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PROCEEDINGS

MR. GALSTON: Okay, ladies and gentlemen. I've given everyone the ritual five minutes to convene, so we can now open the proceedings. I'm very pleased to be able to welcome all of you to the fourth in the series called Governing Ideas, which is a series sponsored by the Governance Studies Program here at Brookings.

The basis premise of this series is that the study of public policy is embedded in a larger complex of ideas, assumptions, purposes, values, ideals, some of which are explicitly contemplated and chosen, others of which are implicit in much more fine grain choices that we make, but which, nonetheless, turn out to have an autonomous power of their own as they become explicit through historical practice and through explicit processes of legal and regulatory interpretation.

In a period in which so much of what we care about is in flux, we believe that it's particularly important to focus explicit attention on the ideas that do shape and govern our practices, or that should shape and govern our practices, and to think very hard about how we should think and argue about questions of that sort.

There are some reasonably well developed procedures for thinking about technical questions, doing political analysis, doing economic analysis. The analysis of ideas that are intended to have or do have practical effect is a much subtler business, particularly when you try to do it in conjunction with the

institutions and policies which they shape and which reciprocally shape the ideas themselves. As I said, this is the fourth in the occasional series, and it is an event that raises, it seems to me, some of the largest questions before us—before the United States, as a polity and a society, but also before the advanced industrialized world as a whole.

The centerpiece of this discussion will be Stein Ringen's latest book, *What Democracy is For*. Let me tell you a little bit about Professor Ringen, who will be delivering a summary of at least some portions of his book. It's so ambitious and diverse that doing the whole thing I think would be very difficult. Then about Kent Weaver, who will be offering a commentary on the book, and about the issues at stake.

First, Stein Ringen, who is the Professor of Sociology and Social Policy at the University of Oxford. Doctor Ringen has written extensively on comparative welfare states and reforms in countries across Europe. His most recent books, at least prior to this, include *The Possibility of Politics*, the third edition of which came out in 2006, and *Citizens, Families, and Reform*, the second edition of which appeared in 2005.

Prior to his taking up his position at Oxford, he was, among other things, Assistant Director General in the Norwegian Ministry of Justice, Professor of Welfare Studies at the University of Stockholm, and a news and feature reporter in the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation. He's held visiting professorships in Berlin, Paris, Barbados, lucky man, and elsewhere. He's a regular contributor to *The*

Times Literary Supplement in London and is a columnist for the newspaper, *Octinpostin* in Oslo. A native of Norway, Doctor Ringen received his PhD in political science from the University of Oslo.

Kent Weaver, our commentator today, is a Senior Fellow in the Governance Studies Program here at Brookings, and also Professor of Public Policy and Government at Georgetown University. His major fields of interest and expertise are American Social Policy, Comparative Public Policy, and Comparative Political Institutions.

Weaver is the author of *Ending Welfare as We Know It*, that's one of his books, *Automatic Government, the Politics of Indexation*, and *The Politics of Industrial Change*. He's also the co-author and editor of numerous other books and a noted expert on, among other things, welfare policy and the development and practices of welfare states as a whole.

Let me just take a minute or so to talk about some of the issues that animate Professor Ringen's book and ought to be, I think, ripe for discussion at this session. In the contemporary United States, there is I think palpable and rising concern about the future of our particular kind of welfare state, and also about the condition of our democratic institutions. Among its many virtues and accomplishments, Professor Ringen's book, *What Democracy is For*, demonstrates both that the United States is not alone in these worries and that there is an intimate connection between them.

As we work here in the United States over the next generation to

renew as best we can our crumbling and increasingly outdated social contract, we will, at the same time, be reshaping in a fundamental way our democratic expectations.

To give you just a flavor of how Professor Ringen comes at large questions of this sort, let me give you — share with you some brief excerpts from two of the chapters of his book, first, Chapter 3, what should welfare states do.

And Professor Ringen says, in part, "I will conclude in favor of a new social contract, one built on the reawareness of self-reliance, and then flowing from that idea, for substantive realignment in real social provisions;" as you can see, no modest ambitions in this book.

And he goes on to say, "In my future welfare state, I see relatively more done by regulating and relatively less by taxing and spending. My recommendations add up to redirecting the welfare state from supporting consumption to supporting institutions, that is, toward a welfare state for investment. What I think can largely, but not fully, be managed outside of taxing and spending is social security. The key to its achievement is universal insurance rather than omnipotent public provision," bold and challenging ideas for us in the United States, and I suspect for all of Professor Ringen's readers across Europe, as well.

And then Chapter 6, entitled, where does freedom come from--in real life I'm a political theorist, and so I read this chapter with particular attention--and here are some of the bold things that Professor Ringen has to say about that topic. He says in what I take to be the thematic summary of the chapter, "I intend to defend

real freedom," real freedom, remember that phrase, "as the proper moral underpinning of a theory of democracy that puts the promotion and protection of freedom at its core," which, of course, raised in my mind and in every readers mind, what's real freedom anyway.

And Professor Ringen offers three orienting propositions to help us get a handle on that question, and I quote those three propositions; number one, what is important in the human condition is how people are connected more than how they are "liberated" from one another; proposition two, real freedom is the freedom that enables you to shape your own life and to do so with good sense, details to come; third proposition, from real freedom comes the understanding that the free citizen is someone who lives in bonds of deliberation with his fellows. So my take away, freedom is more than negative liberty, more than protected rights, and more than the resources needed to act on one's desires. It consists also in certain inner qualities of reason and self-command and in certain relations with one's fellow citizens and human beings. We look forward to Professor Ringen's presentation, to Professor Weaver's commentary, and to a spirited exchange between them and with you.

Just a note on procedure, Dr. Ringen will offer opening remarks; Dr. Weaver, the commentary, we'll then repair to our seats, there will be a little bit of cross talk directed by me, if I can summon the energy, after which there will be a question and answer period of I would guess roughly 45 minutes or so involving everybody in the room. So without further ado, Professor Ringen.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Thank you very much, Bill, for the

opportunity to come here and to speak here, and thank you all so very much for your very generous introduction.

One of the many reasons that I'm happy to be here today is that I have at least one very strong Brookings inspiration in this work of mine, and that is in a small book that came out of this institution in 1975 called, *Equality and Efficiency, the Big Tradeoff*, by the late Arthur Okun, a little book not more than about 100 small pages, but in my view, one of the great works in American political economy. And this work, that book has inspired me at least in two areas of work, one, in my attempt to reformulate, reinvent, I think I say, economic democracy or the idea of economic democracy, and secondly, it's an important inspiration in my reflections on how to improve the quality of democracy. And for that and many other reasons, it's a great pleasure to be able to be here at Brookings.

