

Inquiring Minds Topic - 15 December 2017

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What would be the optimal type of “welfare” or social programs for America?

What do you prefer that government provide and/or monitor?

What should be left to the individual or group to provide and/or monitor?

Can compromise on such issues be achieved?

“Welfare” State - How Much and What Kind?

A welfare state is generally one in which the state takes on the primary role in the protection and promotion of the economic and social well-being of its citizens. The welfare state concept has its foundation in the principles of equitable distribution of wealth, public responsibility for those unable to adequately care for themselves and equality of opportunity. Although some might argue that the United States is a welfare state, this is a point of much debate and contention. Some would contend that the United States is not a welfare state, but instead, is a welfare society because so much of the American welfare system is provided by private corporations, private charities and independent volunteers as opposed to by the government.

Some nations, such as those in Europe and especially Scandinavia, have embraced the idea of a welfare state. Few would dispute that, to the extent there may be a United States welfare state, it is not as comprehensive as those in other western developed nations. Until the implementation of the New Deal policies of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, an American welfare state was virtually non-existent. Today, the main components of the United States welfare state are primary and secondary education, tertiary education, disability and unemployment insurance, housing and income subsidies, food stamps, guaranteed public pensions and public health insurance programs that cover only some of the population. Most social insurance programs are encompassed in the American Social Security

