

The Polls: The Welfare State in Crossnational Perspective¹

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Over the last century all industrial nations have become welfare states. Each has adopted a broad set of social welfare programs to protect its citizens from such vicissitudes of life as unemployment, poverty, illness, and aging and to compensate for inequities arising from industrialization. Collectively the social welfare programs such as unemployment compensation, health care, retirement benefits, and the like are designed to provide all citizens with security and a minimum standard of living. Furthermore this protection is defined as a fundamental right of citizenship, as an entitlement owed the citizen. While all industrial nations have adopted the welfare state philosophy, they have differed significantly in how completely they have embraced the welfare state, on how extensive and how generous the protections are. The United States in particular has been the reluctant bride of the welfare state, instituting national programs later than most countries, enacting relatively limited programs in such areas as health care and family allowances, and spending a lower share of its national income on social welfare than most European nations (Armour and Coughlin, 1985 and Abrahamson, Anderson, Henriksen, and Larsen, 1986). Many explanations have been offered for the discrepancies: the failure of a socialist party to successfully contend for political power in the United States, the weakness of labor movement, the existence of a racial underclass, the (possibly) greater social mobility in the United States, and so on (Leibfried, 1978; Hewitt, 1977; Flora and Heidenheimer, 1981; Wilensky, 1975; Tomasson, 1983; Pescosolido, Boyer, and Tsui, 1985). Here we examine the relationship between the welfare state and the policy preferences and ideologies of the citizenry.

The contemporary attitudes and policy preferences of the citizenry in the United States, Austria, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom match the differences that exist in the historical development and current implementation

of the welfare state. America has generally been less supportive of principles underlying the welfare state and less eager to expand its scope. Leveling is not nearly as popular a goal in the United States as in the European nations. This does not seem to arise because Americans are convinced that their society is more open and thus that leveling naturally occurs across generations. In terms of both intergenerational opportunity and chances for women, Americans are near the middle of the five nations in their evaluations of the openness of society. While they show about an average willingness to take steps to take equalize conditions for women, they show by far the lowest level of support for reducing differences between classes.

Americans are likewise the least inclined to favor various governmental programs to regulate the economy. In terms of wage/price controls, employment creation schemes, governmental ownership, and other economic matters the United States routinely shows the lowest level of support. In contrast the Italians are generally the most enthusiastic for such regulations. For example, while 51% of Americans favor government programs "Supporting declining industries to protect jobs" this is endorsed by 76% of Italians.

Americans are also less supportive of such social welfare entitlements as health care, retirement benefits, housing, and jobs. As with regulations Americans are lowest in support while Italians are generally at the top of the scale. This reticence about expanding the welfare state does not seem rooted in concerns about taxes and government spending since the United States and the European nations differ little in their attitudes towards taxes (about two-thirds of everybody thinks income taxes are too high) and the United States is actually most likely to consider business taxes as too low. Social welfare spending (for health, retirement, and unemployment) are somewhat less supported in the United States than in Italy or the UK, but differ little from Austria

and Germany. The difference here may be that all European countries actually spend proportionally more than the United States, but at least Americans are no more opposed to their relative burden than Europeans and their perceived burden does not readily explain their lower support for welfare programs.

A hint of the underlying difference comes from inspection of attitudes on education. Americans are at the top of the list in their support for more educational opportunity and near the middle in their support for educational spending and assistance. Compared to their low support for other entitlement programs their support for education is relatively strong. However, what they really warm-up to is not the specific programs to assist education but the ideal of expanded opportunity. As Wilensky (1975) has noted, education is associated with equality of opportunity in contrast to most other welfare programs which are related to absolute equality.

As Coughlin (1980) has noted, there seems to be a consistent ordering of nations on their current level of welfare efforts and the public support for such efforts.² Americans have a less, elaborated welfare system because they want and demand less, while Europeans have more because they want more. While a complex array of historical and structural factors explain why the current differences have evolved, one factor does seem to be differences in ideological paradigms. The United States is more an opportunity society where a chance to achieve and a tolerance of some inequality as a natural repercussion of such an open system is accepted. In sharpest contrast Italy is a security society that wants extensive protection from inequities and hardships. The other European nations tend to fall between the Italian and American poles although closer to the European side than the American. While industrialization leads to the establishment of the welfare state in response to inequities and sufferings, the extent and nature of the welfare state varies across advanced nations and

this variation in programs mirrors differences in public policy preferences and in underlying public ideologies of opportunity, equality, and government action.

