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UTAH'S PLIGHT:  
A PASSAGE THROUGH THE GREAT DEPRESSION

by  
Joseph F. Darowski

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of History  
Brigham Young University

August 2004



BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

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## ABSTRACT

### UTAH'S PLIGHT: A PASSAGE THROUGH THE GREAT DEPRESSION

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Master of Arts

The Great Depression marked a fateful passage in the annals of the American people. President Roosevelt's New Deal, the nation's signature response, proved to be a determined but erratic reaction. Against the backdrop of a nation deeply mired in an unrelenting international depression, dramatic events played themselves out in the lives of the men and women of Utah. Throughout, fidelity to principles of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency were sorely challenged.

The people of Utah found succor in two almost diametrically opposed responses. The New Deal offered an amalgam of programs and panaceas through which the federal government attempted to deliver economic relief, recovery, and reform. Able to pour millions upon millions of dollars on troubled waters, the New Deal offered the nation and Utah a vision of economic security rooted in an expanded federal-state partnership. In contrast, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints fused the principles of

independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency into a new program—the Church Security Plan.

In an interesting twist of fate, two individuals, both members of the LDS Church, would come to epitomize these contending prescriptions. In Washington D.C., Dean R. Brimhall spoke for supporters of the New Deal through his role and as a Works Progress Administration official. In Utah, J. Reuben Clark Jr., a member of the LDS Church's First Presidency, helped develop his church's counter response. These two contending ideologies, ultimately meeting on the national stage, emblematically represented the choices facing the nation and Utah.

A review of the events and empirical data concerning the era in Utah leads to the conclusion that neither position convincingly won the day. The Church Security Plan did much good but lacked the level of resources necessary to provide relief for all its members. In terms of overall economic impact, the New Deal easily dominated the state and was preferred by many Utahans, Mormon and non-Mormon alike. Its effect lingered for decades as Utah's renewed economy remained dependent on federal largess. Nevertheless, it was the Second World War that ended the Depression, overshadowing the ideological debate symbolically represented by the Church Security Plan and the Works Progress Administration. In the end, strains of both philosophies continue to be represented in the state and the nation.





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PRELUDE:  
REFLECTIONS OF TIMES PAST

The dawning of the 1920s found America serenely at peace once more. Gone were the smoke, flame, and devastation of the Great War which had transfixed and appalled the world. The United States stood poised on the brink of an almost unimaginable era of social progress and economic prosperity. “Modernism” had materialized as the solution for all that might cloud the American dream. The future virtually glistened—auspicious and bright.

Carnage aside, World War I had vastly benefited the American economy as European demand for materiel and commodities soared. Even after the Armistice of 1918, several economic sectors continued to be stimulated by foreign and domestic spending as well as pent-up consumer demand. Then, after a brief recession, the nation’s economy began to flourish on its own. During the better part of the 1920s, Americans could unreflectingly feel that they were living in nearly idyllic times—a veritable age of affluence, or so it seemed.

This rosy portrait of a nation at peace, securely nestled in an era of prosperity, was only dimmed by what were presumed to be minor deviations. Though most of the country had recovered rapidly from the short postwar slump, agricultural and mining regions had not. The impact of that anomaly fell with particular severity on the mountain west, and consequently Utah. The national government spasmodically offered ineffectual aid while the United States as a whole flourished—at least on paper.

Unfortunately, the accelerating growth of the nation’s economy which appeared

so inexorable, even ordained, was but a mirage. By the mid-1920s, the American people were living in a fool's paradise. They adopted and amplified tendencies and practices which would initially undermine and ultimately collapse the country's economy. Though portents began to appear during the latter 1920s, the actual unraveling of America's commercial and industrial system unfolded rather quickly.

The stock market crash on Black Thursday, October 24, 1929, was but one repercussion of the inherent fiscal, industrial, and commercial deficiencies that had compromised the nation's economy. The postwar financial excesses and myopia endemic to the "Roaring Twenties" helped propel the American nation and the world into an economic downturn so deep and so prolonged that the foundations of governments would be shaken. By the end of that storied decade, life in America would dramatically and irretrievably be altered.

The immediate impact was quite calamitous. By 1932, farm income, in decline since 1922, slid 50 percent. Industrial output also plunged 50 percent. Unemployment idled at least twelve million Americans (some estimates run as high as seventeen million), representing up to 25 percent of the national work force.

Against the backdrop of a nation deeply mired in an unrelenting international depression, dramatic events played themselves out in the lives of the men and women of Utah. The state was particularly hard hit as economic problems carried over from the 1920s were compounded. Unemployment, poverty, disappointment, and despair came to dominate the daily existence of many. Throughout, fidelity to principles of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency were sorely challenged.

President Herbert Hoover, a good man who floundered in bad times, sought valiantly, but futilely, to calm the public's fears and right the economy. As the 1932 presidential election approached, a Democratic Party victory was assured and Franklin Delano Roosevelt assumed the office of President of the United States. Recognizing the leadership void reflected in the nation's drift over the previous three years, Franklin D. Roosevelt took up the challenge. Mustering the best financial, social, and political talent available to him, President Roosevelt offered a troubled nation a "New Deal."

His first two administrations charted a fresh course for federal-state relations for which the national government set the agenda. During that period, the allure of the New Deal's cornucopia of programs and funding enticed a reluctant nation and its constituent states into a new arrangement of their affairs. Subtly, gradually, sometimes grudgingly, state governments and state institutions were reordered and the role of the federal government inexorably expanded. Other institutions, such as religious and private charities, adopted new ways and means of accomplishing their missions as they gradually relinquished obsolete relationships with local and state government agencies.

In the passage of time the intensity of global conflict would lift America far beyond the grim, relentless socioeconomic storms of the 1930s. After a fifteen-year era of depression and war, the United States would be transformed—more centralized and socialized than previously imagined possible. Government involvement in the lives of its citizens and the nation's participation in international affairs escalated so rapidly and extensively that no reversal would seriously be contemplated.



## SCOPE AND METHOD

The Great Depression marked a fateful passage in the annals of the American people. It was a singular, dramatically volatile, historical event. Its gravity and complexion shifted repeatedly during its ten-year reign. President Roosevelt's New Deal, the nation's signature response, proved to be a determined but erratic reaction. Through it, FDR sought to spread relief, recovery, and reform on troubled economic and social waters. Offering an amalgam of programs and panaceas, the New Deal consistently contradicted and confounded its own avowed aims. At its most extreme it advocated the re-engineering of the national economy and social structure. Throughout the 1930s, states, communities, and average citizens found themselves caught in a whirlwind of activity as these two symbiotic forces, the Great Depression and the New Deal, churned across the national stage.

This study explores some of the economic, social, and political, as well as ecclesiastical, implications of both the Great Depression and the New Deal for the people of Utah. Sources examining the emergence and development of Utah recognize the Depression and the New Deal as agents of social and economic change. However, such sources are often limited in the degree to which they can delineate purported social and institutional reformations. They seldom have the opportunity to engage in extensive analysis of those accommodations and realignments that culminated in a narrow reconfiguration of Utah society.

Accordingly, this study seeks to further clarify to what extent, if any, institutions, social structures, and practices were altered in response to the Great Depression and the

New Deal. In part, it focuses on those activities most closely associated with relief efforts, including such federal programs as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC), Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), and Works Progress Administration (WPA). It also reviews Utah's unique indigenous response sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints—the Church Security Plan (later, Church Welfare Plan).

Pursuit of this objective should yield results that will augment the extant literature on the Great Depression and New Deal in Utah. At a minimum, this study ought to further illuminate the immediate and long-term impact of those forces upon the state. It also affords an opportunity to review their implications for Utah's most dominant, non-governmental institution—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Finally, it is hoped this study will contribute meaningfully to the continuing debate over the ramifications of the Great Depression and FDR's program of relief, recovery, and reform for local and state government throughout the United States.

This study is both analytical and narrative in its approach. Quantitative evidence is employed when available. Chronological and anecdotal accounts supplement statistical and documentary material, providing context and clarity. Primary sources are augmented by relevant secondary sources to add depth and perspective. This also permits pertinent issues arising in the literature to be explicitly addressed.

Collections such as the J. Reuben Clark Jr. Papers, Elbert D. Thomas Papers, Dean R. Brimhall Papers, and the records of various relief agencies, as well as demographic and economic data, when correlated, create profiles of such federal relief



programs as the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and Works Progress Administration, as well as for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' Church Security Plan. These profiles help identify the nature and extent of the changes which occurred over time in response to the Great Depression. Furthermore, the profiles describe each organization's ostensible objectives and goals, as well as some of their successes and failures. Thus, this inquiry should render an organic portrait of the era's impact on Utah and its people during the 1930s.

