

# Elite Perceptions of Welfare Inequality: Frame of Reference for an Analysis of Storting Representatives' Positions on Welfare Problems in Norway since 1900\*

PER ARNT PETTERSEN  
Institute for Social Research, Oslo

## 1. Introduction

Welfare studies – investigations into living conditions and social politics – have figured centrally in recent social research. One central research problem has been the effect of social policy on the distribution of different welfare values vertically across social strata and horizontally across geographical divisions.

Public authorities play a significant role in the on-going distribution of social costs and benefits through its decisions within all sectors and at all decision levels. Since the interaction between public and private mechanisms for the allocation of values is yet to be properly mapped, we know comparatively little about the distribution of power among commercial and industrial interests, organizations, and political authorities. The outcome of the processes of allocation, however, is fully evident: Value allocations are manifested in the degree of social stratification, i. e., the systematic, differential distribution of social, economic, and cultural goods.

The task of explicit social policy has been to rectify the grosser forms of deprivation. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose that those who plan and implement social policy – broadly understood – have developed conceptual models of the processes which produce social inequalities and welfare deficiencies. These conceptions constitute the decision premises behind their regulatory, distributive, and re-distributive policies.

I shall develop in this article a framework and some hypotheses regarding the changing conceptions of social inequality held by the members of the Norwegian

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national assembly (the *Storting*), the central political elite in Norway. The purpose is to trace empirically how attention foci and positions regarding skewed distributions of social goods have changed in the last century and to attempt to relate actual changes in social and economic inequalities to these conceptual developments.

The theoretical dimension of the research is to identify the principal factors explaining attitudinal and perceptual changes. The theoretical starting point is that there is a fine interaction between such changes and actual socio-economic developments. This sort of explanatory perspective requires an integration of social science theory from such fields as public administration, political sociology, sociology of knowledge, and economics.

The longitudinal perspective used in this design is an attempt to avoid precisely the chicken-egg problem which analyses of objective-subjective interactions often run up against. The longitudinal design offers the possibility of identifying those empirical changes which are the consequences of political decision and which in turn influence assessments of social conditions and subsequent revision of policy goals.

The conception/perception variable has five main aspects:

- 1) Perception and identification of needs and need patterns
- 2) Conceptions of available means for policy implementation
- 3) Preference orderings
- 4) Ideological cleavages
- 5) Perceptions of 'strategic' support and interest articulation.

These five dimensions, treated as dependent variables, structure the following discussion. The object is to identify those social structural changes and those parliamentary compositions which form and structure elite conceptions of needs, priorities, and interests in the area of welfare policy.

## 2. Welfare Distribution Mechanism and the Perception of Needs

'Need' is a central – and controversial – concept in welfare theory. The central questions of this study are *how* the needs of society come to the attention of decision-makers and *which* needs are salient.<sup>1</sup>

Hernes asserts – as have others – that the market economy mechanism fails to articulate certain interests:

The classic point of departure for economic theory is that consumers express their interests for various goods through the amount of money or the share of their income that they are willing to exchange for these goods. Consumer demand indicates to the producer which goods are profitable to produce.<sup>2</sup>

According to Hernes, market allocation can distort the expression of interests to the extent that consumers have preferences which cannot be expressed in

monetary terms. In the same way the market mechanism can distort the recognition of central needs in a society. Only *effective* demand can be recorded in a money market. This means that the concept of need must be distinguished from consumer preferences if it is to have any theoretical utility. The failure of effective demand can have several causes:

- 1) The market mechanism closely reflects income inequalities, to the obvious disadvantage of those with low purchasing power.
- 2) The market mechanism records demand only for those goods which are available in the market at a given time, and which goods are supplied need not correspond to needs.
- 3) Available goods and services may not be taken advantage of by specific groups because of geographical or even social psychological 'distance'.
- 4) Groups which have special needs but which are weak in terms of numbers may have difficulty in achieving sufficient market weight to have their needs met, although their income levels are satisfactory.

