month time limit.
06/13/41 77-49	HJR 193 214-114	Prohibits WPA employment of Workers' Alliance President.
06/11/42 77-131	HJR 324 133-184	Prohibits initiation of new projects unless necessary to war effort.
06/11/42 77-132	HJR 324 139-184	Returns relief administration to localities.
06/11/42 77-133	HJR 324 279-52	Passage of HJR 324, making relief appropriations.

Notes: Votes in italics are the 15 chosen for inclusion in the analyses of group-wise voting cohesion.

*—indicates a vote selected by decision rules, but excluded from analyses for substantive reasons (see text).

+—indicates a vote not selected by decision rules, but chosen for analyses for substantive reasons (see text).

Sources: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789-1991* [Computer file] (Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1992). Howard L Rosenthal and Keith T. Poole, *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789-1987: Reformatted Data*. [Computer file] (Pittsburgh: Howard L. Rosenthal and Keith T. Poole, Carnegie Mellon University, Graduate School of Industrial Administration [producers]. Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 1991).

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Notes

1. Institutional studies have done well in explaining the origins of public social provision and often take the form of case studies or close comparisons of the experiences of a few nations. Political theories have done well in explaining variation in social spending efforts among postwar capitalist democracies. For reviews, see Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1992), introduction; Evelyne Huber, Charles Ragin, and John D. Stephens, "Social Democracy, Christian Democracy, Constitutional Structure, and the Welfare State: Toward a Resolution of Quantitative Studies." *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (1993): 711–49.

2. U.S. Committee on Economic Security, *Report to the President* (Washington, D.C., 1935), 9. As late as December 24, 1934, Roosevelt wanted to combine the legislation for the Works Program and other economic security measures in one bill. Arthur W. Macmahon, John D. Millett, and Gladys Ogden, *The Administration of Federal Work Relief* (Chicago, 1941), 26–27; Edwin Witte, *The Development of the Social Security Act: A Memorandum on the History of the Committee on Economic Security and Drafting and Legislative History of the Social Security Act* (Madison, 1962), 77; Arthur Altmeyer, *The Formative Years of Social Security* (Madison, 1966), 9. "Social policy effort" is generally understood as the amount spent on social programs as a share of gross national product. On the U.S. efforts in the 1930s, see Edwin Amenta, *Bold Relief: Institutional Politics and the Origins of Modern American Social Policy* (Princeton, 1998), introduction.

3. Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven, 1971).

4. David Mayhew refers to these as "traditional party organizations" and defines them as substantially autonomous, long-lasting, hierarchical, seeking to nominate candidates for a wide range of public offices, and relying substantially on material incentives. *Placing Parties in American Politics* (Princeton, 1986), 19–20. For other notable arguments about "machine politics," see Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963); Martin Shefter, "Party and Patronage: Germany, Italy, and England," *Politics and Society* 7 (1977): 404–51; Ira Katznelson, *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States* (New York, 1981).

5. Mayhew also argues that patronage parties are unlikely to attract program builders, deter the participation of pro-spending groups like the labor movement, promote issue-less politics, and create a political culture of pessimism about the utility of government. *Placing Parties*, 292–94.

6. John D. Stephens, *The Transition from Capitalism to Socialism* (London, 1979). For a review of arguments and evidence, see Gosta Esping-Andersen and Kees van Kersbergen, "Contemporary Research on Social Democracy," *Annual Review of Sociology* 18 (1992): 187–208. Others have amended this thesis by focusing on the discouraging impact on social policy of right-wing political parties and center-party routes to the adoption of social policy, suggesting that gains in U.S. public spending would result from the taking of power by the Democrats, considered a

center party. Francis G. Castles and Peter Mair, "Left-Right Political Scales: Some 'Expert' Judgments." *European Journal of Political Research* 12 (1984): 73–88.

7. Esping-Andersen argues that a red-and-green coalition of workers and farmers was behind breakthrough Scandinavian social policies in the 1930s. *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, 1990), chap. 1. For a farmer-labor coalition argument in the American setting prior to the New Deal, see Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform: Farmers, Workers, and the American State, 1877–1917* (Princeton, 1999), introduction. Orloff argues that a coalition of the organized working class and policy experts was necessary for the passage of old-age pensions in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. *The Politics of Pensions: A Comparative Analysis of Britain, Canada, and the United States, 1880–1940* (Madison, 1993), chap. 2.

8. See, for instance, Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Poor People's Movements: Why They Succeed, How They Fail* (New York, 1977), chap. 1; Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement* (New York, 1994), chap. 10. Theda Skocpol argues that "widespread federated interests"—challenging organizations or reform groups organized across congressional districts—have the best chance of influencing U.S. social policy. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, introduction.

9. Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., *The Age of Roosevelt: The Crisis of the Old Order, 1919–1933* (Boston, 1957), 390–95; Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New York Years, 1928–1933* (New York, 1979), chaps. 3, 8; Jordan A. Schwarz, *The Interregnum of Despair: Hoover, Congress, and the Depression* (Urbana, Ill., 1970), chap. 7; William R. Brock, *Welfare, Democracy, and the New Deal* (Cambridge, 1988), chap. 4.

10. U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States from Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, D.C., 1976), series Y 84-134, Y 135-186, pp. 1075, 1077.

11. This group also includes Republicans from states dominated by traditional, patronage party organizations, Republicans from underdemocratized polities, and Democrats or Republicans affiliated with conservative third parties. There were few such legislators, however.

12. Macmahon et al., *Federal Work Relief*, chaps. 1–3; Samuel I. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York, 1938–50), 1935, Items 45, 54, and 89; Donald S. Howard, *The WPA and Federal Relief Policy* (New York, 1943), chap. 1; Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins*, 65–71; George McJimsey, *Harry Hopkins: Ally of the Poor and Defender of Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987), chaps. 5–6; Searle F. Charles, *Minister of Relief: Harry Hopkins and the Depression* (Syracuse, 1963), chaps. 6–7; Anthony Badger, *The New Deal: The Depression Years* (New York, 1989), 200–215. For data on work program and social spending efforts, see U.S. National Resources Planning Board (NRPB) Committee on Long-Range Work and Relief Policies, *Security, Work, and Relief Policies* (Washington, D.C., 1942), 560–61; Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics*, 224, 1114.

13. U.S. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report on the WPA Program* (Washington, D.C., 1946), 23–26.

14. Howard, *The WPA*, 491, 517–20; Federal Works Agency, *Final Report*, 23–25, 37–41.

15. McJimsey, *Harry Hopkins*, 81–83. According to a schedule devised by the WPA, there were relatively large variations in monthly wages across five skill categories and between wage employees and supervisory employees, as well as slight variations across four regions of the country and across county size to take into account differences in the cost of living. Federal Works Agency, *Final Report*, 23–26, 37–41; Howard, *The WPA*, chap. 6.

16. Patronage politics also seeped in through the requirement that almost all WPA workers be taken from general assistance rolls, over which the WPA or the federal government had little say. Edwin Amenta, Ellen Benoit, Chris Bonastia, Nancy K. Cauthen, and Drew Halfmann, "Bring Back the WPA: Work, Relief, and

the Origins of American Social Policy in Welfare Reform” *Studies in American Political Development* 12 (Spring 1998): 1–56.

17. The 1936 Democratic Party platform was explicit about public employment: “Where business fails to supply such employment, we believe that work at prevailing wages should be provided.” By contrast, the Republican platform criticized New Deal relief policies. Kirk H. Porter and Donald Bruce Johnson, *National Party Platforms, 1840–1968* (Urbana, Ill., 1970), 360–63, 366 [quote on 362]; Robert E. Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (New York, 1948), 81–86; Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. *The Age of Roosevelt: The Politics of Upheaval* (Boston, 1960), chap. 33.

18. Schlesinger, *The Politics of Upheaval*, chap. 32; Burns, *Roosevelt*, chap. 14; Sidney M. Milkis, *The President and the Parties: The Transformation of the American Party System Since the New Deal* (New York, 1993), 62–74; Susan Ware, *Beyond Suffrage: Women in the New Deal* (Cambridge, Mass., 1981), chap. 4; Nancy J. Weiss, *Farewell to the Party of Lincoln: Black Politics in the Age of FDR* (Princeton, 1981), chaps. 7, 9.

19. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics*, series Y 84-134, Y 135-186, pp. 1075, 1077.

20. Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR); *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789–1991* [Computer file] (Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1992); Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism*, 142–43.

21. U.S. Congress, Senate Special Committee to Investigate Unemployment and Relief, *Unemployment and Relief: Report*, 76th Cong. 1st sess., January 14, 1939, 3–6; May, *From New Deal to New Economics*; Macmahon et al., *Federal Work Relief*, 140–42; Sherwood, *Hopkins and Roosevelt*, 91–99; James T. Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism and the New Deal: The Growth of the Conservative Coalition in Congress, 1933–1939* (Lexington, Ky., 1967), 234–44; Rosenman, ed., *Public Papers of Franklin Roosevelt*, 1939, Item 49; Federal Works Agency, *Final Report*.