The Depression and the New Deal did leave an imprint on Utah and the United States. To a significant degree, we are who we are today as a nation, a state, and a people because of a former generation's response to those powerful forces. A study as brief as a master's thesis cannot effectively address all the pertinent issues. Yet, it may offer a small window through which we may peer back in time and glimpse some of the elements which lent that era its particular significance. To the extent we comprehend the Great Depression, the New Deal, and the lives these epic events touched, we more fully understand our time and ourselves.



## A TIME TO REMEMBER

When reflecting on the Great Depression and the New Deal era, Utah stands out in one peculiar respect. Though it generally fit the demographic and economic profile of its region, Utah's culture deviated from the norm—it was dominated by one institution, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This situation was not particularly noteworthy at the outset of the Depression, but it became significant when the LDS Church launched its own singular response to the crisis—the Church Security Plan (CSP). And when Mormon leader J. Reuben Clark Jr. announced in May 1936 that the LDS Church intended to remove all Mormons from government relief roles, the Church's initiative entered the realm of the political. As events unfolded, the Church Security Plan would be portrayed in the national press as an alternative, if not a rival, to the federal government's relief efforts.<sup>1</sup>

The implications of the Church's actions reverberate down to the present day. They are echoed in a common adage which observes that during the Great Depression the Mormons "took care of their own." The accuracy of that lingering perception has been justly challenged over the years. What is more intriguing, however, is how intensely it was challenged at the time by an agency of the federal government—the Works Progress Administration (WPA).

In a sense, both CSP and WPA were creatures of the Great Depression and the New Deal. Each sought to bring some measure of economic relief to a suffering people.

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<sup>1</sup> D. Michael Quinn, *Elder Statesman: A Biography of J. Reuben Clark* (Salt Lake City: Signature Books), 399; Garth Mangum and Bruce Blumell, *The Mormons' War on Poverty: A History of LDS Welfare* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 136-137.

Each came to symbolically represent contending viewpoints. In effect, they became surrogates in a national debate over how best to address the perplexing questions posed by the Great Depression: What was the proper role of government and what was the responsibility of the individual and the community? Who was to intervene, when, and how? Could there be a return to the status quo ante, or was the nation destined to set off on some new and untried course? Difficult times drew forth divergent responses. In Utah these choices stood in stark contrast.

Since its organization in 1830, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints had experienced a brief but tumultuous passage. During its first seventy-five years it endured exoduses to Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois, the martyrdom of its prophet-founder, treks to the Rocky Mountains, persecution over polygamy, a battle over statehood, and challenges to the seating of duly-elected Mormons in Congress. Gradually, the Saints' early millennialistic fervor and impassioned militancy had reduced to a simmer. As the twentieth century dawned, the scene grew quieter. And after all its accommodations with secular America, it seemed improbable that the Church would ever reclaim the national limelight.

But how swiftly things were to change. By the end of the 1920s the United States helped propel the world into an economic depression of unprecedented dimensions. Along with the rest of the nation, Utah, Mormonism's refuge in the mountains, was shaken economically, socially, and politically.

In the midst of all this, the LDS Church heard a resounding trumpet call. Marshaling all its energies and resources, the Church chose to tackle the temporal

devastation battering its members in its own way—as Church leaders saw it, “in the Lord's way.”<sup>2</sup> For the LDS Church, as for America, the Great Depression became a defining moment.

At the Depression's onset, the Church struggled to aid members trying to meet immediate needs. Circumstances threatened to overwhelm its capacity to relieve the plight of its faithful. As the crisis intensified, the LDS Church turned inward. Drawing inspiration from its heritage and tenets, the Church mobilized its membership and thrust Mormonism once again upon a national stage. An innovative Churchwide welfare plan offered Mormons cause for renewed hope, and the nation an alternative to the New Deal. The LDS Church emerged from that fateful era more organized, determined, and purposeful.

Initially, state and county governments, local charities, and LDS Church units in Utah had coordinated assistance for those in greatest distress. However, each possessed relatively limited resources. When substantial federal relief funds began pouring into the region in 1933, many Utahans, Mormons and non-Mormons alike, enthusiastically embraced this aid—that year 35,151 residents received public assistance. In 1934, about 20 percent of Utah's population was reported to be on direct relief.<sup>3</sup>

No one had expected the Depression to linger on and intensify as it had. When it did, LDS Church leadership wrestled with the question of how best to aid its membership during the unpromising years ahead. In response, the Church ultimately inaugurated one

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<sup>2</sup> *Providing in the Lord's Way: A Leader's Guide to Welfare* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1990), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Richard D. Poll et al., *Utah's History* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 483.

its most extensive and enduring financial and organizational ventures.

Historically, leaders and members of the Church diligently sought to care for their own. The earliest examples of such altruistic behavior dated back to the time of the Church's organization in 1830 in the state of New York. Throughout the 1830s and 1840s, Mormons periodically pooled their resources and means as they suffered persecution and forced migrations from Ohio, Missouri, and Illinois.

After their exodus to the Rocky Mountains, Mormons initially sought to keep the Great Basin relatively insulated from the broader national economy. As territorial governor and president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Brigham Young championed those industries and economic activities which promoted cooperation and self-sufficiency among the Saints. However, the region's isolation was gradually eroded by the coming of the railroad, the establishment of the mining industry, and the expansion of the temporal interests of Church members. Nevertheless, efforts to develop and maintain some form of cooperative-based economy persisted into the 1880s. As the region's economics and politics, as well as the commitment of some members, changed with the times, most endeavors of this nature were abandoned.<sup>4</sup>

Nonetheless, well-established theological tenets provided the foundation for the specific practices adopted for caring for the needy. Those tenets placed great emphasis on the virtues of independence, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency. Such goals were to be attained through cooperative efforts to the extent practical, and always through hard work. In crisis after crisis, the priority remained the meeting of the faithful's essential

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<sup>4</sup> Roy N. Doxey, *The Welfare Program of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1960), 16.

temporal needs. Those who required assistance were to be aided and given opportunity to work for what was received.

The attitudes, if not the precise patterns, underlying the LDS Church's initial response to the intensifying economic distresses of the 1920s and early 1930s were based on previous experience. During those years, the Church sought to alleviate members' most urgent needs through local congregations, referred to as "wards." No one knowingly went hungry even though resources were sometimes meager. In the highest echelons of the Church concern deepened and the situation was very closely monitored.<sup>5</sup>

LDS Church bishops were responsible for the ecclesiastical and temporal needs of ward members. Presidents of the women's auxiliary, the "Relief Society," aptly named given the trying circumstances being faced, assisted the bishops in their duties. Together they administered to members' mounting temporal needs. Aid was provided primarily through the distribution of "fast offerings" (cash and in-kind donations) and commodities. Ward employment committees attempted to facilitate job placement among the unemployed.

Clusters of wards—grouped administratively into units referred to as "stakes"—also took steps to provide aid. Several stakes in Salt Lake City banded together and created a multi-stake employment committee, introducing an incipient form of regional cooperation. The Salt Lake, Ensign, Liberty, Pioneer, Granite, Grant, and Cottonwood Stakes participated.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Mangum and Blummell, *War on Poverty*, 93.

<sup>6</sup> Glen L. Rudd, *Pure Religion: The Story of Church Welfare Since 1930* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1995), 5-6.

Wherever and whenever deemed appropriate, Church headquarters extended additional financial support. It acted through the Office of the Presiding Bishopric, which was responsible for coordinating Churchwide efforts. Church leadership on all levels cooperated extensively with city, county, and state officials and agencies. As outlined in a 1928 handbook distributed by the Presiding Bishopric, in times of need faithful members were counseled to turn first to family, then to the county, and finally to the Church.<sup>7</sup>

Over time, an effective working relationship between church and state had grown up in Utah. In the Salt Lake area, the Relief Society General Board maintained a fully functioning social services department. An outgrowth of experiences gained during World War I, this department introduced professional social work practices into the Church. A formal division of responsibility between Salt Lake County and the Relief Society Social Services Department regarding members of the LDS Church dated from 1926.