Except as noted, data in this article are from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP). ISSP is a continuing, annual program of crossnational collaboration. It brings together pre-existing national, social science projects and coordinates research goals thereby adding a crossnational perspective to individual, national studies. Joint research had been carried out on the role of government (1985), social support (1986), and social inequality (1987). In addition to the United States, Austria, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom which participated in the role of government module Australia, the Netherlands, Ireland, and Hungary are now collaborating in ISSP. For further details contact the ISSP secretariat, Roger Jowell, SCPR, 35 Northampton Square, London, EC1V 0AX England.

Technical Information on ISSP Role of Government Surveys

Country	Organization	Field Dates	Sample Size	Methods	Population
USA	NORC	2-4/1985	677	Supplement	18+
Austria	Institute for Sociology, Graz University	5-6/1986	987	Supplement	16+
Germany	Zentrum fuer Umfragen Methoden und Analysen	/1985	1048	Mail	18+
Italy	Eurisko	9-10/1985	1500	Personal	18-74
UK	SCPR	4-6/1985	1502	Supplement	18+

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Levelling

Some people think those with high incomes should pay a larger proportion (percentage) of their earnings in taxes than those who earn low incomes. Other people think that those with high incomes and those with low incomes should pay the same proportion (percentage) of their earnings in taxes.

Do you think those with high incomes should pay a much larger proportion, pay a larger proportion, pay the same proportion as those who earn low incomes, pay a smaller proportion, pay a much smaller proportion?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much larger.....	17.0		37.5	32.2	23.7
Larger.....	39.7		51.0	50.2	50.7
Same.....	37.7		10.0	13.3	22.1
Smaller.....	0.8		0.0	0.5	0.8
Much smaller.....	0.2		0.1	0.3	0.1
Can't choose.....	4.7		1.4	3.6	2.6

What is your opinion of the following statement?

It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the difference in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Agree strongly.....	13.4	36.7	29.5	32.4	22.2
Agree.....	18.1	29.6	26.9	36.3	29.6
Neither agree nor disagree	20.7	21.4	23.5	17.5	24.6
Disagree.....	31.3	7.3	10.0	11.8	17.6
Disagree strongly.....	16.5	4.9	10.1	2.0	6.0

On the whole do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to

Reduce income differences between the rich and poor.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	15.3	37.8	25.9	46.0	45.5
Probably should be.....	20.6	33.8	37.1	35.1	24.6
Probably should not be.....	25.0	15.0	23.6	9.2	13.7
Definitely should not be...	29.2	5.2	6.9	5.4	10.2
Can't choose.....	9.9	8.2	6.6	4.3	6.0

Now we would like to know how you feel about some of the particular issues and problems that people often talk about these days. We would like to know a) how important these issues and problems are in you view, b) how far you feel the government has responsibility for them and c) how well the government is handling these problems. . .

Tell me how much responsibility you think the government has for dealing with the problem. It is something that you feel is 1) essential for government to do, 2) something that government has an important responsibility to do, 3) some responsibility to do or 4) no responsibility at all to do?

Trying to even out differences in wealth between people.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>FRG</u>	<u>IT</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>NL</u>	<u>SW</u>	<u>FIN</u>
Essential responsibility...	13.0	25.9	25.4	39.7	25.4	38.4	31.7	25.9
An important responsibility	18.7	41.6	26.5	32.1	26.5	43.2	43.3	32.1
Some responsibility.....	32.3	28.3	32.9	20.3	32.9	14.6	20.3	26.6
No responsibility at all...	36.0	4.1	15.2	8.0	15.2	3.8	4.7	15.5

(Source Political Action, 1979)

USA = United States, AU=Australia, FRG=Germany, IT=Italy, UK=United Kingdom, NL=The Netherlands, SW=Switzerland, FIN=Finland

Intergenerational Opportunity

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

A person whose parents are rich has a better chance of earning a lot of money than a person whose parents are poor.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Agree strongly.....	29.6	41.0	23.2	36.2	28.8
Agree.....	37.3	32.5	46.5	35.6	43.3
Neither agree nor disagree	12.4	14.3	17.7	13.1	12.8
Disagree.....	17.3	9.2	9.8	11.3	13.2
Disagree strongly.....	3.4	2.9	2.8	3.8	1.9