In these examples it is apparent that the resource-poor groups – the groups which often have the greatest need – are characteristically those who are neglected by the mechanism. The distinction between consumer preferences and needs is important to this research because inequality in the satisfaction of economic preferences is easier to record as a social problem, and thereby as a political problem, than unmet needs which fall outside standard commercial accounts.

Query: Is the *Storting's* attention to welfare questions dominated by problems which can be recorded as consumer preferences?

Using effective market demand to identify welfare problems will create a tension between welfare policy on the one hand and more general goals on the other. Attention (investment) will be directed toward problems which can be identified through the market mechanism, while problems within sectors or population groups which lack effective demand remain unresolved, or grow in scope.

Several questions come up in this connection:

- 1) Which are the salient welfare questions in the *Storting* at various times?
- 2) To what extent does the market mechanism seem to distort the *Storting's* attention to the different welfare problems?
- 3) How significant is the distance between the decision-makers' perceptions of pressing social needs and the actual social situation?
- 4) What are the time lags between the development of the various conceptual elements of a welfare ideology and actual policy adoption?

It is clear that organizations and associational networks influence the socio-political definition of social groups and their interests. The interest-articulation function of associations modifies and perhaps to an extent corrects the direction of the market mechanisms.

Structural, social, and psychological obstacles to collective action, however,

do not affect all social groups equally.<sup>3</sup> Some groups are consequently much slower than others in organizing the collective action necessary to protect their interests. This raises two questions:

- 1) To what extent does the organizing of social groups affect the *Storting's* perception of problem areas, and, correspondingly, to what extent does the failure to organize lead to the neglect of certain problems?
- 2) For some groups the obstacles to organizing seem insurmountable. This applies, for example, to certain groups like social deviants and the psychologically handicapped. What is the significance of associations which 'adopt' such groups' interests? It is important to map such alternative channels of articulation.

These queries require perceptual and attitudinal data from the decision-makers' side to complement the considerable material already available on the various aspects of the organizational development.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. Economic Conditions and Welfare Policy Implementation

The *allocation of resources* – how resources are allocated – is an important question with two facets:

- 1) Who shall pay? Most allocations result in some groups being deprived of resources which they otherwise could have utilized according to their own preferences. The chief means of 'extraction' are taxes and fees.
- 2) The next step, the step which is more important to this study, is the utilization of the resources. *Who* are the beneficiaries of the allocation?

For the sake of simplicity we shall distinguish between groups which *provide* resources for allocation and groups which *benefit* from allocated resources. It is the latter group with which this research is concerned (although a precise distinction is impossible).

There are two different types of allocation: distributive and re-distributive.<sup>5</sup> *Distributive* allocations are intended to benefit the greatest possible number of the population. As many as possible, including the providers of the resources, enjoy the allocated benefits. Examples of distributive allocations are creation and maintenance of health services and school systems, environmental protection, and development of recreational resources. *Re-distributive* allocations provide benefits for specific groups in the population. Only groups which meet specific criteria have access to these benefits. Examples include subsidy systems and group-specific support programs.<sup>6</sup> Unlike distributive allocations, re-distributive allocations exclude all those who do not satisfy the specified criteria. The criteria are usually of a social, geographic, or demographic nature. However, some of the most resource-deprived social groups must be more closely identified. This can be a matter of specifying the unemployed, different kinds of mental and physical

incapacity, unmarried mothers, or Laplanders – a not insignificant ethnic minority.

Only a small part of the welfare situation turns on a specifically re-distributive policy such as I have defined it. A much more significant factor behind changes in welfare conditions is the general economic development, i. e., production increase and economic growth. Economic growth (like distributive allocations) provides a flow of goods and services that does not necessitate the extraction of resources previously distributed. An important point also is that *distributive* allocations may have a greater welfare-creating effect than *re-distributive* measures.<sup>7</sup> Simplified, the reasoning is as follows: X % economic growth per year for Y years results in a higher living standard for the Z % economically most disadvantaged, than a re-distribution of the marginal income of the I % most wealthy to the Z % poor.<sup>8</sup> And variables X and Y can be set to low values. An important condition, however, is that only under 'bullish' conditions does X (rate of growth) reach a sufficiently high level to allow Y (the number of years) to be reasonably small and Z (proportion of disadvantaged) to be of significant size.<sup>9</sup>