Sylvester Q. Cannon, the Presiding Bishop, and Amy Brown Lyman, a member of the general Relief Society presidency, enjoyed a close working relationship with key social service administrators in the state and in Salt Lake City. Through this arrangement, state and local government and the LDS Church were able to husband their limited resources more effectively. This relationship continued through the early stages of the Great Depression. It ceased only when New Deal legislation essentially mandated

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<sup>7</sup> Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 91.



the reorganization of state and county welfare programs in 1934.<sup>8</sup>

In 1933, the First Presidency of the LDS Church began considering what additional steps might be taken to augment Church relief efforts. Over the next three years the talents, abilities, insights, and experience of two outstanding Church leaders came to the fore. Both Harold B. Lee and J. Reuben Clark Jr. contributed substantially to the conceptualization and implementation of a Churchwide welfare program. Though not formally teamed together, their work was completely complementary. The program they helped institute had far reaching ramifications for the LDS Church.<sup>9</sup>

In 1933 Harold B. Lee was serving as president of the Pioneer Stake in Salt Lake City. He earned the respect of many eminent Church leaders with his very aggressive and determined approach to providing for the needy. The year before, the Pioneer Stake created a storehouse and began operating a cannery. Arrangements were made with farmers in the vicinity to exchange labor for agricultural commodities. These initiatives and others like them provided both work and commodities for the needy.<sup>10</sup>

The Pioneer Stake's activities were not entirely unique. Other stake presidents in the area had also been innovative. President Hugh B. Brown of the Granite Stake directed work projects for the unemployed such as the operation of a wood lot and sharecropping. The Liberty Stake, led by President Bryant S. Hinckley, organized the

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<sup>8</sup> Memorandum of Understanding with Campbell M. Brown, Chairman of Salt Lake County Relief Committee, 4 Oct. 1933, J. Reuben Clark Jr. Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Clark Papers); Presiding Bishopric, *Care of the Poor* (n.p., 1934); Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 117.

<sup>9</sup> D. Michael Quinn, *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1983), 265.

<sup>10</sup> Rudd, *Pure Religion*, 8-10; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 108.

first modern bishops' storehouse in 1932. President Henry D. Moyle's Cottonwood Stake planted fruit trees and opened a cannery. But Lee stood out nonetheless.<sup>11</sup>

In April 1935, the First Presidency invited Lee to assume a direct role in the planning and development of a comprehensive church welfare plan. These Church leaders had noted Lee's abilities as a stake president and recognized his accomplishments as a public administrator. Now his ecclesiastical and administrative experience was to be applied to this critical issue on a full-time basis. He would serve as managing director of the Church welfare program until 1941.<sup>12</sup>

Unlike Lee's contributions, J. Reuben Clark Jr.'s were more philosophical and esoteric. Clark began serving in the First Presidency in 1933. A career civil servant, he had represented his nation successfully in his domestic assignments and in diplomatic posts around the world. He brought tremendous administrative and intellectual capacities to his new calling in the Church.

At the outset of his Church service, Clark began formulating a plan that would move the Church's relief efforts closer to what he believed to be the gospel ideal. In an October 1933 General Conference address, he suggested that "if people shall shun idleness, if they shall cast out from their hearts those twin usurpers ambition and greed and re-enthroned brotherly love and return to the old-time virtues—industry, thrift, honesty, self-reliance, independence of spirit, self-discipline, and mutual happiness—we shall be on our way to returned prosperity and worldly happiness." His labors while seeking to bring

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<sup>11</sup> Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 107-109.

<sup>12</sup> L. Brent Goates, *Harold B. Lee: Prophet and Seer* (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft, 1982), 141.

this to pass would not bear fruit for almost three years. However, his persistence and perseverance would be instrumental in creating the necessary consensus within the First Presidency for his dream to become a reality.<sup>13</sup>

He proposed the basic outline for the plan he envisioned in June 1933. The structure for this program was first sketched in a series of handwritten notes and later developed into detailed instructions. The end result reflected his strong commitment to what he perceived to be the founding principles of the Church in regard to the welfare of the members.<sup>14</sup>

Under Clark's plan, the stakes of the Church were to be organized into regions similar to the one functioning in Salt Lake County. All relief efforts were to be coordinated through the Presiding Bishopric's office. The Presiding Bishopric would be supplemented by a committee so that they could direct more extensive activities. Members would no longer be counseled to turn to the county after first turning to their family. The Church would now assume that secondary role. (President Grant initially rejected this last provision as a potential source of confusion given the Church's existing policies. However, it was ultimately incorporated into the Church's welfare practices as concerns about the New Deal coalesced in the First Presidency.)<sup>15</sup>

Though "Suggested Directions," as Clark designated his plan, was initially

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<sup>13</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Oct. 1933, 102; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 121.

<sup>14</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Course of Action," holograph notes, Clark Papers.

<sup>15</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Suggested Directions for Church Relief Activities," 15 Jul. 1933, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Final Draft," 23 Oct. 1933, Clark Papers; Quinn, *Clark*, 260; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 124.

approved in 1933, it was not implemented. The Presiding Bishop, failing to see any urgent need for a change, opposed it and President Grant felt the time was not yet right. A Church welfare survey conducted by the Presiding Bishopric suggested that the existing decentralized welfare program was adequate for present needs. Encouraging statements from the White House and the enthusiastic passage of New Deal legislation implied that economic recovery might be imminent.<sup>16</sup>

Responding to the delay, Clark expressed his dismay in a letter to Presiding Bishop Sylvester Q. Cannon. Clark argued that the present program fell far short of what was needed, that more "precision and direction" was required. His "Suggested Directions" would provide these elements. He further contended that greed, graft, and corruption had "characterized the use of relief funds among us during the last two years." He felt that this was "destroying morale and undermining moral and spiritual stamina."<sup>17</sup>

Clark's arguments did not prevail. Presidents Heber J. Grant and Anthony W. Ivins of the First Presidency concluded that "it was not necessary to issue (JRC's pamphlet) for the reasons that the relief work throughout the Church was being carried out effectively, and the instructions in the pamphlet might cause some confusion and misunderstanding." It was a discouraging development; Clark's proposals lay idle while the Church stayed its course.<sup>18</sup>

Disappointed but undaunted, Clark continued to crusade for a more ambitious and

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<sup>16</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Tentative Notes For Group Meeting with Stake Presidents," Oct. 1936, Clark Papers; "1932 Church Welfare Survey," Clark Papers. See also Quinn, *Clark*, 263.

<sup>17</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr. to Sylvester Q. Cannon, 9 Nov. 1933, Clark Papers..

<sup>18</sup> Minutes of First Presidency meeting, 27 Nov. 1933, quoted in Quinn, *Clark*, 262-63.

concerted approach to Church relief. As the New Deal progressed and direct relief became more widely available, Clark became alarmed at both the constitutional implications of recent legislation and the enervating effect the “dole” would have upon recipients. Over the course of the next two years he spoke directly about the evils of the dole and the sacredness of the Constitution.<sup>19</sup>

In 1934 and again in 1935, the First Presidency came close to taking some substantive action. Each time a lack of consensus regarding direction and emphasis resulted in further delays. However, several issues would bring matters to a head by the latter part of 1935.<sup>20</sup>

Welfare surveys revealed that local Church-unit resources were being overwhelmed. Even where there was stake and regional coordination, things remained very tight. Members were relying on government-sponsored direct and work relief in growing numbers. And, federal programs appeared to be in flux as President Roosevelt contemplated the termination of direct relief. (Actually the burden of providing direct relief was to be returned to the states. Nevertheless, this was hard news at a time when it was all too apparent that the Depression was not subsiding.) Fearing that matters could rapidly exceed the Church's capacity to deal with them effectively, the First Presidency

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<sup>19</sup> J. Reuben Clark Jr., “Remarks at Special Meeting of the Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, and Mission Presidents,” 6 Apr. 1936, Clark Papers; Leonard J. Arrington, Feramorz Y. Fox, and Dean L. May, *Building the City of God: Community and Cooperation Among the Mormons* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1976), 349.

<sup>20</sup> Quinn, *Elder Statesman*, 385-393.

finally agreed that the time was right to introduce the Church Security Plan.<sup>21</sup>

As previously noted, explicit preparation for the introduction of a Churchwide welfare program began with the calling of Harold B. Lee to serve full-time on the project in April 1935. Prior to the plan's implementation, various Church leaders were called together to discuss the prospective plan and their involvement. In February 1936, Campbell M. Brown was called upon to assist Lee in his preparation of a revised report on the subject for the First Presidency. The Church Security Plan (CSP) was announced to the local press and in the Church's General Conference on April 6, 1936. In a sense, the announcement came as something of an anti-climax. Beginning in 1931, it had been intimated through the press and in Church conferences that something major would be forthcoming in regards to Church relief.<sup>22</sup>

In the June 1936 issue of the *Improvement Era*, a Church-sponsored publication, First Presidency statements pertaining to the Church Security Plan were reiterated and governing principles re-emphasized. Members were reminded that Mormonism was a practical religion and when practiced purely would keep members "independent of the disasters which befall the world." Members were counseled not to rely on the arm of man for solutions. The Church's experience sixty years earlier during the Panic of 1873 and the subsequent depression were recalled. At that time a solution had been found

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<sup>21</sup> Draft statement by First Presidency announcing Security Plan [not released], Apr. 1935, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., manuscript of remarks presented at special Priesthood Meeting, 7 Oct. 1935, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., note in file, Nov. 1935, Clark Papers.

<sup>22</sup> First Presidency, "Important Message on Relief," press release, 6 Apr. 1936, Clark Papers; Leonard J. Arrington and Wayne K. Hinton, "Origin of the Welfare Plan of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints," *Brigham Young University Studies* 5, no. 2 (Winter 1964): 71; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 128; Goates, *Harold B Lee*, 144.