A person whose father is a professional has a much better chance of getting ahead in life than a person whose father is a factory worker.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Agree strongly.....	19.0	39.7	18.3	33.9	22.3
Agree.....	32.5	33.9	45.1	36.7	46.0
Neither agree nor disagree	19.1	12.9	18.6	12.7	16.3
Disagree.....	24.9	10.8	14.2	12.2	13.5
Disagree strongly.....	4.4	2.8	3.7	4.5	1.8

In America what you achieve in life depends largely on your family background.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Agree strongly.....	10.6	21.5	7.8	22.2	16.5
Agree.....	19.9	29.8	27.1	40.9	35.6
Neither agree nor disagree	20.2	27.0	29.4	21.3	17.5
Disagree.....	40.9	18.5	28.3	13.0	26.2
Disagree strongly.....	8.3	3.2	7.4	2.7	4.1

Gender Opportunity

Would you say that opportunities for a college education are, in general, better or worse, for women than for men?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much better.....	1.8		0.8	0.7	1.3
Better.....	6.8		1.5	4.0	2.1
No difference.....	75.3		72.0	81.4	68.9
Worse.....	10.5		17.6	8.1	15.0
Much worse.....	0.8		1.6	1.2	1.5
Can't choose.....	4.8		6.5	4.5	11.2

How about job opportunities for women-do you think they are, in general, better or worse than job opportunities for men with similar education and experience?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much better.....	3.0		0.4	1.0	1.8
Better.....	7.1		0.7	6.4	4.8
No difference.....	31.7		11.5	47.3	37.3
Worse.....	49.2		57.6	40.0	47.2
Much worse.....	4.2		27.3	2.2	4.6
Can't choose.....	4.8		2.6	3.2	4.3

And how about income and wages--compared with men who have similar education and jobs--are women in general paid better or worse than men?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much better.....	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.5
Better.....	1.5	0.5	0.6	1.6	1.7
No difference.....	19.7	11.0	11.3	70.6	30.6
Worse.....	64.6	60.6	61.9	22.2	55.9
Much worse.....	7.6	20.2	20.4	1.0	4.8
Can't choose.....	5.7	7.6	5.8	4.5	6.4

Here are three things the government might do. Some people are in favor of them while other people are against them. Please circle one number for each statement to show how you feel.

The government should increase opportunities for women in business and industry.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	18.1	38.6	39.6	14.7	16.4
In favor of.....	30.8	35.9	32.5	37.1	39.9
Neither in favor of nor against.....	34.8	20.6	23.2	31.4	33.3
Against.....	13.5	4.1	3.4	14.1	8.9
Strongly against.....	2.8	0.7	1.3	2.7	1.5

The government should increase opportunities for women to go to college.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	13.9	22.3	22.3	9.6	11.4
In favor of.....	30.5	25.9	20.2	28.0	33.6
Neither in favor of nor against.....	38.6	42.3	48.0	48.9	45.9
Against.....	14.8	6.6	6.6	11.0	7.9
Strongly against.....	2.2	2.9	2.9	2.5	1.2

Women should be given preferential treatment when applying for jobs or promotions.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	5.7	7.1	3.0	4.8	2.9
In favor of.....	7.9	12.8	7.5	15.6	4.5
Neither in favor of nor against.....	27.9	46.7	47.7	35.2	27.6
Against.....	42.5	22.7	23.0	33.1	46.4
Strongly against.....	15.9	10.8	18.8	11.3	18.5

Do you think that . . .

Economic Regulations

All employees should be required to retire at an age set by law.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Agree strongly.....	4.8	27.9	11.2	44.1	19.7
Agree.....	12.8	29.8	31.8	34.3	35.1
Neither agree nor disagree	17.3	20.8	20.9	12.7	17.7
Disagree.....	44.3	17.2	28.7	7.7	23.3
Disagree strongly.....	20.8	4.3	7.3	1.2	4.2

Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Circle one number for each action to show whether you are in favor of it or against it.