This reasoning holds primarily for wage-earners, and historically in Norway an operating assumption for this effect seems to have been the transfer of the labor force from independent occupations in the primary sector to wage-earning positions in the industrial and service sectors.<sup>10</sup>

It is much more difficult to alter the distribution of well-being in periods of restricted growth without re-distributive measures. There is good reason to expect that the political response to welfare needs will vary strongly with the decision-makers' perceptions of the economic conditions. This is important for this design because the inter-war period can roughly be characterized as a continuous recession, including, for example, an unemployment rate generally over 15 % the whole time. In comparison, the post-war economic conditions seem uniformly strong; registered unemployment exceeded 4 % only in 1958. The pre-1914 period also was characterized by high employment levels; unemployment reached 5 % only in 1909.<sup>11</sup>

Query: Is there a relationship between the general state of the economy (inter-war vs. post-war) and the means (distributive vs. re-distributive) selected to meet welfare needs?

- 1) If the relationship holds for the inter-war vs. the post-war comparison, can the relationship be generalized to the 1900–1921 period; i. e., were distributive means selected in this relatively strong economic period as well as in the post-war period?
- 2) Economic conditions seemed to improve towards the end of the inter-war period. This should have produced some changes in welfare approaches. Likewise certain adjustments can be expected during the post-war years as economic conditions varied.

Several further factors influence the type of allocation that is adopted once a problem area becomes politically salient: (a) the group-specific characteristics of

the problem, (b) the size of the target group, and (c) the target group's resource base. The group-specific dimensions can include properties of the group itself, such as age, marital status, or special sickness, or properties of the group's situation, such as high frequency of illness, poor nutrition, or inadequate housing, which coincide with social strata or geographical region. Group-specific problems are distinct from need situations general to the whole population. Group size is, of course, the size of the target in relation to the total population. Resource base is figured on the basis of the group's *convertible* resources, i. e., those resources which can be used to attain other desirable ends. Obviously central is the group's economic standing. Other important resources include education, social status, and geographic location of residence.

The hypotheses are:

- 1) The probability of re-distributive modes of allocations increases with (a) the extent to which the problem boundaries coincide with group boundaries, (b) the smaller and the fewer the groups included within the problem boundaries, and (c) the target group's resource deprivation.
- 2) The probability of distributive mechanisms increases with (a) the generality of the problem, (b) the size of the affected population, and (c) the strength of the target group's resource base.

The hypotheses follow from the assumption that redistributive measures (as I have defined them) involve a rather precise de-limitation of the 'right' beneficiaries.<sup>12</sup> If the target group's size increases to the point that it takes in large sectors of the population, re-distributive measures will become economically and administratively expensive relative to the costs of a distributive approach.

It seems unreasonable that the government should assume the task of re-distributing benefits to resource-rich groups. Moreover, available research findings show that the resource-rich groups benefit disproportionately from distributive mechanisms, since generally there is a certain competition for the better employment positions, educational opportunities, and so forth.<sup>13</sup>

The differential treatment of resource-poor and resource-rich groups, however, invokes two conflicting conceptions of equality. One concept emphasizes *social equality* and *social equalization* while the other honors *equal treatment* of all citizens.<sup>14</sup> This conflict turns up especially in the debate on means-tests to qualify for public assistance. The present research will look at the comparative influence of the two concepts.

The expectations of a distributive vs. re-distributive approach can be summarized in a table building on the two chief variables I have sketched: economic conditions and social group characteristics.

The economic conditions variable is dichotomized into 'recession' and 'growth' (inter-war and post-war). Two ideal-types are constructed for the social group variable: (1) the *homogeneous* social group with distinctive characteristics and which is small and resource poor; and (2) the *heterogeneous* social group which lacks distinctive characteristics (i. e., the group's problems are of a general nature),

is large and relatively resource-rich, or in any case is not notably lacking in resources.