Now, the book I'm speaking from is a manifesto for democracy and freedom. And my message is that we should be very serious, indeed, about making urgent effort to improve democracy. There is a sentence in the introduction which says that the way to protect democracy is not to cheer it, which we do too much, but to reform it, which we do too little, and that is the spirit that I'm working from.

Now, I start from a notion of democratic quality, and I find that — I look only at established solid democracies, nothing else, I don't look at the non-democratic world or even the shabby democracies, only the solid ones, and I find that, by and large, these democracies perform pretty badly compared to what we reasonably should expect of them.

At the same time, I also find that there are very considerable differences in the performance of democracy, from country to country, and one of the surprising perhaps results of that comparison of democratic quality is that the great model democracies, the American Constitution and the Westminster Model in Britain turn out to be a pretty mediocre quality compared to many other democracies. Then I move to the idea of economic democracy. While, in many ways, political democracy has triumphed in the last decades, economic democracy has totally fallen off the agenda. It's not long ago in history that the democratic project was seen equally as one of economic democracy as political democracy. That part of the project seems to have been dismissed.

I wish to reformulate and to reinvent it, and I do that by putting it not as a question of political control, but as a question of redistribution of economic power. And I find in that discussion that there is a great deal of scope, at least for the middle class, to claim more ownership in economic power with no cost to economic efficiency. Here you will recognize the inference of Author Okun's logic.

Then I move on to the welfare state, which I see as an obvious, common sense, practical, and necessary component of democratic governance and as a civilizing project in modern capitalism.

Nevertheless, although I'm a very determined defender of the welfare state, or welfare states I think we should say, I offer what I think is a fairly radical blueprint of reform in welfare states, which I present with the kind of modesty that Bill underlined in the introduction as a new Beverage plan for our time.

These three themes then, on the quality of democracy, economic democracy, and democratic governance, they go to structural conditions in democracy. And from there, I move into the lives of citizens. I move from macro to micro analysis. And I ask first about the possibility to eradicate poverty. And when we discuss poverty, I think that Franklin Roosevelt's language of freedom from poverty is the appropriate language, it is a freedom question, the problem of poverty.

In this work I take inspiration from the great morale economists, Adam Smith and Alfred Marshall, and from Con Verse' in France and Tom Pine in England. And I try to treat poverty, define poverty as that which is socially unacceptable. And I find through logic and some empirical measurement that poverty in this understanding is something that can be eradicated. It has been eradicated in at least some corners of the world, and since it's possible, this is a social ail that should be eradicated.

It's not enough I think that we discuss poverty in terms of containing the problem or reducing the magnitude of it. I think we should take, on earnest, the United Nations terminology on the problem of poverty, and that is that the goal, the near goal, is to eradicate it.

From that, I turn to families. And here I take my inspiration from a gentleman which I hold in almost as high in esteem as Arthur Okun, namely from Aristotle, and I treat in his spirit families as political institutions. Families produce children, and in that respect, they are, at least in Europe, falling down on the job. But more importantly, families raise children, and they are the core institutions in our

civilization for the production and the reproduction of values and norms. And I am in this work and elsewhere a strong spokesperson for the protection, the support, and for investment in families.

And finally, I address philosophically the difficult question of freedom, which Bill mentioned, and the core value as I see it in democracy. The free citizen in my universe is a person who is the master of his or her own life. For that, we need liberty, first of all, and basically, but not only, we need also, when liberty is unsure, reason, the ability to be in control, a purpose, and a meaning, and a will.

And that brings me in the discussion of freedom back to values and norms. These are the main themes covered in six chapters in the book. And I try to tie all this together into what I call the liberal vision, which is an optimistic outlook on social life according to which we humans are the masters of our own destiny, so that we, in the double act of cautious, constrained government, and democratic authority, can translate economic progress, economic prosperity, into genuine progress, into better lives for more people. Now, that blue eyed optimism is, as luck will have it, realistic, and it is something I want to encourage confidence in.

Now, I've agreed with the organizers here that in order to put some flesh and blood on some of these ideas, I'll say something about the treatment of welfare state issues. For convenience, I do say the welfare state, but I'm very aware that we should be saying welfare states, so let's just have that as a reminder.

And what I thought I'd do in the introduction is to list or go through some of the assumptions or premises that lie beyond the — or behind the more

specific proposals that I make, I mentioned some of those proposals in the passing, and then we can get on in the discussion to more precise issues.

Now, I defend in this work an idea of rationality, that is, that the individual is, by and large, the best judge of his or her own interest, and that, for the most part, people do what they do for good reasons.

This assumption I think is obvious and indispensable in a concept of freedom and it is one I try to go by, but not always, not to the very end, not automatically. Reason, and I really prefer the term reason to rationality, the word rationality has been badly damaged by unfortunate tendency to rational choice logic, so I prefer reason.

Reason depends also, in my universe, on a little bit of help from your friendly welfare state. And that addition, that little qualification is, I think, important and significant. The difference between those of us who are comfortable in the liberal vision and ideological conservatives in the American understanding, and I met some of them at the Cato Institute on Friday, that difference does not go to any sort of fundamental outlook on human nature, although the ideologist will sometimes have us believe it does. It goes to how we deal with some qualifications on the margins.

To take the rational assumption to mean that people do not sometimes need a bit of help, but it is enough that they have choice is, I think, unacceptably brutal and cynical. And to introduce a notion of some help even from the states is only to accept that we are social animals and does not in any way

undermine the general outlook that people live rational, for the most part, rational lives.

Now, from there, I go on to think about social policies and the welfare states. And the first premise or assumption that I start from is that democratic governments are now very severely constrained in their power to tax, or more specifically, in their power to tax more.

During what the French called Les Trente Glorieuses the thirty glorious years from about 1945 to 1975, democratic governments could introduce new social policies and fund them with additional taxes; that was an easy ride. Now, the level of taxation, on the one hand, is, throughout the democratic world, pretty high and there's not much more to extract, and on the other hand, capital has become much more moveable, and capital, therefore, has a stronger veto power in taxation. Capital, as you know, couldn't care less about how governments spend money, but cares very much about how and how much it raises.