Control of wages by legislation.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	8.5	26.3	10.5	31.2	10.3
In favor of.....	14.3	31.9	17.1	41.7	22.2
Neither in favor nor against.....	22.9	22.5	20.3	14.6	21.2
Against.....	38.4	12.1	21.6	10.9	36.0
Strongly against.....	15.9	7.2	30.6	1.6	10.3

Control of prices by legislation.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	8.1	56.0	28.0	53.7	20.5
In favor of.....	29.5	30.6	27.5	37.1	39.7
Neither in favor nor against.....	21.7	7.4	9.5	5.0	15.8
Against.....	30.4	4.1	17.1	3.7	20.0
Strongly against.....	10.3	2.0	17.9	0.5	4.0

Cuts in government spending.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	40.8	53.1	39.8	34.5	11.1
In favor of.....	39.5	28.5	36.8	33.5	27.0
Neither in favor nor against.....	11.5	14.2	15.3	20.3	24.4
Against.....	6.6	3.2	5.5	10.5	28.9
Strongly against.....	1.5	0.9	2.5	1.1	8.6

Government financing of projects to create new jobs.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	27.9	28.3	30.2	55.6	37.4
In favor of.....	41.5	43.6	41.2	35.7	50.2
Neither in favor nor against.....	15.9	22.3	15.2	6.3	7.9
Against.....	11.2	4.4	8.8	2.0	3.7
Strongly against.....	3.5	1.5	4.6	0.4	0.8

Less government regulation of business.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	15.0	17.6	13.5	11.9	13.1
In favor of.....	33.6	28.9	27.7	29.6	41.5
Neither in favor nor against.....	32.3	37.3	31.7	38.1	34.0
Against.....	15.9	12.9	18.7	17.5	9.5
Strongly against.....	3.2	3.2	8.3	2.9	1.9

Support for industry to develop new products and technology.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	21.7	29.9	31.0	26.6	37.4
In favor of.....	48.4	36.2	44.3	47.7	53.3
Neither in favor nor against.....	19.6	26.0	17.5	18.0	7.4
Against.....	8.6	6.3	4.9	6.7	1.6
Strongly against.....	1.6	1.6	2.3	1.0	0.3

Supporting declining industries to protect jobs.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	17.2	18.9	24.5	35.3	18.8
In favor of.....	34.1	27.4	33.4	41.1	30.9
Neither in favor nor against.....	23.9	23.4	14.3	12.5	21.2
Against.....	20.0	20.3	16.5	9.6	25.3
Strongly against.....	4.9	10.0	11.2	1.6	3.8

Reducing the work week to create more jobs.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Strongly in favor of.....	5.6	13.8	21.7	27.5	15.7
In favor of.....	20.3	22.0	28.8	36.9	34.1
Neither in favor nor against.....	27.5	22.1	19.8	19.9	22.8
Against.....	34.2	25.5	15.6	12.9	23.6
Strongly against.....	12.4	16.7	14.1	2.8	3.8

On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to . . .

Keep prices under control

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	39.3	48.2	24.7	75.0	60.1
Probably should be.....	44.7	41.9	49.6	22.0	31.5
Probably should not be.....	14.5	5.1	19.0	1.5	5.1
Definitely should not be...	7.8	1.2	4.8	0.4	1.8
Can't choose.....	2.9	3.6	1.8	1.0	1.5

Provide industry with the help it needs to grow.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	15.6	21.9	10.6	33.1	53.0
Probably should be.....	42.6	45.4	40.1	47.7	40.1
Probably should not be.....	23.8	19.6	37.7	12.6	3.5
Definitely should not be...	10.8	3.4	6.4	2.7	0.9
Can't choose.....	7.1	9.6	5.2	4.0	2.5

What do you think the government's role in each of these industries should be.