*Table 1. Distributive vs. Re-distributive Allocations under Different Economic Conditions and with Different Target Groups*

Social Groups Characteristics	Economic Conditions	
	Recession	Growth
Homogeneous	1. Good possibility of non-allocation. Slowing of socio-political development stemming from governmental cutbacks.	2. Re-distributive mechanisms established, with emphasis on permanent re-distribution by group-specific criteria.
Heterogeneous	3. Short-term re-distributions in response to acute problems.	4. Distributive mechanisms established; emphasis on increasing social mobility.
Concept of Equality	Social equalizing: distributive equality	Equality of treatment: process equality.

More specific expectations can now be developed from the various queries and hypotheses that I have sketched above:

- 1) Given the homogeneous group-type, there is a high probability that when the economy is in recession remedial resources will not be allocated although the problems are politically salient and are considered important. The principal explanation for the failure of government action lies in the target group's lack of organizational resources. Inaction, though, will be justified by fiscal arguments. A good example of this is the Old-Age Security Law of 1923 which was never implemented due to the nation's economic straits.
- 2) The outlook for the small, distinctive, resource-poor group improves with the economic conditions: Remedial re-distributive allocations are easily adopted. The allocations will be *permanent* in the sense of continuing benefits, if the target group itself cannot be held responsible for its plight or if the group is regarded as having earned the benefits.<sup>15</sup> Another important aspect of this situation is that emphasis is placed on *automatic* allocations, so that the beneficiaries' necessary effort to receive the assistance is minimal.
- 3) By using their political resources, heterogeneous target groups in recessionary economies can obtain assistance of a re-distributive nature, but the assistance is likely to be short-term and intended to meet only the most acute needs. Unemployment benefits and emergency employment programs are common examples. This category also differs from the re-

distributive allocations in category 2, in that applicants for assistance must usually apply individually to the appropriate public authority, i. e. benefits are not awarded automatically.

- 4) Mechanisms for distributive allocations – which are usually capital-intensive – will be built-up when the economy is strong. This includes commercial expansion, creation of new jobs, development of public and private service institutions, and not least the building-up of educational institutions. Labor market policy, along with expansion of educational opportunities, is the most important means of increasing social mobility.
- 5) The emphasis on social equalization is greatest when the economy is in recession since it is then that the equality problems are most difficult to resolve yet most visible. The easing of resource scarcity in periods of growth makes it possible to include larger groups in the various assistance programs. As the demand for *equal treatment* increases, means-tests fall into disfavor as unnecessary and unjust.

#### 4. Economic Conditions and Patterns of Priorities<sup>16</sup>

Quite aside from the means and mechanisms used, the basic welfare problem is the allocation of scarce resources to remedy certain problems selected from among many. The extent of agreement within the *Storting* regarding the setting of welfare priorities is significant both for the tasks the *Storting* undertakes and for the means it adopts. *Pattern of priorities* expresses the extent of this agreement within the *Storting*.

Two basic pattern types are *integrated* and *fragmented*. In an integrated priority pattern one proposal, or several complementary proposals (proposals which seek to resolve the same problem), will have the support of a majority. No single proposal can win a majority in a fragmented pattern because the priorities advanced by the various parties are inconsistent.

The polar points for this variable are an integrated *Storting* with all parties sharing a common set of priorities on the one hand, and a fragmented *Storting* in a dead-lock situation where no compromise solution can win acceptance on the other. The integrated pattern is of greater interest for us because it can shift the type of allocation in the direction shown by the arrows in Table I.

- 1) In times of weak economy the probability of redistributive measures favoring small and resource-poor groups increases if their problems are highlighted and there is agreement within the *Storting* on remedial action.
- 2) The tendency in times of strong economy is different: Welfare policy is re-evaluated, resulting in the discovery of previously over-looked distinctions and the application of new criteria for classifying resource-poor groups. If the new criteria gain acceptance, the more closely identified target groups may become eligible for direct re-distribution, reducing their exposure to the competitive aspects of the distributive processes.