"that yielded happiness and prosperity through personal labor, they earned what they had and were able to pass unharmed in the midst of a national economic crisis by implementing 'God's plan.'"<sup>23</sup>

The government's role in providing much needed relief to some was acknowledged, but it was also noted that it could not be relied upon to be constant in its efforts. The Church's goal was to redress the problems that were a consequence of the dole and unemployment—to restore true independence and security. Under the Security Plan, stakes were being organized into regions which were to be presided over by executive councils. Regional storehouses were being developed and ward employment committees more efficiently organized. The storehouses would operate in such a way that surplus commodities would be preserved, eliminating much of the waste resulting from prevailing market conditions. To the extent possible, the urban unemployed were to be shifted to farming, mining, and other industrial activities.<sup>24</sup>

In subsequent remarks recounting the inauguration of the Church Security Plan, President Heber J. Grant emphasized the following: "Our primary purpose in organizing the Church Security Plan was to set up . . . a system under which the curse of idleness would be done away with, the evils of a dole abolished, and independence, industry, thrift, and self-respect be once more established among our family. The aim of the Church is to help the people help themselves. Work is to be re-enthroned as a ruling

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<sup>23</sup> Henry A. Smith, "The Church Security Plan," *Improvement Era*, Jun. 1936, 333.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 334.

principle in the lives of our church membership."<sup>25</sup>

The practical goals of the Security Plan were "immediate" as well as "long-term" in nature. The immediate goal was to "create a surplus of foodstuffs and other commodities during the ensuing summer months and to provide work for all employable persons who are receiving assistance from the Church." The ultimate objective was to "set up within the Church an organization to make it possible for the Church to eventually take care of its people exclusive of government relief and to assist them in placing themselves on a financially independent basis."<sup>26</sup>

As presented, the plan contained elements immediately recognizable in J. Reuben Clark Jr.'s earlier "Suggested Directions" and Harold B. Lee's experiences in the Pioneer Stake. The emphasis on centralization and coordination, which represented a change in policy from the Church's previous decentralized operations, bore a strong resemblance to Clark's recommendations. The creation of a storehouse system, employment projects, and the integration of several stakes into newly formed regions harkened back to some of the Pioneer Stake's accomplishments.

As it had in the past, the Church interpreted its guiding temporal principles of self-sufficiency, financial independence, and the virtue of work as justifying a partial withdrawal from the prevailing economy. At least as far as faithful Church members were concerned, government-sponsored direct relief was to be abandoned. Members should not accept anything for which they did not work. Clark had promoted this

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<sup>25</sup> "The President on Church Security," *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1937, 131.

<sup>26</sup> Smith, "Church Security Plan," 337.



perspective from the beginning of his service in the First Presidency, and President Grant had also placed great emphasis on the need for members to work for what they received regardless of the source.

Inherent in the Church Security Plan was the notion that the needs of the unemployed could best be met through agricultural pursuits. The provision of food was considered the most elemental and essential need of those in distress. Many of the Church's members had backgrounds in agriculture and understood its basics. A number of the unemployed had been directly involved in agriculture at some time. Land could be found for agricultural production, even in urban areas, empty lots, and tracts. Eventually, the Church purchased farm land with the intent of relocating unemployed members there.<sup>27</sup>

To be fully implemented, the Church Security Plan required a maximum effort on the part of members, especially the provident and cooperative utilization of all their resources. In this respect the plan was intended to "provide a means of distribution which will permit farmers in one section to use all available lands for production, for laborers and tradesmen in other sections to work to a full capacity in order that all may have work to do and that none should be found in want." The plan assumed that surpluses would provide needed commodities and that distribution would occur through an internal barter system among regions and storehouses. The result would be, in effect, the creation of a Church-centered mini-economy, operating separate and apart from the

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<sup>27</sup> "The First Presidency Speaks on Church Security," *Improvement Era*, Jan. 1937, 3. See also J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Tentative Program for Missions," typescript, Clark Papers; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 147.

secular economy and free of external control.<sup>28</sup>

It was further suggested that the Security Plan would not only alleviate the immediate distress of faithful members, but that it could also offer a "a solution to grave national problems." Once more, members were reminded that the world was watching: "The Church has a great opportunity to attract the attention of the Depression ridden world by showing them the way out with this new cooperative program." The Church would once again stand as a "city upon a hill."<sup>29</sup>

To some members, aspects of the plan seemed reminiscent of earlier Church cooperative efforts. In many of their remarks the First Presidency and other Church leaders held up the past as an example, frequently referring to the laws of consecration and stewardship as practiced in the early days of the Church. The United Order and the Order of Enoch were both cited as examples of what cooperation could achieve and also as warnings about the consequences of the failure of faith. Statements connecting these earlier efforts directly with the Church Security Plan were often ambiguous. While carefully indicating that the current plan was not the initial phase of a new United Order, J. Reuben Clark Jr., Melvin J. Ballard, and other authorities occasionally suggested that it might lay the foundation for such.<sup>30</sup>

Almost immediately the Church Security Plan resulted in a substantial increase in

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<sup>28</sup> Smith, "Church Security Plan," 337.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 338; J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Remarks at Special Meeting of Presidents of Stakes, Bishops, and Mission Presidents," 6 Apr. 1936, Clark Papers.

<sup>30</sup> Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 344, 350; Conference Report, Apr. 1945, 25.

the Church's relief efforts. Though not spectacularly dramatic, Church statistics documented a steady and tangible expansion in member participation in relief-related activities. The program provided a call to action which many answered.

A Church survey in the latter part of 1936 indicated that significant progress had been made in most stakes in preparation for the coming winter. Tithing and fast offering receipts rapidly increased. Welfare projects were implemented in most wards and stakes. Substantial numbers of members were assisted in one way or another. Evidently, the regional structure superimposed on the existing Church organization steadily improved cooperation and coordination.

In the 1936 welfare survey, 112 stakes reported out of a possible 117. Fast offerings more than doubled, from \$50,623 in 1935 to \$106,450. Over 360 projects had been undertaken with 19,000 participants. More than 1,000 members had been placed in private employment, and 23,000 had been assisted in some respect. Eighty-seven of the 112 stakes indicated they could meet members' needs through the coming winter. Two years later, in June 1938, it was reported that over 56,000 members received some form of assistance under the plan and there were sixty-seven regional and stake storehouses in operation. By 1943, after the Depression had subsided, ninety storehouses and sixty-five canneries were in operation.<sup>31</sup>

Such success was achieved, in part, because the program had clear and unambiguous, quantifiable goals. Beginning in 1937, actual production quotas (referred to as budgets) were set for regions and stakes. Those explicit assignments tested the

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<sup>31</sup> "1936 Church Welfare Survey," updates, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., "Church Welfare Plan: A Discussion," 30 Jun. 1939, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., Conference Address, 1 Oct. 1943.

members' commitment and the Church's ability to function effectively under severe stress. To the extent that members responded to such duties, the Church was measurably strengthened.<sup>32</sup>

In a similar vein, the program gave the Church an opportunity to re-establish its internal boundaries. As the First Presidency counseled members concerning their duties under the new program, it became readily apparent what the characteristics of a "faithful" Mormon were: "A faithful member is one who paid tithing when in a position to do so and has attended ward meetings and performed the duties required of him by the presiding officers of the ward or stake."<sup>33</sup>

Of course there was some variation in how strictly such a definition was enforced.

A 1939 WPA field report regarding conditions in Utah recounted the following:

The Church Security Program is set up somewhat on the lines of the Federal Works Program—that is, it has work projects and in order to be eligible to be employed, it is necessary that the person shall have been a member in good standing in the Church and shall have complied with all its laws and regulations, one of which is that he shall have paid tithing equal to 10% of his earnings. The fact is that the WPA workers and recipients of relief generally have not been paying tithing and under the Church rule, they are not eligible for work projects.

The Welfare Agents told me that some of the bishops imposed this rule very strictly. There are cases where men and their families have been members of the Church for years and the wives have been associated with various activities of the Church, but because they have not paid tithing, they could get no relief. Other bishops are inclined to more or less ignore the rule.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 98.

<sup>33</sup> Presiding Bishopric, *Care of the Poor*.

<sup>34</sup> Allen T. Sanford, State Director, Office of Government Reports, to Frank Hamlin, Field Administrative Assistant, Office of Government Reports, 14 August 1939, Dean R. Brimhall Papers. J. Willard Marriott Library, Manuscript Division, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Brimhall Papers).