The result of that is that there is really no new money available to democratic governments for new policies, and that policy realignments of any significance have roughly to be done by reallocations within given budgets, within more or less constant budgets, and that is an entirely new and much more demanding political environment for public policy.

From that, much of my thinking in this book about social policy is about how to free up tax capacity, because I think there are some things in the welfare state that we should do more of, and that can only be funded from taxes, and

if we're going to be able to do more of that and have tax funding for it, we need to free up tax capacity for those reasons. And Bill mentioned some of my ideas on that in the introduction.

So I play around with ideas for how governments can do things, new things and additional things without raising additional taxes, or sometimes without appearing to raise additional taxes. So, for example, I introduce a concept of non-tax taxation, which I am — I think is very promising for public policy analysis. What I think freed up tax capacity should be used for is mainly, not only, but mainly family policy. And I put here family policy at the very heart of this, as I call it, welfare state for investments. And the way to free up tax capacity, which Bill also mentioned in the introduction, I think, is to rely more on regulation and less on state's provision, and in social security, to rely more on insurance and less on tax funding, but again, with a little bit of friendly help from the welfare state.

For example, I make some very detailed proposals about how the state can encourage people to become savers and how they can take people by the hand from a very young age and attune them to a habit of saving for life contingencies. So this is a tax assumption that I start from and that matters very much for my discussion.

A second assumption I call the affluence assumption. And here I argue that the economists I am concerned with, I'm, again, talking only about affluent capitalist democracies. The economists I am considering are now seriously affluent economists, the economists of mass affluence, not universal affluence as we know,

but mass affluence. And I think it is time for us in the social sciences to take affluence seriously.

We have, for good reasons, been very interested in understanding poverty, for good reasons, but I think we should now be equally interested in understanding the nature and consequences of affluence. And one result of mass affluence is that citizens are different creatures. The common man, and we must now also say the common woman, are knowledgeable and have economic freedom. They are people of capacity. The welfare state grew out of the experience of mass poverty, but that environment is now very different. We are now reshaping it in an environment of mass affluence. And the result of this, I think, is that we can now think of the welfare state in a less paternalistic way than we may have done previously, and that we can think of citizens as more autonomous and responsible.

Now, this, for me, is really to return to William Beveridge and to his report on social insurance and allied services, which was published in 1942, and indeed, I now, 65 years later, take much inspiration for new reform from Beveridge's old report.

You may know that Beveridge's report was seen certainly in Britain as the blueprint for the welfare state after the Second World War, but you may also know that what Beveridge suggested was never implemented, and that what was implemented was very different from what Beveridge had had in mind.

Now, one paradoxical result I find of affluence and non-paternalism, or maybe I should say no result, is that there is no reason to expect that fewer people

will be in need of social care. Some people are more affluent, more competent, more knowledgeable, et cetera, but also, social expectations rise in a similar way. And here I've learned much from the American experience of work fare, non-paternalism in practice, and the American experience, and I draw on work by, for example, Barbara Wolf and Robert Haverman. The American experience is that work fare, when it does work, which it sometimes does, is not a soft option for government, for the welfare state.

When it works, as it has in many respects worked remarkably in the United States, it works because very considerable effort is invested in personal social care, in taking people by the hand and leading them from dependency to work. A very serious effort in social care is invested and needs to be invested to make it work.

So I put family policy at the heart of my welfare state for investment, but I also put a great deal of emphasis on social care. Those of us in Academia who are interested in welfare state policies like to work on the hard stuff, on social security, on pensions, on health care, and so on, but I think we should pay much more attention also to the soft stuff, to personal social care. And here I think much is needed to bring social care from chaos, abuse, and inefficiency into a situation where we can get it right.

Then I move on to the population assumption and to some of the consequences of the second demographic transition. Demographic arguments matter very strongly in my discussion of social policy. And my main argument here is that a core assumption in the welfare state as it emerged after the Second World War has

broken down, and that is the assumption of demographic stability, so that successive generations would be of about the same size, and therefore, contribute pay about the same to the welfare state, and benefit, and get about the same from it.

Now, that assumption has now spectacularly collapsed, and with it also has collapsed a built-in inter-generational fairness in the welfare state, as was previously seen. And some of the results of that is that we are scrambling for a new social contract, and roughly so that the ideological basis of solidarity is shifting from the old story, which is that we will take care of each other, to a new story, which say that we will take care of ourselves, but again, and as always, with a little bit of help from the friendly welfare state.

For example, I see much of what goes under the name of pension reform and also work fare as more or less ideological devices for a new social contract of self-reliance, a new story that we tell each other about the welfare state, a new ideological basis of solidarity.

Now, the population assumption is also part of what leads me to my strong emphasis on family policy. In Europe, it's a bit different than the United States, although not totally. We need, in my opinion, we should, in my opinion, encourage higher birth rates. Parents and prospective parents want to have more children than they are able to realize. It's a matter of freedom; it's a matter of enabling people to realize the kinds of lives and family lives which they aim for. And we should, therefore, give child rearing families, in my opinion, much more economic support, support in the form of money and in the form of time.

Now, I suppose this may be a slightly alien idea to the American culture, or possibly children more than in, well, go to the other extreme, in Scandinavian culture, for example, are seen as private goods.

Now, I don't think that economic support on its own will necessarily push up birth rates very much, and I make various other proposals to support family institutions, but I think it is clear that families will not feel able to have more children, they want to, should feel able to have more children, unless the economics of child rearing are radically improved.

Now, this is finally about making it possible for modern women to be wives, mothers, and workers at the same time. Let me say just a bit more about the family theme. Modern families are tremendously productive institutions, both economically and in the production of consumption well being, and morally in the production of values and norms, and in the preparation, perpetual preparation of new generations of citizens, tremendously productive.

Don't believe any fairy tale about modularized nuclear families that don't matter, they're tremendously productive. But their productivity is slipping, it is on a downward slope; productivity, family productivity is slipping, downward slope. And this is very costly to us, it is costly in economic terms, it is costly in the reproduction of the tribe, with current birth rates, imagine they were stable, they would, in 100 years, be 25 percent as many Italians as there are today, and 50 percent as many Germans.

Now, I don't predict that will happen, but it is a way of explaining

what the current demographic situation is. And it is costly, in the robustness of values and norms, and there through in the security of freedom.

So you see, Bill, that I have something to say about ideas and philosophy and something to say about practical social policy, and there's more, for example, about education and how to pay for mass participation in higher education, which we may return to.