There is reason to believe that this process is especially advantageous for those target groups, such as social deviants and unwed mothers, which earlier had been regarded as responsible for their own difficulties. The Law on Aid to the Handicapped and Rehabilitation Assistance can perhaps be explained in this way. This law emphasizes 'the occupational skills which the recipient has upon the completion of suitable treatment and rehabilitation. The beneficiary's loss of earning capacity should be determined on the basis of the *real possibilities* for gainful employment in work suitable for the individual compared with the individual's corresponding possibilities before being disabled'<sup>17</sup> (emphasis added). In other words, earlier occupation and the opportunities locally available for new work are included among the evaluation criteria for the awarding of support.

## 5. Value Orientations and Party Cleavages

Policy cleavages among the various parties are to be expected, and it is possible that these divisions will reflect different *value* orientations. Value differences can be traced to more or less formalized ideological anchorings or to divergent perceptions and descriptions of the prevailing life-situations of the various population strata. It is important in either case to study the norms the parties use at various times to justify their positions on what is just and what is unjust inequality, and to determine the extent to which these value differences come to be expressed as political cleavages.

Four dimensions of norms concerning social equality are important for differentiating the principal normative perspectives which separate the parties:

- 1) The value assigned to social equality in itself.
- 2) Perceptions of the actual extent and pattern of social inequality.
- 3) Perceptions of the sources of inequality and the conditions responsible for its maintenance.
- 4) Judgements of the functions and consequences of social inequality.

A central thesis in Norwegian political science is that political consensus has been steadily increasing in the areas of social welfare policy.<sup>18</sup> To the extent that this is correct, we should expect increasingly fewer major cleavages among the parties, and a tendency to agree on which welfare problems are salient.

It is of interest to trace the development of the consensus by asking: Which party's position seems to have prevailed in the welfare debate, and has the welfare debate become divorced from ideologies, or has a common ideology grown out of the debate?

The decision process on the one hand is one of de-ideologized, pragmatic debate dominated by official statistics and 'value-free' research findings. On the other hand, the setting of new goals and the extension of existing welfare benefits to new social classifications result from a process of ideological convergence.

## 6. Political Strategy and Welfare Politics

The final set of questions concerns the possibility of mapping *regularities in political participation* among *Storting* representatives in matters of welfare policy. Party affiliation, geographic identification, sex, seniority, and so forth, are dimensions which may structure *Storting* debate of welfare problems. Since welfare decisions touch social groups which as electors also pass judgement on the politicians' performance, politicians have strategic interests to protect which presumably will influence policy stands on welfare matters, quite apart from personal commitments to the betterment of social conditions.

An important question therefore is: What is the role of strategic analysis in the party groups' determination of policy position and level of participation in the welfare debate, and what are the particulars of this strategic analysis with regard to social groups?<sup>19</sup>

Target groups of welfare policy usually have heterogeneous partisan compositions. This means that all or most parties have a strategic interest to participate which follows from the competition among the parties to be most efficient in coping with social problems.

- 1) A *heterogeneous* pattern of participation is expected where the party groups compete for the electoral support of a potential target. This produces an integrated pattern of priorities to the extent that there is also policy consensus. Policy disagreement of course reflects priority fragmentation, since potential target groups may be traditionally associated with one particular party, or the salient welfare problems may coincide with a traditional cleavage in Norwegian politics. If such a party can be characterized as 'traditional', then it will perceive a strategic interest in confirming its political loyalty and continuity to the voter group and/or cleavage.
- 2) A *homogeneous* pattern of partisan participation results when one or a few parties politically dominate a potential target group. The possibility for *polarized* participation arises when the debate not only coincides with a principal cleavage but also differentially affects several significant groups affiliated with different positions. A *fragmented priority pattern* characterizes both cases; in the latter case the priority pattern is highly fragmented.

Certain regularities in debate participation will appear which clearly have little to do with strategic assessments in the sense that participation cannot be explained by calculations of political advantages. This non-strategic participation is termed *idealistic* and *de-politicized*. Idealistic participation appears when the potential target groups have little if any electoral impact, either because the group's size is insignificant or because its electoral turnout, if possible at all, is very low – e. g., in Norway, individuals convicted of war-time disloyalty. De-politicized questions are those which, like most *Storting* business, go through without opposition and without debate. Participation in some situations can be explained by com-

mittee membership, which is another sign of de-politicization and low interest.<sup>20</sup> De-politicization itself as a process will be a focus of attention, made possible by the fact that the data extend from 1900 to the present.