One of the more intriguing aspects of the Church Security Plan was the generation of emerging Church leaders associated with its administration. Of the members of the Church Welfare Committee created in 1936, four would become members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (Hugh B. Brown, Harold B. Lee, Henry D. Moyle, and Marion G. Romney), all four would serve in First Presidencies, and one, Harold B. Lee, would become President of the Church. The experience they gained through participation in the planning and execution of the plan would bear fruit for decades.<sup>35</sup>

In 1938, to avoid confusion with the government's Social Security program, the Church Security Plan became the Church Welfare Plan. By 1939 the program was sufficiently established for the Church to issue a handbook containing a full outline of the program, as well as administrative guidelines. Though the plan did not immediately achieve all the objectives that were set, it was remarkably resilient. The program announced in 1936 remained essentially intact until substantially reorganized in 1960.<sup>36</sup>

When CSP was announced, many members readily welcomed it; however, the response was not unanimous. Harold B. Lee prepared answers to questions raised about the practicality and appropriateness of the program.<sup>37</sup> In *J. Reuben Clark: The Church Years*, D. Michael Quinn contends that "opposition to the Welfare Program was dramatic among local leaders and members of the Church, 70 percent of whom were New Dealers." In Church conferences, J. Reuben Clark Jr. acknowledged that there were

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<sup>35</sup> Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 148.

<sup>36</sup> Poll et al., *Utah's History*, 488-489; Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 157.

<sup>37</sup> Tentative Program for Group Meetings with Stake Presidents, Oct. 1936, Clark Papers.

dissenters. As late as 1944 he made reference to bishops and stake presidents who resisted implementation of the plan, sternly reminding them that it operated under the auspices of the President of the Church. However, such rebukes were not enforced through ecclesiastical sanctions.<sup>38</sup>

The introduction of the Security Plan in 1936 garnered national attention. The conservative press of the nation enthusiastically embraced the program, interpreting it as anti-New Deal. Such publications as the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Readers Digest*, and *The Nation* praised the plan.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, the liberal press saw it as a backward step in contrast to the forward-thinking programs of the New Deal, "an ultra conservative gesture of withdrawal." Occasionally during the ensuing years, J. Reuben Clark Jr. stated categorically that the plan was not politically motivated in any explicit respect.<sup>40</sup>

Clark's denial seems plausible, at least in a literal sense. The conceptualization of some of the plan's features did predate the full implementation of the New Deal. This is not to say that Church leaders, especially the First Presidency, did not hold strong political opinions. Yet, aside from this "political" aspect to the media's coverage of the plan, much that was said and written portrayed the Mormons as holding mainstream American principles. Devotion to independence, self-sufficiency, and hard work could

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<sup>38</sup> Quinn, *Clark*, 269; Quinn, *Elder Statesman*, 401-404; J Reuben Clark Jr., Remarks, 2 Oct. 1936, Clark Papers; J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Apr. 1944, 115.

<sup>39</sup> "The Goal of Self-Support," *Saturday Evening Post*, 6 Mar. 1937; Marc A. Rose, "The Mormons March Off Relief," *Readers Digest*, 7 Jun. 1937; Martha Emery "Mormon Security," *The Nation*, 146, No. 7 (12 Feb. 1938): 182-183.

<sup>40</sup> Arrington, Fox, and May, *Building the City of God*, 348, 350; J. Reuben Clark Jr., in Conference Report, Apr. 1945, 25; J. Reuben Clark Jr., *Church Welfare Plan: A Discussion* (Salt Lake City: The General Church Welfare Committee of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, undated) 3.

hardly be construed as anything but core American values.<sup>41</sup>

While such publicity integrated the LDS Church more fully into American society, changes in relations between church and state had a contravening effect. Direct cooperation between LDS Church and Salt Lake County agencies became impractical, since most New Deal programs being instituted presumed a well-defined separation of church and state. One consequence of this disengagement was a lessening of the direct Church-community coordination that had previously existed.<sup>42</sup>

In a broader sense, the magnitude of the Great Depression and its impact on Latter-day Saints helped enlarge the Church's perspective. Though Utah and the mountain west lay at the geographical center of the Church in the 1930s, steady growth was occurring outside the region. For any institution to have national and international appeal, it would have to eschew parochial attitudes, policies, and programs. From the outset, the Church Welfare Plan embodied a more ecumenical approach. It was applicable everywhere, not just in Salt Lake City.

In the post-World War II period, the plan provided the means by which the Church was able to initiate its own relief effort in Europe. It also became a channel through which the Church participated in emergency relief efforts following natural disasters and engaged in other humanitarian activities. Such generosity gained additional international recognition. Growing remarkably from humble beginnings, the Welfare Program ultimately incorporated a variety of production, distribution, and social services.

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<sup>41</sup> George Stewart, Dilworth Walker, and E. Cecil McGavin, *Priesthood and Church Welfare* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1936), 16-18.

<sup>42</sup> Mangum and Blumell, *War on Poverty*, 116-118, 144-145.

Refined and expanded, it became recognized worldwide as one of the most significant arms of the Church.

Taken in its own right, the Church Security Plan ultimately proved to be an astonishing success. However, when viewed within the perspective of the Great Depression era and its ostensible objectives at that time, its achievements were not so pronounced. Many Church members were aided by the plan, but many continued to draw up federal largesse for their succor. In truth, the plan never came close to accomplishing its immediate purposes during the latter and closing stages of the Depression.

In 1936, it was estimated that 88,000 members of the Church were receiving some form of relief. During the period from 1930 to 1935, prior to the CSP, the Church expended \$3.68 million on what it identified as “charity” in its annual financial reports. A crude calculation suggests this was the equivalent of \$7 per person per year, when divided by 88,000. From 1936 through 1940 the Church expended about \$7.2 million for charity, or about \$16.36 per person per year, again using the 1936 estimate of 88,000 members in need of relief. Of course, the number of recipients the Church aided at any given time was not close to that number, so per capita expenditures were actually greater. Though the Church supported many additional activities designed to get needy members back on their feet, such as employment and agricultural relocation projects, there were not enough resources available in terms of dollars and cents to resolve the problem for the entire Church.<sup>43</sup>

Some understood this at the time, but could also sense the potential of the

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<sup>43</sup> See April Conference Reports, 1930 to 1940.



program. Church member and attorney George S. Ballif related the following to another member, Nels Anderson, an employee of WPA: “We had an interesting session of Leadership Week at the B.Y.U. during January, at which the whole security set up was aired. Dr. John A. Widstoe frankly admitted that the plan was an ideal which had not yet been put into operation. . . .The most interesting comment of all was that of John C. Swenson. I asked him what he thought of the Church Security plan. He said: ‘Well, –you know how the Bible says God created the world spiritually before he created it temporally, and the Church Security plan is like that.’”<sup>44</sup>

The Church’s accomplishments, at least in monetary terms, are dwarfed when compared with federal relief activities in Utah during the same period. Nevertheless, claims made in the press about the “success” of the program drew the praise of the conservative element in the country. However, the exaggerated nature of those claims and some Church leaders’ perceived anti-New Deal political activities also drew the ire and enmity of influential New Dealers in and out of the Church.

Dean R. Brimhall, one of the most determined critics of the Church Security Plan and the Church leaders who stood behind it, was also one of the Church’s own. His collection of papers housed at the University of Utah offers an inside glimpse of the workings of a major New Deal program, the Works Progress Administration (later renamed the Work Projects Administration), especially in Utah. His papers also document WPA’s troubled reaction to the Church Security Plan. In this regard, they

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<sup>44</sup> George S. Ballif to Nels Anderson, 16 Feb. 1938, Dean R. Brimhall Papers, J. Willard Marriott Library, Manuscripts Division, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Brimhall Papers).

reveal much about WPA activities intended to discredit CSP and the leaders of the LDS Church. At the heart of this scheme stood Dean R. Brimhall himself.

How a member of that church, the son of a Brigham Young University president, became one of CSP's most intense critics is certainly an intriguing question. Brimhall, born in 1886, was the son of George H. and Flora Robinson Brimhall. His father served as president of BYU from 1903 to 1921. Dean R. Brimhall served a LDS mission to Germany from 1907 to 1909. Graduated from BYU in 1913 with a B.S. in psychology, he received a master's degree from Columbia University in 1916 and completed a Ph.D. there in 1922. He subsequently taught psychology at BYU and Columbia.<sup>45</sup>

During the early years of the Depression his attention turned to some of the key issues of that day. In a letter to Dale Morgan in 1945, Brimhall noted that "Greenwell, Bowman, Maurice Howe, and Bob Hinckley, together with a few doctors and lawyers, formed a liberal group in Ogden. . . .When the depression came on we, of course, became very interested in economics, and sociology. Marriner Eccles came to a few of our meetings. Then one by one we began to drift into government work."<sup>46</sup>

In 1933 Brimhall was appointed Utah director of aviation under the Civil Works Administration and helped develop municipal and other landing fields in Utah. He subsequently became the Utah planning director for the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. In January 1935 he was selected to serve as director of the Utah State Planning Board. Later in 1935, he became an advisor on labor relations for the Works

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<sup>45</sup> Biographical note, Register, Brimhall Papers..