The welfare state, properly devised, is an instrument of freedom, and I want to improve it in that respect within the liberal vision by using it as an instrument to channel power into the hands of ordinary people and families. So that be enough for me in the — as the introduction, and we can then move hopefully to some further discussion. Thank you very much.

MR. WEAVER: Okay. It's a delight to be here, and I begin with a note that was passed to me that the book seller has arrived, and that copies of What Democracy is For will be available for purchase after the event, outside there, so apologies that they did not arrive before, but they're here now, and at a generous discount, there you go, excellent. Okay. I will try to be very quick in my comments because I know it's difficult to sit there patiently while people are up here talking at you, so I'll try to be quick.

I will say that it's difficult because what democracy is for is a real tour de force in an era where most scholars have a tendency to think very small in terms of the problems that they take on; it's a work of really breathtaking scope that, nonetheless, manages to be very compact in length. That makes it very difficult to

comment on, so I hope you'll forgive me for being very selective in the kinds of comments that I make.

Stein Ringen in this book challenges us to rethink what democracy means and what it is that we need to do to get to democracy. He provides very real indicators of the quality of democracy in wealthier societies. He didn't mention the actual scores on an eight point scale; Norway and Sweden get an eight, the United States gets a two, just below Korea, and equal to Chile, Costa Rica, and Spain.

This is a message that I think will not go down easily with an American audience, but I think it, nevertheless, needs to be heard, because it does cause us to rethink what really is the quality of our democracy, a quality that's based, in part, on objective indicators across societies, and, in part, on what he calls a society's democratic potential, in the area of democratic potential, that is to say living up to what the United States could be as a democracy that the United States tends to fall short. So, again, it's a very stimulating argument.

I am going to focus, although I love the fact that he's so brief, I'm going to focus most of my comments on some things that I'd like to see a little bit more on in his next book. And I even have a — at the end, I have a suggested title for what the next book might be called.

And, again, being very reluctant to fault him for anything that he's left out of the book, there are a few concerns I'd like to see raised. One has to do with the — what Paul Pearson has called the politics of permanent economic austerity.

I'm certainly very aware of the problems that globalization and other

pressures create for governments using its taxing power to solve social problems, to improve the quality of democracy.

It's now axiomatic that throughout the developing world, governments are facing a crunch as a result of rising life expectancies, falling birth rates, revolutions in medical technology, which increase the cost of existing burdens on government. He, nevertheless, proposes a series of policies that are ambitious and also very expensive. For example, a scholarship account for all persons six years beyond secondary education, child allowances that would be sufficient to cover the cost of daycare for parents of young children, and the creation of accounts, a basic flat rate pension, earnings related pension, and long term care accounts beginning at age 18 that people would be required to pay into, but that the government would pick up the cost of those premiums from ages about 18 to 30. So in the next book, I'd like to see a price tag for all that, how much he thinks that that will cost.

He mentions the fact that taxation is becoming increasingly difficult for governments and that there is a tendency, particularly for governments that have taxed more to have larger declines in their tax rates than governments like the United States, which tax less.

But the gap between those at the high end of the scale in terms of taxation as a percentage of GDP and the low end is still extremely high. If you use OECD's statistics, which admittedly have some problems with them, the U.S. spends about, in 2005, about 26.8 percent of GDP is raised and taxed all levels of government, whereas Sweden is about 51 percent, and Norway is about 45 percent

and has actually risen over the last 15 years.

So, again, I remain to be convinced that the measures that are proposed in What Democracy is For can be financed at tax rates significantly below those that are found in Norway and Sweden, and I'm more than a little doubtful that many societies are going to be able to ramp up their tax rates to those levels. So our first issue has to do with financing and the politics of austerity. A second issue I want to raise has to do with social diversity and its propensity to redistribute.

The societies that have done the best job of eradicating poverty in the advanced industrial countries are generally those countries that tend to have the lowest levels of ethnic linguistic diversity. For example, Norway and Sweden, which on the sort of standard index of ethnic and linguistic fractionalization, you know, have about a four, and the United States is about a 50, and France is about a 26.

Now, the relationship between willingness to tax and diversity is very complex related to things like the level of social trust, the extent to which people feel that benefits are going to people like me, but you know, the overall point here is that countries that — where people tend to be more alike tend to be more willing to tax themselves the most. So, you know, I'd like to see more thought to how we can get more redistribution and more willingness to tax in those societies.

There's a very interesting argument in the book that western societies, especially the very low birth societies, need immigration the most, and therefore, should be encouraging generous welfare states, and in particular, generous policy —

pronatalist policies because they need higher birth rates. And I agree that that's true, but I'm not sure that it plays out that way politically, that because immigrants tend to have larger families and tend to be less integrated and sometimes even seen as threatening, it makes the politics of pronatalist policies in those countries often rather difficult.

A third point has to do with basically his three class model of how politics is made in welfare states and the notion of economic democracy. His basic argument is that for there to be an expansion of welfare state commitments, that people in the middle tend — need to see that they will do at least as well from policies as the poor, therefore, you ought to have universalistic policies with an emphasis on taxing the rich.

But that middle that he's talking about is quite broad, I would assume from say the tenth percentile to the 95th percentile, and I'm not sure that everybody within that group, especially people above the 50th percentile, have homogeneous interest that can be united around a policy of a more generous welfare state.

A fourth issue that I would like to see a little bit more attention to is the question of incentives and obligations for people who receive benefits from the welfare state. There's not much in the book on questions of morale hazard, in particular, on things like whether generous policies to support lone parents might, in fact, encourage things like teen pregnancy, that most observers say are not very desirable social policy. But again, the question of obligation and incentive is something where a little bit more attention in the book I think would be useful.

A fifth point that I will again, just very briefly, so we'll have more time for questions is, the question of what's a tax. Now, the book argues that government needs to regulate more and tax less, that in particular, areas like pension policy and long term care insurance, that a lot that's currently being done through government or discussed as being done through government could be done through insurance in the private sector. But will shifting these sectors to a heavily regulated quasi-private sector really be seen as something other than a tax? I'm not sure that voters will, in fact, see it that way.

The last point I'll just make has to do with neopaternalism. Again, there's a very rich argument in the book about the need for social care, what he refers to as pragmatic, practical, down to earth help for those who are helpless, and he argues that that care really needs to be determined on a case by case basis that's determined based on individual situations rather than being monolithic.