Electric power.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Own it.....	5.6	21.1	18.3	32.3	25.3
Control prices and profits but not own it...	58.9	53.3	60.3	54.1	42.8
Neither own it nor control its prices and profits...	30.0	8.2	16.4	3.6	25.4
Can't choose.....	5.6	17.5	5.0	9.9	6.5

Local mass transportation.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Own it.....	9.6	26.2	23.3	29.0	17.7
Control prices and profits but not own it...	43.0	42.7	52.7	56.6	36.6
Neither own it nor control its prices and profits...	38.9	11.4	17.6	4.6	39.4
Can't choose.....	8.4	19.8	6.4	9.9	6.3

The steel industry.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Own it.....	2.5	19.2	8.0	18.4	16.4
Control prices and profits but not own it...	32.0	38.5	42.0	53.6	30.3
Neither own it nor control its prices and profits...	55.8	18.2	40.4	8.9	41.9
Can't choose.....	9.7	24.0	9.6	19.1	11.4

Banking and insurance.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Own it.....	2.6	12.7	4.8	21.3	8.4
Control prices and profits but not own it...	44.4	44.5	51.3	56.4	31.5
Neither own it nor control its prices and profits...	44.1	22.0	36.8	9.1	49.0
Can't choose.....	8.9	20.7	7.1	13.1	11.0

The automobile industry.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Own it.....	2.2	6.6	2.2	13.0	8.0
Control prices and profits but not own it...	33.3	35.2	38.6	58.6	29.0
Neither own it nor control its prices and profits...	56.4	31.8	51.9	13.8	53.2
Can't choose.....	8.0	26.3	7.3	14.6	9.8

Welfare Programs

On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to

Provide a job for everyone who wants one.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	12.9	44.7	34.9	51.2	36.7
Probably should be.....	20.3	35.9	45.2	37.2	32.4
Probably should not be.....	33.3	12.4	15.4	7.1	16.1
Definitely should not be...	28.0	2.6	2.8	3.0	10.8
Can't choose.....	5.6	4.5	1.6	1.6	4.1

Provide health care for the sick.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	35.5	64.3	53.4	86.0	85.6
Probably should be.....	46.3	31.7	43.6	12.9	13.2
Probably should not be.....	11.9	1.3	2.1	0.1	0.6
Definitely should not be...	4.4	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3
Can't choose.....	2.0	2.3	0.6	0.7	0.3

Provide a decent standard of living for the old.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	41.9	63.5	55.4	81.0	78.2
Probably should be.....	44.9	33.8	40.5	17.4	19.6
Probably should not be.....	9.1	1.3	2.9	0.4	1.1
Definitely should not be...	2.4	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.5
Can't choose.....	1.7	1.3	0.8	1.0	0.6

Provide a decent standard of living for the unemployed.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Definitely should be.....	14.7	16.2	23.2	38.7	42.8
Probably should be.....	33.0	46.5	59.7	43.6	39.0
Probably should not be.....	30.2	18.8	11.2	10.3	10.3
Definitely should not be...	15.2	10.1	3.0	4.2	3.7
Can't choose.....	6.8	8.4	2.9	3.2	4.2

If the government had to choose between keeping down inflation or keeping down unemployment to which do you think it should give highest priority?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Keeping inflation down.....	39.2	23.8	33.0	28.0	28.3
Keeping unemployment down..	44.5	53.5	50.9	63.5	63.5
Can't choose.....	16.3	22.7	16.1	8.6	8.2

Now we would like to know how you feel about some of the particular issues and problems that people often talk about these days. We would like to know a) how important these issues and problems are in your view, b) how far you feel the government has responsibility for them and c) how well the government is handling these problems.... Tell me how much responsibility you think government has for dealing with the problem. Is it something that you feel is 1) essential for government to do, 2) something that government has an important responsibility to do, 3) some responsibility to do or 4) no responsibility at all to do?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>FRG</u>	<u>IT</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>NL</u>	<u>SW</u>	<u>FIN</u>
Looking after old people								
Essential responsibility.....	41.1	43.5	51.0	69.2	57.7	43.1	38.9	47.6
An important responsibility...	40.3	45.1	42.4	22.8	30.5	50.3	50.5	48.4
Some responsibility.....	17.8	11.1	6.2	7.6	11.1	6.0	10.2	3.7
No responsibility at all.....	0.8	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.2
Seeing to it that everyone who wants a job can have one								
Essential responsibility.....	34.2	59.0	60.0	78.9	54.6	49.1	49.2	57.7
An important responsibility...	37.4	35.2	33.5	14.9	30.8	41.1	39.9	36.1
Some responsibility.....	24.0	5.2	6.1	5.4	13.1	7.7	10.0	5.2
No responsibility at all.....	4.4	0.6	1.5	0.8	1.5	2.1	0.9	1.0
Providing good medical care								
Essential responsibility.....	41.9	62.2	62.7	79.3	73.5	55.1	47.5	54.4
An important responsibility...	35.6	31.7	31.5	16.3	21.1	38.2	38.1	40.1
Some responsibility.....	19.6	6.0	5.5	3.9	5.0	6.2	13.0	5.1
No responsibility at all.....	2.9	0.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.5	1.4	0.3
Providing adequate housing								
Essential responsibility.....	25.4	36.7	39.1	69.3	60.6	52.4	27.4	30.1
An important responsibility...	37.5	44.2	45.4	22.4	27.0	41.4	43.1	47.3
Some responsibility.....	32.3	18.4	14.1	7.3	11.6	5.8	26.2	19.9
No responsibility at all.....	4.9	0.7	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.4	3.3	2.7