<sup>46</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Dale Morgan, 8 Oct. 1945, Brimhall Papers.

Progress Administration in Washington D.C. under Harry L. Hopkins. He remained with WPA until 1939, when he joined Robert Hinckley at the Civil Aeronautics Authority.<sup>47</sup>

Brimhall came to WPA with serious reservations about American capitalism, and even some doubts about the work of the agency he represented. Like other New Dealers, he believed the nation's economic system had failed because the model was inherently flawed. In a 1935 letter to Dorothy Nyswander he asked the question, "What now, is the matter of our democratic system that we cannot see the failure of our economics?" In a letter to a Mr. Strachey, in June 1935, he observed, "The Federal Government is committed to the policy of a works program that will take it out of the business of giving relief. It does not seem possible that it will succeed but it is certainly better for people to be producing schools, water-systems, sewage systems, roads and the like than to remain idle."<sup>48</sup>

Brimhall's papers contain several other documents which offer further evidence of his disenchantment with his times and also with his church. Among these are a copy of the "Logan Temple Lectures," a series of lectures delivered before the Temple School of Science in 1885 and 1886 by C. W. Nibley. The text, in its questioning of the morality of capitalism and private ownership of land, has an almost socialistic slant. One passage reads, "It is true God is on our side; but the reason He is there, is because our side has justice and truth to back it. Therefore when we see anything in our system, so manifestly

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<sup>47</sup> Biographical note, Register, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>48</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Dorothy Nyswander, 6 Oct. 1935, Brimhall Papers; Dean R. Brimhall to Mr. Strachey, 24 Jun. 1935, Brimhall Papers..

unjust as is our private ownership of land, we may be very sure it cannot long stand.”<sup>49</sup>

Brimhall apparently authored a paper entitled “Latter-day Saint New Dealers of 1879 to 1890.” It was written in response to the LDS Church leaders’ support of the Supreme Court action which overturned key New Deal legislation. In it he notes that the Church once took a very different stand regarding the authority of the Supreme Court to speak for the nation. As the following suggests, Brimhall’s break with LDS Church leadership was both philosophical and personal: “The Church has grown powerful and rich; its interests are with the corporate enterprise. . . .The Mormon leaders, with their new interest in banking, insurance, finance, and industry, declare those who want progressive social legislation to be treasonable and disloyal.”<sup>50</sup>

Brimhall’s harkening to the past for solace as he faced the challenges of the modern world did not end there. Other files contain material on the United Order, the City of Enoch, transcripts of an 1873 address by Orson Pratt on establishing the kingdom of God, and an article by Jerome Davis entitled “Capitalism and the Church.” Pratt’s address reviewed the successes and the failures of the Saints in living the law of consecration and ended by calling on members to follow Brigham Young in the re-establishment of that principle. Davis focused on what he perceived as the irreconcilable conflict of Christian precepts with capitalism.<sup>51</sup>

In a curious juxtaposition, it is interesting to note that J. Reuben Clark Jr. retained

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<sup>49</sup> C. W. Nibley, “Logan Temple Lectures,” 1, 4-5, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>50</sup> Dean R. Brimhall, “Latter-day Saint New Dealers of 1879 to 1890,” Brimhall Papers.

<sup>51</sup> Material concerning the United Order, City of Enoch, and Orson Pratt address, Brimhall Papers; Jerome Davis, “Capitalism and The Church,” news clipping with no date or source, Brimhall Papers.

several copies of another Orson Pratt discourse. In 1874, Pratt spoke again on a theme related to the law of consecration.<sup>52</sup> Though on opposite sides of a political and philosophical divide, both Brimhall and Clark turned to the past for inspiration and both saw in cooperative efforts a better way, perhaps even a more excellent way. Brimhall endorsed the New Deal with its initial undercurrent of incipient national collectivism. Clark rejected the New Deal, seeing it primarily as the champion of the “dole” and thus destructive of the self-reliance, independence, and cooperative spirit that he believed could be the only basis for a truly united or “collective” effort in the gospel sense.

Regardless of the source of Brimhall’s disaffection with capitalism and his church, he poured himself into his work at WPA and, at the same time, kept an eye on developments in Utah. Beginning in 1936, with the announcement of the Church Security Plan, he undertook both the authoring and commissioning of a number of studies on the situation in Utah. His activities would culminate in 1939 in the hiring of Louis Wirth, a noted sociologist at the University of Chicago, as a WPA consultant. Wirth’s ostensible assignment was to conduct a study of relief efforts in Utah as part of a series of such reports. In truth, Brimhall orchestrated this study with the intention of unmasking what he believed to be the abject failure of the Church Security Plan.

Why did Brimhall react so negatively to CSP? At heart, he believed the program was motivated by Church opposition to the New Deal and that the LDS Church was bent on offering the nation an alternative of its own ill-considered devising. As early as 1934, Brimhall had come to see the leadership of the LDS Church as being parochial and out of

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<sup>52</sup> Orson Pratt, “Stewardship and Consecration,” 14 Jun. 1874, Clark Papers..

touch politically and economically. Brimhall had been present during a Lorena Hickok interview with the First Presidency. At the time, Hickok was roving the country as an unofficial field agent for Harry Hopkins, WPA's top administrator. Hickok's report was rather unflattering in its depiction of the First Presidency:

Before I close, even though this is a long letter, I must tell you about my session with the Mormon dignitaries this afternoon. . . .

In three big, deep, soft chairs, in a dim and luxuriously furnished office in the Church Office building (right next to Brigham Young's Beehive) they sat—Heber Grant, Brother Ivens, and J. Reuben Clark. I believe all three have the title of "President." President Grant, nodding—he went to sleep a couple of times—showing life only when something was mentioned about banking and defaulting on interest payments. President Clark, round, impassive, for the most part silent. President Ivens, aged, apparently almost bloodless, doing most of the talking.

I was accompanied by Dean Brimhall, a member of the state relief staff. His grandfather was one of Brigham Young's right hand men. His father was for years president of Brigham Young university. He calls himself an "apostate," or something of the sort, and informed me, with some glee, as we went in, that Warren Harding was the only man who had ever had nerve enough to light a cigaret in that building. (I suspect him of warning me.) At any rate, Dean Brimhall is not exactly an enthusiastic supporter of the Church.

Said President Grant, before relapsing into his afternoon nap: "I can tell you one effect of your relief out here in Utah. People are defaulting on interest payments and their mortgages so they can get government relief."

Said President Clark: "The Government was going to build a new pipe to carry water down the mountains into the little town where I live. There's been talk of putting in a new pipe for several years, but we've never got around to it. I guess maybe they felt it might be needed more this year on account of the drouth. It would cost \$20,000. I asked if it was going to be a loan or a gift. They said it was going to be a gift. So I said, "No—this town isn't going to rob the United States Treasury." I guess we can get along with that pipe a few years more.

Said President Ivens, after defending the Relief Administration, on the ground that "if we didn't give them relief, they'd come and take it": "Here's one message I which you'd take back to Washington, to President Roosevelt. Tell him to rid this country of those aliens."

More was said, by me mostly, asking questions—politely, oh, so politely, you just wouldn't believe that I could be so polite! But its hardly worth setting down.

And all this time, across the room, sat the grandson of one of Brigham Young's right hand men, literally writhing in a rage to which he dare not give

expression!

After that conversation, I don't think the New Deal can count much on understanding or support from the Latter Day Saints of Utah.

Yours very truly,  
Lorena A. Hickok

Thirty-some years later, Brimhall recounted his recollection of that visit for historian Leonard Arrington. Brimhall expressed his dismay at Clark's anti-Roosevelt and anti-New Deal posture. Furthermore, the First Presidency did not have a grasp of the fundamentals of FERA, especially the work-relief element. He noted that at the close of the interview Hickok asked them, "Can you take care of your own people?" Brimhall reported, "There was dead silence for fully a minute. She sat tight and finally Clark looked down at the table and slowly shook his head. Pres. Grant was looking at Clark and without a word shook his head. Then Ivins did the same. And that was that."<sup>53</sup>

Within two months of the Church's announcement inaugurating CSP, the Works Progress Administration brought it under scrutiny. On June 5, 1936, Darrell J. Greenwell, state administrator, Utah Works Progress Administration, sent Brimhall a report. Gordon Wirick had visited with Mark Austin, a representative of the Church. He had verified the number on relief throughout the Church and received a description of some of the Church's initiatives. Austin asserted that the Church thought 16,500 of its members on relief could and should return to farming. In the cities, micro-industries were to be established. A barter system was also planned. In a curious turn that would

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<sup>53</sup> Lorena Hickok to Harry Hopkins, 1 Sep. 1934, Brimhall Papers; Dean R. Brimhall to Leonard J. Arrington, 14 Jul, 1966, Brimhall Papers. It should be noted that Hickok's letter to Hopkins does not directly corroborate Brimhall's recollection given over thirty years later.