22. U.S. NRPB Committee, *Security, Work, and Relief Policies*, 407; Federal Works Agency, *Final Report*, 8, 19; Howard, *The WPA*, 361–68.

23. U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics*, 224; U.S. NRPB Committee, *Security, Work, and Relief Policies*, 558, 561; Howard, *The WPA*, 854–57.

24. Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism*.

25. In the Senate, an amendment immediately to restore the \$150 million was defeated 47–46. Soon afterward Roosevelt asked Congress to appropriate the additional \$150 million, but received only \$100 million. *New York Times*, 6 January 1939, 1; 11 January 1939, 1; Patterson, *Congressional Conservatism*, 294–97, 302–5.

26. Congress enacted these other important changes: (1) a requirement that local sponsors provide 25 percent of funding; (2) a \$52,000 limit on nonfederal building projects; (3) a mandate to abolish geographical differentials in security wages not justified by differences in cost of living; (4) a formula for the distribution of WPA jobs to the states; (5) the elimination of the Federal Theatre Project and a requirement that other arts projects gain local sponsorship. *New York Times*, 15 June 1939, 1; 29 June 1939, 1; 1 July 1939, 1.

27. *New York Times*, 7 July 1939, 1; 11 July 1939, 7; 24 July 1939, 1; ICPSR, *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records*.

28. Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 8, 1939, Item 2, pp. 36–53; Milkis, *The President and the Parties*, chaps. 5–6; Macmahon et al., *Federal Work Relief*, chap. 6.

29. Barry Dean Karl, *Executive Reorganization and Reform in the New Deal: The Genesis of Administrative Management, 1900–1939* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963); Richard Polenberg, *Reorganizing Roosevelt’s Government, 1936–1939* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966), chap. 9.

30. See, for instance, Rosenman, ed., *The Public Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, 1935, vol. 9, Items 119, 120, 123, 125, and 128.

31. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics*, series Y 84-134, Y 135-186, pp. 1075, 1077.

32. *New York Times*, 5 January 1940, 8.

33. *New York Times*, 21 May 1941, 1; 14 June 1941, 1.

34. Amenta et al., "Bring Back the WPA," Federal Works Agency, *Final Report*, p. v; Michael Katz, *In the Shadow of the Poorhouse: A Social History of Welfare in America* (New York, 1986), 224-34.

35. Other major New Deal social spending programs follow a similar trajectory—initiation during the reform-oriented regime of 1935, expansion and institutionalization in the mid- to late 1930s, but suffering retrenchment rather than elimination in the mid-1940s. Amenta et al., "Bring Back the WPA."

36. See Christopher Leman, "Patterns of Policy Development: Social Security in the United States and Canada," *Public Policy* 25 (1977): 261-91; Fred Block, "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule," *Socialist Revolution* 33 (1977): 6-28.

37. See Lester V. Chandler, *America's Greatest Depression, 1929-1941* (New York, 1970), 21.

38. For comparisons among industrial countries, see Peter Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1986). For a comparison of the United States and Great Britain in the adoption of Keynesian deficit spending techniques, see Margaret Weir, "Ideas and Politics: The Acceptance of Keynesianism in Britain and the United States," in *The Political Power of Economic Ideas: Keynesianism Across Nations*, ed. Peter A. Hall (Princeton, 1989), 53-86. On British social policy, see Derek Fraser, *The Evolution of the British Welfare State: A History of Social Policy Since the Industrial Revolution*, 2d ed. (London, 1984), chap. 8. For a comprehensive analysis of the adoption of core social insurance programs in seventeen industrial countries in the 1930s, see Alexander Hicks, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism: A Century of Income Security Politics* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1999), chaps. 3 and 4. For changes in U.S. and British social spending efforts in the 1930s, see Amenta, *Bold Relief*, chap. 4.