## 7. An Approach to the Study of the Development of Elite Perception

In the previous pages I have sketched a frame of reference for questions concerning the development of the elite's perceptions of social inequality, compared with the actual distributions of social goods since the turn of the century. The framework turns on five central questions:

- 1) From a conceptual distinction between need and market preferences, I queried whether there is a relationship between the extent a problem can be articulated through the commercial marketplace on the one hand, and the attention devoted to the problem by the *Storting* on the other. A complementary query is whether the development of networks of organizations and associations has significantly affected the foci of official attention.
- 2) I have hypothesized a relationship between economic conditions (roughly growth vs. recession) and the type of welfare allocation (distributive vs. re-distributive).
- 3) Given recessionary tendencies, an integrated (as opposed to fragmented) pattern of priorities in the *Storting* facilitates re-distributive responses to the needs of resource-poor groups. When the economy is 'bullish', 'new' groups will be designated for direct redistributive allocations.
- 4) Another area of inquiry is how the various party groups justify what they consider just and unjust social inequality and how these differences are manifested in political cleavages.
- 5) Finally, I have tried to determine the extent to which the debate participation of parties and representatives is a product of strategic calculation.

The specific hypotheses advanced under each heading will be empirically evaluated. The research draws on two types of data: content analyses of *Storting* debates, and official statistics and statistical analyses from economic and political histories. The principal data are selected debates in the full *Storting* for all years ending in 0 and 5 (i. e., 1900, 1905, 1910, etc.). The five-year time interval allows a fairly representative recording of *Storting* developments, plus it assures a reasonable sample of elections and non-election years, if this should have an effect on the debates. The interval also coincides conveniently with census data, which are collected every tenth year.

The selection of the debate data is obviously problematic in a design of this sort, since nearly all political questions can in one or another way be traced back to a welfare problem. From the operationalizations of welfare or living standard (see below), and with the help of the *Storting's* own case listing, I have selected *all* debates on questions concerning the allocation of welfare benefits. In the most

recent years, the *Storting* has changed its procedure from debating specific cases as they are reported from committee to debating departmental appropriations under the budget. Consequently, the 1970 budget debate for the Social Department is included in the sample; the budget debates selected for 1975 also include those for the Department for Local Affairs and Labor, Department for Environmental Protection, and the Consumer and Administration Department.

The quantitative content analysis which makes up the core-data base is complemented by qualitative analyses for the same debates. A substantial portion of the text material has already been coded, with a very satisfactory inter-coder reliability of 86 % for a random sample of nearly 100 debates.

In addition to the core material, described data will also be collected for certain years which fall outside the sample. This is partly due to the fact that political events which are linked to the quantitative data are often not included in the designated years, and that important welfare events such as social welfare legislation do not coincide with these years. These specially selected data help provide a fuller picture of welfare policy development. These discretionary years are also drawn into the analysis since the analytic problem statement suggests not only the strict time-series research strategy but also a series of case analyses (see note 10). For example, the case studies can address specific target groups, such as the Laplanders, or the relation between the economy and welfare policy, such as the linkage of the economic downturn in 1921 and the failure to implement the 1923 old-age pension program. Region-specific problems are also pertinent case-study foci. Consequently there is a need to supplement the systematic sampling of years with problem-directed material.

The concept of welfare is the central theme in this design. Welfare is operationalized as a specific variable which can describe both actual distribution of various values and, as a content analytic variable, the perceptions and positions on various problems. The operationalizations are similar to those used in other research projects on level of living:

- distribution of income and wealth
- health and dietary conditions
- employment and work situation
- housing, quality and availability
- educational opportunities
- recreational and leisure-time opportunities
- political resources.

