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William R. Brock

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# WELFARE, DEMOCRACY, AND THE NEW DEAL

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WILLIAM R. BROCK

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## PREFACE

In 1984 I published a book on the agencies and activities of the American states in the late nineteenth century. It was my original intention to make a similar study for the years of the Great Depression, but a preliminary survey convinced me that it would be more rewarding to limit the investigation to federal and state welfare policies, with special reference to those concerned with the relief of unemployment. They added a new element to the functions of government, transferred responsibilities that had been exclusively local to the states and the nation, and challenged traditional attitudes toward poverty and distress.

The relief of unemployment also brought to light a basic dilemma of reform in a democratic society. The new policies were initiated and largely controlled by professional social workers and welfare administrators who had been elected to no offices. The principal obstacles to humane and efficient administration were raised by elected officials and legislators: Who had the right to insist? Who had the right to refuse?

The materials for a study such as this are voluminous. Every state has a story to tell, and the papers of many men and women in public life throw light on problems and events. Selection must be made, and an author can hope no more than that his choice will be deemed judicious.

Research in the United States was made possible by a generous grant from the British Academy. In Great Britain the sources for the study of the United States in the twentieth century are greater than is sometimes imagined. The collections in the British Library, the London School of Economics, the University of Cambridge, and the Rhodes House Library in the University of Oxford were particularly useful.

*Cambridge*  
*January 1988*

WILLIAM R. BROCK

## ABBREVIATIONS

### *Archives, Agencies, and Frequently Used Printed Sources*

*APSR* = *American Political Science Review*.

FDR Library = F. D. Roosevelt Library, Hyde Park, New York.

FERA = Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

LC = Library of Congress.

LC Pinchot = Library of Congress, Gifford Pinchot Papers.

NA = National Archives, Washington, D.C. (RG = Record Group).

*NCSW* = *Proceedings of the National Conference of Social Work*;  
cited with year.

N.Y. St. A. = New York State Archives, Albany.

POUR = President's Organization for Unemployment Relief.

RFC = Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

TERA = Temporary Emergency Relief Administration (New York).

WPA = Works Progress Administration.