And principally, I think all of us would agree that care should be tailored to the individual and that dealing with a myriad of bureaucracies, and he has a wonderful example in the book about a lone parent in London trying to navigate multiple bureaucracies having to do with counsel housing and a variety of social benefits, et cetera, and how that is, indeed, horrific, filled with repeated personal interactions, lots of waiting, lots of mistakes on the part of bureaucracies, and needing to make that more user friendly with a single point of contact, as much as possible, and also providing more discretion to providers on the Scandinavian model.

And, you know, here I agree that there are some advantages to this

notion of individually tailored policy rather than the Anglo-American policy, which tends to be more focused on rights, albeit very generous rights for recipients of social benefits, but again, I think that there needs to be more attention here to the need to have rules to make sure that care provider A and care provider B giving care to two clients who are in similar situations, in fact, make similar sorts of decisions, even though they may have differing propensities to help based on their personal predilections.

And a little bit more I think would be useful on the practical difficulties of neopaternalist policies, particularly drawing on the problems that the American states have encountered in trying to move people from welfare to work.

So in short and in conclusion, I think that the promise of what democracy is for of a more generous poverty free society built around a policy regime of universal social benefits, financed by a broad tax base, and moving some things to the private sector is a very alluring promise, and for anyone who's been to Sweden or Norway, you know it's not just a very alluring theoretical promise, it's a very alluring social reality. But the question I'm going to ask is, what practical advice does it offer for countries like the United States that are a long way from being there?

Frank Fukuyama, in his book on state building, talks about getting to Denmark, the problem of, you know, Denmark standing generically for a developed country with well functioning state institutions.

He says, we know what Denmark looks like, and something about

how the actual Denmark came into being historically, but to what extent is that knowledge transferable to countries as far away historically and culturally from Denmark, Somalia, and Moldova, and in this case he might add the United States.

So what are the prospects for countries like the United States to be able to get to Norway in welfare state terms? I think they're, you know, very, very substantial barriers in our particular situation in the United States.

You know, a tragic history of social exclusion that's racialized perceptions of many social programs, particularly those that are oriented towards families and those where racial and ethnic minorities get a disproportion amount of benefits, the fact that we're facing our own budget crunch, increasing needs to fund retirement, health care programs, entrenched group politics, and a system of decentralized, rather than party centered accountability for politicians, it makes it very difficult for them to take benefits away from one group that may be needed to fund benefits for another. A very strong cultural resistance to increase taxes, again, I think are all very serious problems.

So are there fewer steps that I think that we can learn from *What Democracy is For* that do hold promise for the United States? And, yes, I do think that there are such things, again, very concrete things. One is things like increased use of automatic stabilizers in the social security system.

He talks at some length about the new Swedish pension system which has automatic stabilizers built into it; I think that that's a useful notion to inform the debate on social security that is destined to come in the United States sooner or later.

Increased, improved access to benefits for the poor, particularly the elderly poor in a program like supplemental security income, which truly is an appalling program with very limited access and very intrusive administration.

I think his book suggests that we need to reengage in the debate over universal health insurance that's already underway at the state level and may soon be back on the agenda in the United States. Increased attention to integration of services for those who are most helpless, particularly low income single parent families I think is something that his book certainly calls for, and more generally, a rethink of social policy towards families, a debate that until 1996, was basically about aid to families with dependent children. Now that the TANF has been created, there's been a lot of difficulty in getting that debate back on the national agenda in a systematic way to think more broadly.

So my suggested title for the next book is, how much does democracy cost and how do we get there. I'm looking forward to reading it, and I'm confident that it will be just as thorough, stimulating, and path breaking as *What Democracy is For*.

MR. GALSTON: Well, I have a million questions. I'm going to suppress all of them in the interest of group participation. But I do want to give Professor Ringen an opportunity to respond briefly to at least some of the points that Kent Weaver raised in his very thorough remarks on your book.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, thank you, Kent, for those very nice comments, and at least it seems that I've been able to write the book so that it's

reasonably understandable, what I'm saying in it, not always the experience.

Now, obviously I should address the price tag issue. And you're absolutely right to point out that I haven't done the accounts; well, nor would I at least be able to do it, but that's — but I have, although not doing the accounts, I have been trying to figure out a bit about where money could come from and how it might be — might find more palatable solutions than straight forward taxation; also, by raising money in ways which at least look less like taxation than straight taxation, whether insurance for social security, by social insurance, might still be perceived as taxes to some degree, but I think it would also be perceived as different from straight taxation, there's something to it.

There are other arguments also, by the way, for social security, through insurance than just the tax issue. I argue that we also give workers ownership in their pensions, that the pensions are uncertain, and that one way of making them more certain is to give individuals ownership, so there are many things. But the issue of the price is very relevant, and obviously, I should do a second book. I won't, I can tell you, but I should, I should.

But let me give an example of how I've been playing around with trying to figure out ways in which money could be raised for social purposes without being direct taxation. I think you mentioned this idea of human capital foundation. Now, I ask myself this question, we're looking forward to societies where the life course is pretty much divided into a third, which is education, a third, which is work, and a third, which is free time. Now, that is an incredible equation,

because the one-third, which is in work, is going to have to pay for the two-thirds that are out of work. We have to be, obviously, very productive if we're going to be able to manage that. On the other hand, we have to short up education if we're going to be productive. Where could we in any possible way find some channels of funds to square that account? And the idea that I've come upon is to take that money, not out of income, I don't think there is enough income to take it as taxation, but to take it out of wealth, but to do that in such a way that the wealth in question is not nationalized, it remains in the ownership of persons, and it remains in the economy as capital that is used in economy.

But certain elements of wealth, I call it the tops of very large ownerships, are earmarked for funding, in particular, education. Now, no wealth is nationalized, no — at least not complete ownership is shifted, no capitalist diverted out of productive use into government coffers but some private capital is earmarked for the funding of educational needs.

I don't think that would be unpainful, but I think it's less painful than any alternative, and I think some kind of device need to be found if we are going to be able to move from where we are into truly mass participation, mass democratization of higher education.

Now, of course, you're right that I haven't done the estimates. But it is an idea of a kind of non-tax taxation which I would hope might be more palatable than direct taxation from the treasury, which is not dissimilar to the funding of social security through capital funds. So I have been trying by way of logic to find some

way that I think the books could be balanced, but you're absolutely right that I haven't done the math of it, nor as I say, would I be willing to do it. There's a little bit of additional comment to make on it, because, you know, to do the math on it is — the question is, how realistic are these ideas?