The group-relevant dimensions are:

- occupation
- social stratification
- demography
- social policy client groups
- ethnicity.

More general groupings which will be used are consumers, family, and the population as a whole.

The sources and functions of social inequality are classified as follows:

- individual sources
- culture of poverty explanations
- political and economic structural explanations
- society's reward system as causal
- social inequality as a random phenomenon.

The perceived consequences of inequality will be classed as either conflict-creating and dysfunctional or socially functional.

Social welfare measures will be grouped by benefit category:

- sickness, injury, and disability compensation
- old age social security
- unemployment assistance
- family support.

Further, attitudes toward preventive welfare measures in contrast to social insurance program will be noted as well as positions on voluntary social work and the significance of the temperance movement for the improvement of living conditions.

The economy will be disaggregated into the conventional primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors, and comparisons made with regard to the welfare significance attributed to each. Relative preferences for private as opposed to public economic enterprises will be noted. Ideological references will be identified by the standard -isms, democratic ideals, and religious or Christian norms. Finally, Norway is divided into three regions (East, South and West, and Trøndelag and North) in order to evaluate both problem concentrations and relative preferences for decentralization.

The regional division in conjunction with the welfare variables and the perceptions of group-specific problems will give a picture of the elite's *need perceptions*. The cause and effect variables plus the positions on the more specific social policy measures will indicate the differences which have existed over welfare policy *ways and means*. The dominant perceived means-ends combinations are the basis for different *priority* patterns. These will both follow from and feed back into the individuals' *ideological orientations*. The *Storting* representatives' attention to their *strategic interests* will modify the values of the hypothesized explanatory variables for the different periods.

#### NOTES

1. See J. P. Roos, *Welfare Theory and Social Policy: A Study in Policy Science*, Commentationes Scientiarum Socialium, 4 (Helsinki: 1973) and T. Haavelmo, *Variasjoner over et tema av Gossen*, Institutt for Sosialøkonomi, University of Oslo, 1972, for a discussion of the concept of 'need' as used in welfare analyses and welfare economics.

2. G. Hernes, *Makt og Avmakt* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1975), p. 147.
3. Hernes reviews the factors which frustrate and conversely facilitate the organizing process. Hernes, *ibid.*, p. 174.
4. Perceptions and positions are primarily gleaned from a quantitative content analysis of *Storting* debates. In addition to the quantitative material, we will, of course, be interested in the more politically substantial position changes which appear over time. Consequently, the data report will be supplemented by extended citations from the debate materials.
5. I immediately concede that the distinction of distributive and re-distributive allocations raises analytic problems. First, the content of the two concepts is socio-culturally determined, so that the meanings change over time. That is, policies thought to be re-distributive at the turn of the century perhaps would not be so considered today.  
Secondly, it is necessary to distinguish among the decision-makers' intentions with a particular measure, the perceptions of the target group, and the actual consequences. The concepts probably should also be defined slightly differently according to the political sector being examined. I have in this design attempted to restrict the concepts to refer to the decision-makers' intentions, with re-distribution referring specifically to benefits to special target groups.  
For a fuller discussion of the concepts, see T. Lowi, 'Distribution, Regulation, Re-distribution: The Functions of Government' in R. B. Ripley (ed.), *Public Policies and their Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1966) and R. Salisbury and J. Heinz, 'A Theory of Policy Analysis and some Preliminary Applications' in I. Sharkansky (ed.) *Policy Analysis in Political Science* (Chicago: Markham, 1970).
6. Else Øyen conceives of 'social policy' as a redistribution of resources aimed at reducing social distance between and within population sectors. Øyen's discussion also relates the re-distribution concept to group-specific policies. E. Øyen, 'Sosialpolitikk som manipulerer av sosial avstand', *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning*, No. 3, 1974.
7. It has been customary in the post-war period to regard the tax system as the most important re-distributive device for income leveling. 'Providers' and 'beneficiaries' in the tax approach to re-distribution are identified by after-tax income distribution and the progressiveness of the tax system.
8. The reasoning here, with some modifications, borrows heavily from A. Næss, *Økologi, Samfunn, and Livsstil* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974), p. 118.
9. Although economists use more elaborate models, the chief variables are the same. Their summary judgement is also that the transfer of the labor force from low productivity occupations (primary sector) to high productivity employment (in industry and service industries) is significant for economic growth. See S. Seierstad, 'Norsk Økonomi', in N. Ramsøy and M. Vaa (eds.), *Det Norske Samfunn*, 2nd ed. (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1975) and Statistisk Sentralbyrå, *Norges Økonomi etter Krigen* (Oslo: 1965), pp. 37-45, 50 ff., 111 ff. *Stortingsmelding No. 10, 1947* (Om Nasjonalbudsjettet, 1947) provides clear evidence that political decision-makers in the post-war period have accepted this reasoning.
10. One of our first project reports deals precisely with the *Storting* representatives' assessments of the social significance of the different economic sectors, how labor market policy can actively be used to further economic growth, and when and under what conditions *Storting* representatives have accepted the administrations' attempts to re-distribute the work force between industries and hence between regions. Per A. Pettersen, *Næringer, arbeidsmarked og sysselsettingspolitikk: sosial og geografisk omfordeling av arbeidskraft*, Institutt for samfunnsforskning, Oslo, 1975.
11. Seierstad, *op.cit.*, p. 120.  
Measured by economic growth (GNP) Norway has experienced more or less continuous growth since the 1870's. But the period leading up to the Second World War was characterized by great uncertainty and a more uneven growth pattern. The slope of the growth curve and the annual percentage increase have both increased since the war. There have been no years with negative growth in the post-war period while the negative figures for 1921 and 1931 are 12 % and 8 % respectively. See *Norges Økonomi etter Krigen*, *op.cit.*, p. 57.
12. Else Øyen has compared the 'trygdesystem' (social insurance system) and the 'sosialomsorgssystem' (social rehabilitation system) and finds that while group-specific characteristics are the criteria for allocations under the 'trygdesystem', individual-specific char-