SOURCE: Political Action, 1979

Government Spending and Taxes

Listed below are various areas of government spending. Please indicate whether you would like to see more or less government spending in each area. Remember that if you say "much more", it might require a tax increase to pay for it.

The environment.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	9.7	32.2	42.5	16.4	6.3
Spend more.....	31.7	36.8	38.6	42.0	29.1
Spend the same as now.....	42.8	23.2	15.6	29.4	54.1
Spend less.....	9.6	1.9	1.2	6.6	4.5
Spend much less.....	1.7	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.6
Can't choose.....	4.4	5.3	1.8	4.7	5.4

Health.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	12.6	21.5	18.8	32.6	35.6
Spend more.....	46.0	37.1	32.6	46.8	52.2
Spend the same as now.....	33.0	36.5	39.9	13.5	10.8
Spend less.....	5.2	1.4	6.5	4.3	0.5
Spend much less.....	1.7	0.4	0.6	1.1	0.3
Can't choose.....	1.7	3.1	1.6	1.7	0.7

The police and law enforcement.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	9.6	4.2	8.6	11.0	8.4
Spend more.....	40.2	16.7	20.4	35.0	30.4
Spend the same as now.....	42.6	56.3	59.7	39.6	53.3
Spend less.....	4.3	12.7	7.1	7.9	4.3
Spend much less.....	0.8	2.7	1.2	1.9	1.8
Can't choose.....	2.4	7.4	3.0	4.5	1.8

Education.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	21.4	8.4	9.4	16.0	22.2
Spend more.....	43.3	25.9	30.0	44.5	51.6
Spend the same as now.....	29.1	52.0	52.0	31.7	22.9
Spend less.....	3.5	7.4	5.9	3.9	1.8
Spend much less.....	0.6	0.8	1.0	0.3	0.2
Can't choose.....	2.1	5.4	1.7	3.6	1.3

The military and defense.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	7.7	2.8	1.5	2.9	5.0
Spend more.....	11.8	9.5	4.4	8.4	12.1
Spend the same as now.....	36.9	36.7	30.0	30.9	43.8
Spend less.....	26.0	25.9	31.8	27.8	24.5
Spend much less.....	14.0	17.8	29.9	25.4	12.5
Can't choose.....	3.7	7.3	2.4	4.6	2.1

Retirement benefits.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	12.3	12.1	10.4	22.3	25.3
Spend more.....	29.3	36.7	35.3	51.9	49.3
Spend the same as now.....	41.0	45.6	48.9	19.8	23.5
Spend less.....	10.2	1.4	3.3	3.1	1.0
Spend much less.....	2.7	0.4	0.6	0.6	0.1
Can't choose.....	4.3	3.8	1.5	2.3	1.0

Unemployment benefits.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	7.2	3.0	7.6	15.3	12.0
Spend more.....	17.0	11.2	26.0	39.2	28.2
Spend the same as now.....	48.9	41.2	50.5	24.7	38.7
Spend less.....	16.6	28.9	10.2	9.8	14.5
Spend much less.....	6.7	9.7	2.6	6.6	4.1
Can't choose.....	3.8	5.9	3.0	4.3	2.4

Culture and the arts.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Spend much more.....	3.7	2.3	2.0	6.8	1.2
Spend more.....	10.8	8.3	11.0	24.6	8.0
Spend the same as now.....	39.2	41.1	48.8	45.7	35.3
Spend less.....	23.7	27.6	24.1	10.8	30.8
Spend much less.....	14.8	12.3	9.5	5.9	20.2
Can't choose.....	7.8	8.3	4.5	6.2	4.5