And, you know, I am working on ideas, and I'm not terribly concerned about how realistic ideas are. I think it's very valuable to produce ideas, get them into discussion, make propositions, and then churn them out and work on them, and it doesn't — I don't see sort of the success of my work on ideas in this respect as measured in the extent to which those ideas are practically taken up, but I'd rather measure it in the extent to which they stimulate discussion and reflection.

Can I just say one thing about another comment you made, and that is on incentives, and in particular, on the encouragement of teenage pregnancy, a very, very difficult issue. Not least if you work on these issues in Britain, where the rate of teenage pregnancy is very high, much higher than anywhere else in Europe.

MR. WEAVER: But only half as high as it is here.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Okay, you're right. Now, there is an incentive issue, but it's a very hard one because there is also a fundamental social justice issue. I mean children are blameless, and using children as the vehicle of incentives towards better behavior of their parents is very difficult. It comes up against really fundamental issues of social justice. As you will know from the discussion, I'm very, very strongly in favor of encouraging partnerships, encouraging marriage, and argue very strongly that we should encourage not only partnership, but

formal marriage, even stimulated economically, financial means.

But I don't think we can on the social justice account escape the need that also children of lone mothers needs to have reasonable security and the possibility of growing up in a reasonably safe way, and it's very difficult to think in terms of incentives for parents which will be punishing for their children. I don't have an exact formula on it, but I just think it's a very difficult issue to resolve.

And we get some way by thinking in terms of incentives, but we come up against really fundamental questions of social justice. Be satisfied with those comments to some of your very nice suggestions and comments.

MR. GALSTON: Well, thanks very much. And we've now entered phase three of this event. And I'd like to recognize first Pietro Nivola, who is the head of Governance Studies here at Brookings, and who perked up, I noticed, when Professor Ringen mentioned that if current trends continue, there will only be 25 percent as many Italians as there are today.

MR. NIVOLA: A disaster, not just for the welfare state, but for the world, exactly. First of all, Professor Ringen, it's really a pleasure to have you here, and I haven't read your book yet, I hate to say, but I am going to go right out and begin after this session is over. And also, I think this discussion has been very interesting. Just a couple of comments, or actually an observation and then a question.

On your notion of earmarking private capital for education purposes, actually, ironically, the U.S. is probably a model of that because of the large private

component of — especially of higher education, and the mechanism is the tax code, actually, is the mechanism is the tax deductibility of charitable gifts. I mean that substantially explains why Harvard University has a \$30 billion endowment over the course of its history. So actually, ironically, the United States is doing, in some ways, exactly what you suggested.

I wanted to go back actually to the point that Kent — one of the several points he singled out, which had to do with the tradeoff between taxation and regulation, if there is a tradeoff. Let's just, for the sake of argument, take your point that tax rates in many welfare states are pretty much maxed out given the mobility of capital in the global economy.

But my question would be sort of along the lines of what Kent was getting at, which is, you know, regulatory regimes are a form of back door taxation, and you can get capital flight from countries that over regulate as much as countries that have high marginal tax rates. As a matter of fact, in some ways it's more dangerous to impose regulatory arrangements on an economy than it is to just simply visibly raise taxes, and that's because regulatory systems are, in fact, less visible. You know, the voters — here's where I didn't agree with you, Kent, the voters are, in fact, often less aware of the cost of regulation than they are of direct taxes.

And therefore, it becomes politically alluring to impose the sort of — these indirect forms of taxation that are regulatory in nature, and the result is often a mess that's worse in countries that have the higher tax rates.

I'm thinking, for example, you mentioned the Italians, well, the

Italians suffer from over-regulation, especially of the labor market, more than they do from high taxes, which are often simply avoided.

So I'm not sure that sort of going the regulatory route really gets you out of the predicament of sort of how to reduce the costs on welfare state — on countries that have, you know, large welfare states in the face of global economic pressures.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: We never escape the predicament completely. I mean I have various things to say about regulations, but the main one that I really have in mind is that, it's in social security, where I do advocate a shift towards insurance, which is in the hands of the worker. But that, in my opinion, needs to be backed up by regulations which make insurance obligatory. So it's a regulation of individual behavior more than business behavior. I also think, my opinion is that it would be in worker's interest that they pay for their own social security insurance rather than it being a mesh of individual contributions and employer contributions.

So in a way, the employer is pushed entirely out of that equation. Workers would then claim higher wages, but more of those wages would be invested into social insurance. And the regulation there would very much be on individual behavior more than on business behavior. But I don't mean to suggest that, you know, we don't get into some difficult tradeoffs with regulations also, that on this one, anyway, that is my thinking.

I'm coming from the University of Oxford, I'm very aware of the use

of private wealth for higher education in the United States, and you know, we're terribly, terribly jealous of Harvard and Princeton and such bases, that we're not exactly a poor institution ourselves, but you know, we're far behind those.

But, of course, this is the elite sector in the United States. So that private wealth is used, but not necessarily in a very democratic distribution. So my idea of human capital foundations is linked to an idea of accounts that individuals hold and that would enable them to spend say six years in education beyond secondary that everyone has. So the source is capital, private capital, but the distribution is into the hands of everyone, in arrangements where they would be able to use their educational capital at any time they want through their life course.

MR. GALSTON: Yes; and do, please, identify yourself as you ask your question or make your comment.

MR. COFFEY: John Coffey, retired State Department. Just a short observation and proposition on the notion that families need financial incentives to have babies. I'm not touching on the whole issue of unwed pregnancy, but normal married couples, I dare say, don't have children for the sake of tax benefits, that's just not why people have babies.

The proposition is this, that a good case might be made that the unprecedented affluence and peace that Europe has enjoyed for 50 years, thanks to the United States, has inevitably spawned a kind of selfish hedonism and materialism that sort of saps the will of a people to reproduce itself, or even to fight and defend itself. There is a good case that could be made for that effect of affluence.

MR. GALSTON: Professor Ringen.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, the will is there, you see. Parents and potential parents want to have more children than they are actually having. It's not the will that is the shortage, it's the ability. Now, it does work a little bit to use economic incentives to encourage children; not very much, but it works a little bit. But the real issue is, I think I mentioned it, the possibility for modern women to be wives, mothers, and workers at the same time. The reason Italy is in dire straights, to the detriment of the entire world, is that this is impossible in Italy.

In the current constellation of economic support for families and family conventions — some other places, it is being done, it is being realized. So it is this possibility of women to live modern lives while also being family members and mothers, that is the combination that I think we should be thinking for.