- acteristics seem to predominate in the 'sosial-omsorgssystem'. 'En beskrivelse av og sammenlikning av to sosialpolitiske systemer,' *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning*, No. 1, 1975.
13. See W. Martinussen, *Fjerndemokratiet* (Oslo: Gyldendal, 1973), p. 182; and Olaf Tvede, 'Samfunnsmessige endringer og betydningen av utdanning,' *Tidsskrift for samfunnsforskning*, No. 3, 1975.
  14. Seierstad, *op.cit.*, p. 139 ff.; Øyen, 1975, *op.cit.*; and T. Haavelmo, *op.cit.*, pp. 76-80.
  15. Øyen's comparison of 'trygdesystem' and 'sosialomsorgssystem' links the former to continuing allocations and the latter to non-continuing programs. Øyen, 1975, *op.cit.*
  16. 'Patterns of priorities' is an adaptation of Salisbury's and Heinz's 'demand pattern'. See Salisbury and Heinz, *op.cit.*, 48 ff.
  17. *Sosial Trygghet*, 2nd ed., Sosialdepartementet (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1971), p. 100.
  18. See Ulf Torgersen, 'The Trend towards Political Consensus: the Case of Norway,' *Acta Sociologica*, 6, 1962.
  19. G. Sjöblom and B. Molin suggest two models for strategic party behavior. See G. Sjöblom, *Party Strategies in a Multiparty System* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1968), and B. Molin, 'Swedish Party Politics: a Case Study', *Scandinavian Political Studies* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1966), 1/1966. In my earlier thesis I attempted to combine the two models in a study of the strategic behavior of Norwegian parties. See Pettersen, *Konfliktlinjer og partistrategi*, Institutt for Statsvitenskap, Oslo, 1973. The combined strategy model will be further developed in the present study.
  20. Usually debates in which only the respective committee members participate are without significant conflict and are of a pro forma nature. We can imagine debate situations dominated by committee members, however, which are only superficially non-strategic. Committee membership, for example, may be a pre-requisite to obtain the information necessary to conduct a spirited opposition. Such situations in the welfare area, however, are expected to be rare.