39. Rosenman, ed., *Public Papers of Franklin D. Roosevelt*, vol. 4, 1935, Item 1, pp. 19-20.

40. For a discussion of choosing roll-call votes, see Ira Katznelson, Kim Geiger, and Daniel Kryder, "Limiting Liberalism: The Southern Veto in Congress, 1933-1950," *Political Science Quarterly* 108 (1993): 283-306. We selected all close votes, excluding the trivial and redundant, and then brought back a few votes that were not extremely close but seemed important. For the Senate, a close vote was one for which the margin of victory was twenty votes or less and for which two-thirds (63) or more of the Senators cast votes. (Our computations include legislators' indications of support or opposition through pairings and announcements recorded in the *Congressional Record*.) This yielded twenty votes. When multiple votes were taken the same day on a single issue, we chose only the closest vote with the most Senators voting and excluded the others. This led to three exclusions. We then examined the *Congressional Record* and newspaper accounts in order to exclude votes that were either misleading or trivial. We also excluded four votes in which Republicans insincerely joined with progressives chiefly for the purpose of embarrassing the Roosevelt administration. These included two early votes on prevailing wages, votes 74-24 and 74-34. Roosevelt initially opposed prevailing wages because they were predicated at first on a full work week and would thus increase the WPA budget by about 50 percent. After a prevailing wage amendment (vote 74-24) passed, the administration had the bill recommitted to committee and the language deleted, offering assurances that the president would set pay rates that would "not affect adversely or otherwise tend to decrease the going rates of wages." The

administration's language was substituted by a vote of 83–2. We similarly excluded a 1939 vote specifying that heads of families with the greatest need should be the first hired and the last to be laid off (vote 76–59) and the 1938 vote on civil-service status for WPA employees (vote 75–172). We also excluded two trivial votes: a 1935 losing proposal requiring that \$500 million be spent on school construction (vote 74–40) and a June 1938 amendment to establish a minimum monthly wage of \$40 for WPA work (vote 75–171). We exclude the latter because the proposal would have had little practical effect—a conference committee was meeting on a wages and hours bill that would apply a comparable wage to WPA work. We also included four budgetary votes to gain leverage on this issue across time: a 1935 vote to reduce the WPA appropriation (vote 74–38), a 1939 vote to decrease the deficiency appropriation (76–29), and a 1941 vote to increase the appropriation (vote 77–60). The last (vote 76–66) was to commit an amendment to the Committee on Education and Labor, which was expected to act in favor of prevailing wages. In any case, we analyzed both the original 20 votes and our smaller modified set of 15, finding little difference in the results (not shown, but available). By contrast, of the 33 House votes only three had a margin of less than 100, and each took place in 1941 or 1942. The votes were taken from ICPSR, *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records*.

41. Some qualifications about the meaning of roll-call votes are in order. Power is often exercised at earlier stages of the legislative process, such as in congressional committees. Legislators from the underdemocratized South were rarely defeated and thus accumulated seniority that allowed them to chair approximately one-half of Senate committees during the New Deal and influence legislation that they opposed. See Mack C. Shelly II, *Permanent Majority: The Conservative Coalition in the United States Congress* (Birmingham, Ala., 1983); V. O. Key, *Southern Politics in State and Nation* (New York, 1949). WPA bills began in the appropriations committees, chaired by southerners Senator Carter Glass (D-Va.) and Representative James Buchanan (D-Tex.), for much of the WPA's existence. The appropriations subcommittees on work relief were also chaired by southerners, Senator James F. Byrnes (D-S.C.) and Representative Clifton A. Woodrum (D-Va.), who no doubt influenced the content of Roosevelt's proposals.

42. To be counted as having a strong labor movement, a state needed to score high on two measures: union members in 1939 as a share of the nonagricultural employed in 1940, and the income of the state federation of labor from 1938 to 1940 as a percentage of the nonagricultural labor force, with the latter employed to indicate political mobilization. For union membership, see Leo Troy and Neil Sheflin, *U.S. Union Sourcebook* (West Orange, N.J., 1985), 7–3; for state federation of labor income, see Edwin Amenta and Jane D. Poulsen, "Social Politics in Context: The Institutional Politics Theory and State-Level U.S. Social Spending Policies at the End of the New Deal," *Social Forces* 75 (1996): 33–60; for the nonagricultural labor force, see U.S. Bureau of Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, D.C., 1948), 194, 196. The fifteen states, which constitute a conservative estimate, are Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

43. This small number corresponds to the well-recognized but by 1939 tiny group of progressive Republican senators, who were mainly from the West and often in states where labor had made great advances. On the decline of progressive Republicans, see Clyde P. Weed, *The Nemesis of Reform: The Republican Party During the New Deal* (New York, 1994), chap. 6.