And I think it's actually quite important to get the message through that it's not the will that is lacking, it is the ability to realize the kinds of family lives that people themselves wish to have.

MR. GALSTON: I wonder if I could step out of my moderator's role for just a minute to press you a bit on that point, because that is, I think we would agree, an empirical proposition that you've just laid on the table. And obviously, it's going to be very difficult to do a random assignment experiment to achieve real closure in testing that proposition, but I can't help noticing the following, that there are many countries in Europe, indeed, I would say just about all of them, where family supports, broadly speaking, are much more robust than they are in the United

States, and have actually increased since the 1960's. Nonetheless, the birth rate is not only lower than it is in the United States, but has fallen much more substantially. And what I'm trying to figure out is, how those gross facts of the past 40 years are consistent with the proposition that it's a question of means and not of will.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, the United States is different. In this respect, it is really the outlier in the current demographic regime. But it's not as different as one might think if we look only to overall demographic trends.

For example, the demographic regime of middle class America is pretty much on a European scale. The birth rates in middle class America are lower than in America overall, nearer to the European situation. So it's a bit — the United States is a bit different depending on which parts of the population you look at.

But you are absolutely right, that the United States has a birth rate which is more than adequate to reproduce the population and to contribute to continued economic growth. And it is the one outlier among the advanced industrial countries in this.

Now, part of the high birth rates, relatively high birth rate in the United States is a result of higher levels of immigration. The immigrant population contributes more to population growth. Also, in Europe, the immigrant populations contribute more than national populations, the population growth, where there is population growth. Now, I can't explain the American exceptionalism of this totally. If I can just go back to the European scene again. We know from survey data, and I think they can be trusted, that when people talk about the number of children they

would have, it's pretty stable throughout Europe, it is about two, it is on the reproduction level.

So if people were able to realize the level of fertility which they wish to have, we would have a reproduction level of fertility. And that norm is pretty stable across European countries.

Actual birth rates are very different across European countries. And where this demographic situation is, in my opinion, quite dire is in — notably in the Southern European Catholic countries, where the discrepancy between desired and actual fertility is very large. That, for me, is evidence that something in social conventions and arrangements stand in the way of people realizing kinds of lives they want to have.

So I think that I'm on pretty firm ground here as long as I talk within Europe, but the United States is different in this respect, and I cannot at least fully explain that difference. It must be related to cultural situations.

Now, if I could add to that, because I think that — I emphasize family policy very strongly, and you mentioned it in your comments, but I didn't really take that, didn't really take. The family policy at the core of the — there are many reasons for economic support to families with children and fertilities; one of them is combating poverty. Now, for the United States, it's possible to support families, child rearing families, economically in the United States very much of income poverty would be eliminated by a broader and more generous program of economic support to families, and it seems to be in the United States.

The United States is a family friendly culture; it's a culture that is concerned with levels of poverty, particular among children, and the destiny and the possibility of beyond. It seems to be that it is a policy prescription that ought to be possible. I'm not sure it is, but it seems to me that it ought to be.

SPEAKER: Were it not for, you know, the fact that it is very much caught up in diversity concerns, in particular with differences in the level of benefits that have been received by racial and ethnic minorities, it would be easier I think that that — like much of American social policy, it's heavily influenced by the legacy of racial politics and racial discrimination.

MR. GALSTON: Other questions? Yes, in the back.

MR. SMITH: Bruce Smith, former Brookings, George Mason. I think you have a problem of a conflict between egalitarianism and stratification, because if you look at any of these social policy areas, the really big one is going to be health. Health is going to overwhelm everything, and if you insist on trying to have complete equality and access to health, it's going to drown out everything else. I've been going to a lot of health conferences lately, and unchanged, pretty soon, because of the way our Medicare system works, you subtract part B from your social security payment.

Well, let things roll forward without any change and people are not going to get a social security check, they're going to get a bill to equalize what they still owe to pay for health care.

So I think the only way to make sense, and I think it probably applies

to education, too, why is education, higher education suffering in Australia now, because they're wedded to this myth that it has to be free. Well, everyone realizes that that only goes to the upper classes, so they're starving it, and it's atrophying, and I think that happens in some of the European countries, too.

But go back to health; you could take the regulatory solution, as Pietro says, and mandate that everyone buy insurance the way states mandate that everyone buy car insurance. Then you might have, okay, we'll have a system, which Massachusetts says is horrible term connector or (inaudible) term, where they will subsidize the poor so that they can buy a minimum policy. But the rich are going to buy a bigger policy, they're going to pay more, they're going to have more health care. And if you say we have to hold it down so that everyone is equal, all you do is wreck the whole system. So you have this kind of relative deprivation. Even if you give a minimum level to everybody, the rich are going to be able to buy more, and the relative deprivation gap is going to increase.

So to make sense of the whole thing, you have to have a sort of stratified system with some minimum, but let people pay for if they can, and if they want to, but that collides with this egalitarian ethic. So I think you have ideology in economics in collision here, and I don't know how you square this, but health is the major driving force, and it's going to dwarf everything else.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: I'm very grateful to Kent for not having observed that I skirt around health care. I was hoping I'd get away with that. I think the observation is very pertinent, and I don't have an answer. I think the issue of how

to manage health care, modern health care, is just beyond me in difficulty.

I used to, until recently, in my lecture speak of the National Health Service in Britain as the jewel in the crown of the British welfare state, but at least for a while now, I haven't been doing that.

SPEAKER: Afraid people would laugh?

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Afraid people would not necessarily take it, and I don't think the — it really is in conformity with the evidence, the recent evidence of how the National Health Service performs. The government is claiming that it's repairing it by investing more in it, it may be correct, I remain skeptical. So I'm at a loss really to give you a very good answer, because it is an issue which I've — I think I have through some kind of idea for how to get a grip on social security, but I don't really have an idea for how to get a grip on health care.

And I haven't been able to say that I think it should be in the form of health care insurance. Maybe it should, but I'm not certain about it. I can only plead a little bit of guilt to the implicit accusation that was made of —

SPEAKER: You're in very good company in not having solved the health care problem.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Thank you very much.

MR. GALSTON: Other questions, yes.