be echoed in subsequent WPA reports concerning CSP, Wirick suggested that CSP was a simply an attempt to bail out the Church-sponsored Utah-Idaho Sugar Company:

“However in my opinion I think that the help-self system resulted from the difficulty which the Utah-Idaho Sugar company had with the beet farmers over contracts for planting beets this year. Many refused to sign the contracts claiming that the farmer was not getting the right share. . . .The Utah-Idaho Sugar company, as you know, is owned and controlled by the Mormon Church and I have been told that the best way to whip the growers into line was though the church officials.”<sup>54</sup>

On July 8, 1936, Brimhall sent a wire to Robert Hinckley, who was then serving as a WPA regional field representative. It cryptically noted that “Yesterday Myers just learned of my study and asked if Sears would interfere. I advised Sears to be limited strictly to visiting actual projects in operation, second, to determination of the actual number of individuals in the Church program taken from eligible rolls. Advised against visiting any church officials.” A week later Brimhall submitted a twenty-nine page memorandum to Harry Hopkins, concerning CSP and the situation in Utah. He accurately recounted some of the First Presidency deliberations concerning the relief situation, including information on the surveys they had conducted. He asserted that Church leaders were hostile to the New Deal and wanted to discredit it. He also accused the Church of being motivated by a loss of control over the members, especially in regard to tithing.<sup>55</sup> In summarizing his views on the true agenda behind CSP, Brimhall wrote:

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<sup>54</sup> Gordon Wirick, “Wirick Report,” 5 Jun. 1936, 4, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>55</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Harry Hopkins, “The Mormon Relief Plan,” memorandum, 14 Jul. 1936, Brimhall Papers.



(1) Some Church officials have political and economic motivation for discrediting the Federal Program.

(2) The Church officials fear the public effect of the report that an undue proportion of its members were receiving assistance from government agencies.

(3) The Church resented the loss of control over recipients of help and the loss of the right to ask for money from members able to give it.

(4) Pressure groups within the Church have for several years been asking the Church to support cooperative action.<sup>56</sup>

In his closing analysis, Brimhall suggested, “The great value that will come to Utah and the Mormon people will be the enlightenment Church leaders will get. Their boasting has committed them, their capitalistic thinking will continue to restrain the formation of real cooperatives, their members will refuse the conditions imposed on recipients of relief. Out of it will come an enlightened, though disillusioned leadership.”<sup>57</sup>

Another report also surfaced in July 1936. It echoes much that had appeared in Wirick’s earlier report and Brimhall’s memorandum. The Church’s ability to remove 88,000 members from relief rolls was directly challenged. Church leaders were criticized for earlier relief efforts and expenditures on buildings and temples. A crisis in the sugar beet industry was alluded to once more. CSP was unfavorably contrasted with WPA.

The report’s conclusions argued that:

The LDS Church will not transfer 88,000 from the relief rolls to Church Welfare rolls because:

- (1) There are less than 88,000 Mormons on public relief;
- (2) The LDS interpretation of members in ‘good standing’ will greatly reduce the number of Mormon relief workers eligible for relief;
- (3) The obvious disadvantages to the workers will make the plan

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

unattractive to relief clients;

(4) Mormons on relief are, for the most part, physically incapable of the work created by the LDS Church; The unemployables are already working on WPA projects [apparently a typographical error, “employables” would make more sense];

(5) Many of the proposed projects, other than beet raising, will not be carried out because of competition with private industry.

The following objectives will probably be accomplished:

(1) The Sugar Beet Plants will re-open, crushing beets produced by the Church;

(2) The growers’ strike will be broken;

(3) The publicity surrounding any accomplishments, however slight, will serve to increase the prestige of the Church.

(4) Those needy who do succeed in getting aid may regard the Church more highly in the future;

(5) LDS leaders, if they disregard the facts in the future as they have in the past will pronounce their program a howling success and project it to the public as vastly less expensive and more successful than the government’s relief program.”<sup>58</sup>

The suspicion that the Church was deliberately hostile towards the New Deal and WPA was reinforced over the next two years by political and media events. James H. Moyle contacted Brimhall to request information on public relief in Utah in October 1936. Brimhall was willing to help but did not want his name used. As they discussed the situation in Utah, Moyle commented, “I am on excellent terms with Grant. I guess he even swears by me, but if they are wrong I will be the first one to take off my coat and get into the fight. . . .They want to kick the government anyway. I have been trying my best to keep politics out of the Church but it is hard to do.”<sup>59</sup>

A month later, Moyle wrote to Brimhall, sharing part of a conversation he had

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<sup>58</sup> “Security Program of The Church of The Latter Day Saints,” unattributed and undated report, Brimhall Papers. [Because of internal references and other evidence in the text, it appears to have been composed in July 1936.]

<sup>59</sup> James H. Moyle and Dean R. Brimhall, notes of phone conversation, 15 Oct. 1936, Brimhall Papers.

with President Heber J. Grant concerning an editorial Grant had written for the *Deseret News* which castigated the Roosevelt administration and challenged the constitutionality of New Deal programs. The editorial had gone so far as to assert that, "Church members, who believe the revelations and words of the Prophet, must stand for the Constitution."<sup>60</sup>

Moyle related:

We were pretty disturbed over the *Deseret News* editorial. I had a long talk with President Grant. . . . While I think he was somewhat impressed with the possible mistake that he had made he said that the editorial had been published with his approval . . . that people were entitled to his ideas on the subject. He has, as I stated to him, absorbed the views of the financiers and failed to appreciate the humanitarian purposes of the President. He really believes the policies of the New Deal are dangerous and that the President does not have the high regard for the Constitution that he thinks he should have. After the election . . . he merely said that he had followed the impressions which he had on the subject and did not claim that he had received any inspiration concerning it.

He still insists that he is a Randall Democrat (a Pennsylvania Protectionist Democrat), and he said he was going to vote for Governor Blood, and afterwards said that he did vote for the Governor.<sup>61</sup>

As previously mentioned, during the first two years of CSP's operations numerous articles appeared in the press regarding the program, many quite favorable. The *Saturday Evening Post*, *Readers Digest* (it published an article which claimed no Mormons were on relief), the *New York Herald Tribune*, and *The Nation*, among others, all discussed CSP in positive terms.<sup>62</sup>

It was a September 21, 1937 *New York Herald Tribune* editorial which set in motion a chain of events which resulted in the commissioning of Louis Wirth's Utah

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<sup>60</sup> *Deseret News*, 31 Oct. 1936.

<sup>61</sup> James H. Moyle to Dean R. Brimhall, 14 Nov. 1936, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>62</sup> "The Goal of Self-Support," *Saturday Evening Post*, 6 Mar. 1937; Marc A. Rose, "The Mormons March Off Relief," *Readers Digest*, 7 Jun. 1937; "The Mormons Show the Way," *New York Herald Tribune*, 21 Sep. 1937; Martha Emery "Mormon Security," *The Nation*, 146, No. 7 (12 Feb. 1938): 182-183.

study. The September article prompted Brimhall to look into the best way to respond.

He composed an interoffice memo that noted:

Mr Alan Johnstone, Counsel for the Byrns Committee, has offered to write a letter to the Herald Tribune expressing interest in the attached editorial [from the Herald Tribune] and asking for the source of the data it reports. This, of course would be followed by letters to Mormon Church officials.

If Mr. Hopkins thinks this procedure advisable, I think I shall inform Mr. Johnstone at once. He will probably ask Mormon officials to appear before the committee later.

I have a mass of current data available.<sup>63</sup>

On October 4, 1937, Brimhall received a reply from Harry Hopkins. His original memo was returned with a pencilled note, "Brimhall, I think someone should explode this and your scheme is too slow. HLH." Over the next two months an exchange of letters took place between WPA and Church officials concerning comments President Grant made disparaging work-relief programs. David Niles, an assistant administrator with WPA, attempted to correct President Grant's use of the term "government dole." After an exchange of several letters among Grant, David Niles and Harry Hopkins, Grant ended the dialogue in November 1937, "I made no specific reference to the Works Progress Administration and no indirect reference to the Administration, except in so far as it might be covered by my observation in regarding idlers receiving gratuities, that is a 'dole' from the Government. You know whether or not the Works Progress Administration could fall within that implied reference."<sup>64</sup>

In 1938 a significant number of unfavorable articles began to appear questioning

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<sup>63</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Mrs. Godwin, memorandum, 22 Sep. 1937, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>64</sup> Mrs. Godwin to Dean R. Brimhall, memorandum, 4 Oct. 1937, Brimhall Papers [Photocopy provided in appendix.]; David K. Niles to Heber J. Grant, 6 Oct. 1937, Brimhall Papers; Heber J. Grant to David K. Niles, 15 Oct. 1937, Brimhall Papers; Heber J. Grant to Harry Hopkins, 15 Oct. 1937, Brimhall Papers; David K. Niles to Heber J. Grant, 6 Nov. 1937, Brimhall Papers; Heber J. Grant to David K. Niles, 26 Nov. 1937, Brimhall Papers.