Do you consider the amount of federal income tax that your household has to pay is

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much to high.....	22.9	21.3	16.4	29.7	20.6
Too high.....	37.3	44.7	41.5	39.3	35.1
About right.....	29.9	19.8	26.8	25.9	25.4
Too low.....	0.5	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.5
Much too low.....	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.2
Pay no tax.....	5.8	7.2	11.2	3.2	15.3
Can't choose.....	3.6	6.3	3.8	1.5	2.9

Do you consider the amount of tax that business and industry have to pay is too high or too low?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Much too high.....	4.7	12.0	2.1	21.8	9.3
Too high.....	12.2	27.6	15.6	29.0	30.4
About right.....	29.4	19.8	68.2	18.0	30.8
Too low.....	33.0	2.6	12.3	8.9	5.6
Much too low.....	9.2	0.5	1.7	3.9	1.3
Can't choose.....	11.5	37.5	0.0	18.5	22.6

Education

How do you feel about opportunities for young people to go to college. Should opportunities be . . .

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Increased a lot.....	44.3	5.5	9.8	8.5	29.3
Increased a little.....	25.1	13.7	21.2	30.2	26.0
Kept the same as now.....	23.9	47.2	43.8	37.6	34.6
Reduced a little.....	3.5	18.5	16.0	15.4	4.1
Reduced a lot.....	0.8	1.3	2.4	2.6	1.0
Can't choose.....	2.7	13.7	6.8	5.5	4.9

Some people think the government should provide financial assistance to college students. Others think the government should not provide such aid. In each of the circumstances listed below should the government provide grants that would not have to be paid back, provide loans which the student would have to pay back, or should the government not provide any financial assistance?

For students whose parents have a low income.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Government grants.....	42.7		51.8	76.9	81.4
Government loans.....	52.0		45.1	17.6	16.3
No government assistance...	4.5		1.3	3.3	0.9
Can't choose.....	0.8		1.8	2.2	1.4

For students who have outstanding grades in high school.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Government grants.....	35.1		42.3	63.3	66.0
Government loans.....	53.3		51.4	21.0	27.2
No government assistance...	9.5		2.2	10.9	2.4
Can't choose.....	2.1		4.0	4.8	4.5

For students who have average grades and middle income parents.

	<u>USA</u>	<u>Austria</u>	<u>Germany</u>	<u>Italy</u>	<u>UK</u>
Government grants.....	14.4		10.3	23.2	42.5
Government loans.....	66.1		69.5	35.8	44.6
No government assistance...	16.3		15.9	33.4	7.1
Can't choose.....	3.1		4.3	7.6	5.8

Now we would like to know how you feel about some of the particular issues and problems that people often talk about these days. We would like to know a) how important these issues and problems are in your view, b) how far you feel the government has responsibility for them and c) how well the government is handling these problems.... Tell me how much responsibility you think government has for dealing with the problem. Is it something that you feel is 1) essential for government to do, 2) something that government has an important responsibility to do, 3) some responsibility to do or 4) no responsibility at all to do?

	<u>USA</u>	<u>AU</u>	<u>FRG</u>	<u>IT</u>	<u>UK</u>	<u>NL</u>	<u>SW</u>	<u>FIN</u>
Providing good education								
Essential responsibility.....	47.3	48.0	55.2	66.4	68.4	64.4	46.6	39.7
An important responsibility...	35.7	41.6	37.6	26.7	24.0	33.9	42.3	48.1
Some responsibility.....	14.4	9.9	6.9	6.0	7.2	1.5	10.0	11.3
No responsibility at all.....	2.5	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.4	0.2	1.1	0.9

SOURCE: Political Action, 1979

FOOTNOTES

¹For previous Polls articles on public attitudes toward the welfare state in the United States see Shapiro and Gillroy, 1984a; 1984b; Shapiro and Smith, 1985; Shapiro and Young, 1986; Shapiro, Patterson, Russell, and Young, 1986; and

²The % of gross domestic product spent on social welfare in 1977 was Germany (23.4%), Italy (22.8%), Austria (21.1%), United Kingdom (17.3%) and the United States (13.7%) Armour and Coughlin, 1985, p.80).