MR. ALCHAIR: My name is Heath Alchair. I would like to raise a very simple question. I haven't read your book just, you know, for my laziness or efficiency of time utilization or management. I want you to summarize what

selection in the American democracy, vis-à-vis, the ideal democracy you defined just based on the factors, you know, you mentioned, you know, three measure factors and six, you know, micro, you know, factors you define, and what you think is the idealistic democracy in the history, you know, so far as we could trace back in the, you know, past. And the U.S., you know, which way, you know, U.S., United States will feel better, either vis-à-vis, you know, comparing with, you know, European country like Sweden or Norway, you mentioned, or just, you know, other, you know, country you think of whether, you know, if it's imaginary, you know, country, or sometimes, you know, people coming from, you know, Asia, from China, or you know, even other log states, you know, they say, you know, they are still democracy, sometimes we are mixed up with, you know, the concept of democracy, so if you could help us just in probably those matters, I'll greatly appreciate it.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, I'll give you a paper on it. I gave a talk to the Chat Institute on Friday called how good a democracy is America, and that discussion paper starts with the sentence, the answer to this question is not very good. And they didn't —

SPEAKER: I'm surprised that you escaped to be here today.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: They didn't exactly roll over on the fact, thank you for that. But in that paper, it's a bit difficult to summarize because it's a long argument, but in that paper, I conclude with particularly three recommendations, specifically on American democracy, I can just mention those, then I can give you the paper after I talk. The first is that American democracy needs

to make itself more trusted in its population. The real problem of trust, not only in the American case, but particularly in the American case. The second is that American democracy should make itself at least a bit more efficient in its decision making, a bit more capable in the production of necessary decisions. The division of power is a notable principal, but there can be too much of a good thing.

And the third recommendation that I made is that American democracy should get a grip on the mesh of economic interests and democratic politics and do something about the distorting influences of economic interests in democratic politics. This, again, is something that goes back to Arthur Okun and my inspiration from Arthur Okun.

So those are some recommendations specifically for American democracy. When I look specifically to British democracy, there are some other recommendations. In the British case, it's urgent to revive local democracy. There the chain of command is very weak from citizens to decision makers.

So although both British and European democracy are relatively low on my scale of democratic quality, they are that for different reasons, and there are different prescriptions that follow from that.

MR. GALSTON: Yes.

SPEAKER: (inaudible) Oxfordshire Associates. Professor, thank you for being here, a very interesting commentary. I want to ask you if you could expand a little bit more about families, which is one of the tenants of your talk. The ideal of what you explained is well taken, but what about the reality of the United

States today, 50 percent divorce rates, dysfunctional families, dysfunctional children, dysfunctional educational system? Most of the poverty are children. Health care, the 40 — 50 million who are uncovered, most of them are children.

It seems that if what you're saying is — flies against what reality is, and how do you turn that around, because it doesn't seem to get better, it seems to get worse, and it's not part of the discussion that is going on among the wise, if I could say that. Thank you.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, I am very strongly in favor of better economic support of that. I think certainly not a better recipe for solving all problems, but I think that families can't manage unless the economics are reasonably sound. I think also that we should, to the extent that we can, encourage, I speak of it as togetherness, partners that have children, as much is possible, it should be encouraged, to live together. I have moral ideas about this; I think they should be encouraged to marry as a basis for togetherness.

I think it has something to do about our culture and the kind of stories we tell each other. I think that support family ideas are now weak in our culture. I think the voice of children should be represented much more strongly. I think it's still quite terrifying when I listen to most family debates, that it's about wives and husbands and women and men, it's very little about the children. I have some radical ideas on how to raise the voice of children, and I included in this one, it will come in the next book, how to extend the franchise to include children, increasing power to children and to families with children.

So I have some ideas, but I think also you're right that we hear — have to do with some problems which are very deeply rooted in culture and that there's no easy fix. But there are some things that could be done, and I think, you know, we can start with helping to solve some of the really grave economic problems that many families have, that would do quite a lot.

Of course, I recognize the situation in the United States, that this is very complicated in the social constellations of the United States. Nevertheless, I would say that families should have a lot — much more support financially, in terms of money and in terms of time. I'm aware that I can't give a full answer, but I think there are some things that we can work on.

MR. GALSTON: I'll entertain one more question, if there is one, and then I'd like to offer a brief concluding remark; yes.

MR. BACHURE: Hi, my name is Bachure, I'm summer intern of Hope and Society Institute and I have a question regarding democracy and global economy. I just want to know your personal perspective on Bush's policy. Do you think this is spreading a bad idea of democracy or U.S. national interest?

SPEAKER: Welcome to America, Professor Ringen.

PROFESSOR RINGEN: Well, you know, I said that my book is a manifesto for democracy and freedom. I think it's absolutely right that the American President would speak for democracy. I was at the Arlington Memorial in the weekend and I saw that the President is not the first one to do so; President Kennedy also (inaudible)

But there is a question of how that is done. And in the chapter on freedom, I do have a conclusion where I say that I think that if my kind of idea of freedom as a unity of liberty and reason were taken more seriously, then perhaps the American President would speak in the world for democracy and freedom, but perhaps more about responsibility, old responsibility, and less in such a way that some in the world have reason to feel fear where they hear the language of some of our leaders, and not just the American President, we can include the British Prime Minister in this, and in the way that they want to speak about freedom and democracy in the world.

MR. GALSTON: Well, this has been a very rich discussion. And let me just conclude with a couple of comments which Professor Ringen may choose to take as coming from the American scene. Two things, first of all, to an American ear, one of the implicit issues that needs to be brought into higher relief is how economics and culture interplay in shaping some of the phenomena that you're talking about in this book. More than once you adverted to American exceptionalism, which is, I would say, a cultural notion rather than a strictly speaking economic notion, and that raises the question of what the mix or balance is between norms and incentives in determining outcomes such as a shortfall between reported desired number of children, on the one hand, and the number that people actually have on the other.

I am unpersuaded that that is in Europe in the main an economic issue. My hypothesis is that it's much closer to a cultural issue, and we could talk at

some length about that.

The second concluding remark I'd like to make is that to an American ear, one of the most remarkable things about your book is the way it cuts across so many of our ideological divisions and ideological reflexes.

Americans listening to you talk about issues such as the family and ownership and the pension system would hear conservative themes. People hearing you talk about regulation and individual responsibility would hear centrist themes.

People hearing you talk about a much richer panoply of family supports and educational supports would hear what are regarded in this country as liberal or even left liberal and progressive themes. And if it is the case that the overall conceptual architecture of your book enabled you to cut coherently across this ideological dichotomy in American politics and culture, then that is a very significant fact, that it seems to me those of us on this side of the Atlantic would do well to ponder. And with that, thank you very much, thanks to the audience, Professor Ringen, Professor Weaver.

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