44. For discussions of this index, see Stuart A. Rice, "The Behavior of Legislative Groups: A Method of Measurement," *Political Science Quarterly* 40 (March 1925); idem, *Quantitative Methods in Politics* (New York, 1928); William H. Riker, "A Method for Determining the Significance of Roll Calls in Voting Bodies," in John

C. Wahlke and Heinz Eulau, eds., *Legislative Behavior: A Reader in Theory and Research* (Glencoe, Ill., 1959).

45. There are three plausible and complementary explanations. First, Katznelson and colleagues in "Limiting Liberalism" argue that southern Democrats from the underdemocratized part of the polity were fairly reliable early supporters of New Deal social spending initiatives, but only if they were written to appease them. Very possibly the negative impact of underdemocratized Democrats on social spending was registered at the budget-proposal stage, before votes were taken. Second, early southern Democratic votes in favor of the WPA budget may have been a result of a weak strategic position of the anti-social-policy grouping in the face of large pro-spending contingents in Congress after 1934. The underdemocratized Democrats may have been able to act on their opposition to the WPA only after the losses suffered by the pro-spending groupings in 1938 ended their majority in Congress. Third, southern Democrats may have turned against the WPA in later years because the administration was increasingly making steps to ensure its permanence. All in all, the evidence suggests that Democrats from the underdemocratized part of the polity were not opposed to redistributive national government spending programs, so long as they provided a no-strings-attached regional redistribution of income. But southern Democrats did not want national control over spending, or national standards in it, concerned as they were about the impact of spending on the operations of elites who paid low wages.

46. These votes are on a June 1937 measure to set local contributions at 25 percent (75–42), which was opposed by the WPA; a June 1937 measure to turn work relief administration to the states (75–44), which was opposed by the WPA; a February 1938 measure to repeal the Woodrum amendment requiring the WPA to avoid shortfalls (75–119), the repeal being supported by the WPA; and a June 1938 measure to prohibit the use of work relief to influence elections (75–166), which was opposed by the WPA. The latter measure was a cleverly worded vote of no confidence in the program and predictably ran along party lines.

47. See *Congressional Record*, vol. 83, part 2, pp. 2285–98.

48. In all the votes, the open, democratic left (34) and the some-forces (32) groups supported the WPA, with the underdemocratized part of the polity providing weak opposition (-4). The no-forces group, mainly consisting of Republicans (-75), opposed the WPA.

49. Howard L. Rosenthal and Keith T. Poole, *United States Congressional Roll Call Voting Records, 1789–1987: Reformatted Data*. [Computer file] (Pittsburgh: Howard L. Rosenthal and Keith T. Poole, Carnegie Mellon University, Graduate School of Industrial Administration [producers]. Ann Arbor: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 1991), vote 77–38. A proposal to devolve relief administration to states and localities, which was recurrently offered and typically failed overwhelmingly, was defeated in June 1942 by only 184–139. Southern opposition was much weaker (14) than that of other Democrats (84), vote 77–132. The only other House vote with a margin less than 100 was a vote on the same day (vote 131), prohibiting new WPA projects, with a similarly close and losing result. A relatively close vote (77–49) indicated an instance of coalition between Republicans and southern Democrats—the June 1941 passage, 214 to 114, of an amendment by Representative Everett Dirksen (R-Ill.) to prohibit the use of any WPA funds to compensate the president of the Workers' Alliance, David Lasser. The amendment had strong support from Republicans (-80) and moderate support from southern Democrats (-52). It was opposed by nonsouthern Democrats (32).

50. It should be noted that at the beginning of 1939 Hopkins had taken over as Secretary of Commerce; he was being groomed at the time potentially to become Roosevelt's successor. Colonel Francis Harrington was named to head the WPA

that year and thus senators were not literally voting with or against Hopkins—though he was still associated in the public's view with the WPA.

51. Senators Sheridan Downey of California, James O'Mahoney of Wyoming, and Alva Adams of Colorado voted with the WPA on all measures concerning the character of the WPA except the one to refer the issue of prevailing wages to the Committee on Education and Labor. O'Mahoney and Adams were members of the Appropriations Committee, which would lose control over the issue and possibly the WPA as a whole.

52. See Lyle W. Dorsett, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the City Bosses* (Port Washington, N.Y., 1977); Stephen P. Erie, *Rainbow's End: Irish Americans and the Dilemmas of Urban Machine Politics, 1840–1945* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1988); Searle F. Charles, *Minister of Relief: Harry Hopkins and the Depression* (Syracuse, 1963); Roger Biles, *Big City Boss in Depression and War: Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Chicago* (DeKalb, Ill., 1984); Amenta, *Bold Relief*, chap. 5.

53. Davis was also backed by the AFL. Richard C. Keller, "Pennsylvania's New Deal," in *The New Deal: The State and Local Levels*, ed. John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody (Columbus, Ohio, 1975), 45–76.

54. Congressional Quarterly, *Guide to U.S. Elections* (Washington, D.C., 1985); idem, *Congressional Elections, 1946–1996* (Washington, D.C., 1998), 170–71.

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