the accomplishments of CSP. By mid-year Brimhall began setting in motion his plan to further discredit CSP. In August of that year, he and Nels Anderson contacted Read Baine, a professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. Brimhall indicated that, “We want somebody to organize a little project to determine just how much the Mormon Church Security Program has affected the relief situation.” Baine declined, recommending Utah sociologist Lowry Nelson, but Brimhall countered that someone more removed from the Church was needed.<sup>65</sup>

Brimhall next contacted a Professor Dangerfield at the University of Oklahoma. He also declined. Finally he was able to interest Louis Wirth in the study in October 1938. In the meantime, Brimhall had orchestrated things at WPA, making arrangements in Washington and Utah in support of the project. Personnel, statistics, and funding were assembled. Though a considerable number of documents elaborate the unfolding of Brimhall’s plan, a March 28, 1939 memo from Brimhall to a Mr. Rauch provides a very concise outline of the whole affair:

Mrs. Gaffney has informed my Secretary that you desire some detailed information on the Utah Study being conducted under the direction of Professor Louis I. Wirth of Chicago. In April 1936 the Mormons announced that they were going to take all their members off the State and Federal relief and work relief rolls. A representative of the Mormon church called on President Roosevelt and the President wrote a memorandum to Mr. Hopkins commending the proposal of the Mormon Church.

Mr. Hopkins had me write a report. After some weeks of investigation I reported that the plan proposed by the Mormons was conceived in antagonism to the New Deal and that it was at that time purely a paper affair.

The reactionary press of the country took up the report of the proposals

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<sup>65</sup> *Washington, D.C. Times*, 25 Feb. 1938; *New York Daily News*, 20-21 Jun. 1938; Nels Anderson, Dean R. Brimhall, and Read Baine, notes of telephone conversation, 31 Aug. 1938, Brimhall Papers; Dean R. Brimhall and Professor Dangerfield, notes of telephone conversation, 14 Sep. 1938, Brimhall Papers.

with great gusto. Hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles were written extolling the virtues of the program and in many cases pointing out that Mr. Hopkins should learn from the Mormons how to handle relief. Mr. Hopkins frequently referred such statements to me and finally, following a long editorial in the New York Herald Tribune extolling the Mormons and depreciating [*sic*] the Government Works Program, he wrote me a memorandum and asked me if something couldn't be done about it. I took the matter up with Mr. Hinckley, who also had been annoyed at the misrepresentations and the use the reactionary press was making of these misrepresentations, and we decided that the W.P.A. should make an investigation itself in order to have the facts.

We tried to obtain the help of several able people but in each case we were unsuccessful . . . We decided to ask Professor Louis I. Wirth . . . if he would supervise such a study. Nels Anderson was able to convince him that he should.

In order to keep the Administration record clear I explained the whole problem to Aubrey Williams and received his permission to go ahead. In the meantime, however, Mr. Williams was replaced by Colonel Harrington. I therefore explained the matter to Colonel Harrington in a memorandum which was presented to him by Mr. Niles and received his approval. . . .

It might well be asked why this study was not done by our Social Research organization instead of having it done by setting up a special project. Had we done it ourselves and then published the results, the value, however accurate the findings, would have been lessened by the fact that we were ex parte students of the problem. When it is finished it will have the stamp of approval of one of the best departments, in one of the best universities in the world. It will be done much cheaper than we could have done it ourselves. The only possible disadvantage I can see in the method we have used arises out of the fact that Professor Wirth may submerge the Mormon program in the study of other factors affecting the relief requirements in the state of Utah. However, the only way we could obtain his services was by telling him that we would not control or direct his activities other than present the problem to him. He felt that in a case of this kind he had his professional standing at stake and that he would have to make an objective study in his own way. Mr. Gill and Mr. Myers are going to cooperate in gathering some of the data necessary to complete his study.<sup>66</sup>

In July 1939, Dean R. Brimhall sent another memorandum, in that instance to

David K. Niles, based on data gathered for the Wirth study:

I think the Secretary will be very much interested in the following: A "nose count" of the number of Mormons on state relief, including old age pension, aid to dependent children, and direct relief, shows that they represent

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<sup>66</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Mr. Rauch, memorandum, 28 Mar. 1939, Brimhall Papers. [Photocopy of full text provided in appendix.]

79.3 per cent of the total load in the state, although the percentage of Mormons in the state is very close to 60 per cent.

The Mormon load on W. P. A. is 83.1 per cent of the total in the state of Utah, although it should be proportionately only about 60 per cent. This gives the lie to the Mormon claim about taking care of their own.

My problems now are to get the study finished up in presentable form and get the facts broadcast for the benefit of the reactionaries and the prevaricators, who have been talking so loosely for nearly three years.<sup>67</sup>

Work on the study did go forward and was ultimately completed by fall 1939.

Though some copies were apparently circulated, publication became problematic. As late as January 1941 Brimhall was writing Wirth about salvaging the study and getting it published somehow. There is, however, no record of the study ever making it into print.

In later years, Brimhall either forgot or “mis-remembered” the project. In a July 1966 letter Brimhall responded to Arrington’s probing about the Utah study:

Since you did not reply to my request for more information about the source of your report that Hopkins had solicited in 1937 a study “to prove that Utah still had one of the highest relief loads, despite the welfare (LDS) plan,” I think I may have offended you by stating that Hopkins would never have asked for such a report. However, I am correct. Utah’s relief load and the load of every other state was known by him and was also public information. . . .

The WPA research section did arrange to have a study made to determine what proportion of WPA relievers’ was Mormon. Professor Wirth of the Department of Sociology of the University of Chicago was the director of the study. . . .He was slow getting started and died in the midst of the study. [Actually, Louis Wirth died in 1952 at age 54, twelve years after he completed the Utah study.] His assistants were mostly graduate students in his department and soon left for other jobs or went back to school. . . .I think Mr. Jaffe was his chief assistant. He (Jaffe) called on me to report that the Salt Lake area, city or county, I don’t know which, had been completed and that LDS members numbered twenty percent more than non-members, proportionate to the population expectancy. . . . Shortly thereafter I left the work in the Dept. of Commerce and

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<sup>67</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to David K. Niles, memorandum, 31 Jul.1939, Brimhall Papers. [Louis Wirth’s “Utah Study” has not been located. However, portions of it appear in Brimhall’s papers. An outline of the content, the first three chapters, and a portion of chapter seven are available in the Brimhall Papers. A photocopy of the chapters is provided in the appendix.]

had no time or interest in trying to have the study completed.<sup>68</sup>

After leaving the WPA in 1939, Dean R. Brimhall served as director of research for the Civil Aeronautics Administration until 1951. He was also a noted expert on Native American rock art and an accomplished photographer. He died in 1972. Considering all the time and energy Dean R. Brimhall poured into his vendetta against the Church Security Plan and the negligible results he achieved, Shakespeare may have offered the most fitting epitaph for the “Utah Study” and those involved:

Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor player  
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,  
And then is heard no more. It is a tale  
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,  
Signifying nothing.<sup>69</sup>

The Church Security Plan was rechristened the Church Welfare Program in 1938 to avoid confusion with the federally-sponsored Social Security program. It became, in many respects, one of the LDS Church’s most successful and admired programs, especially in terms of its subsequent international humanitarian efforts. Contrary to the evidence available, the myth that the Mormons took care of their own during the Great Depression endures.

The national debate that CSP and WPA symbolically denoted was never resolved with complete finality. In one sense, World War II intervened, smothered the Depression, and rendered the issue somewhat moot. The rechristened CSP endured, while the WPA did not. However, other New Deal programs, such as Social Security,

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<sup>68</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Leonard J. Arrington, 14 Jul. 1966, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>69</sup> *Macbeth*, act 5, scene 5, lines 23-27.



persisted, ensuring that the federal government would continue to play a dominant role in furnishing welfare to the nation's citizens. Both viewpoints in the debate lingered on and are still with us today. Americans continue to perceive themselves as rugged individuals and yet have assigned the federal government significant responsibility for their economic security. An entirely new America did not emerge from the turmoil of the Great Depression, nor did the country return to the past. What resulted is perhaps best considered a hybrid—a blending of America's Clarks and Brimhalls, if you will.



## UTAH'S PLIGHT

It would be difficult to discuss Utah's passage through the Great Depression without recognizing the unique role attributable to the LDS Church and its Church Security Plan. However, it would also be almost delinquent to ignore the more mundane, though justly intriguing, account of how the state as a political and economic entity reacted to the crisis. For, in truth, there were two responses to the Great Depression in Utah, church and state. Each played its part, though in the state's and the nation's collective consciousness only one story is much remembered—that the Mormons took care of their own. That it wasn't quite so remains to this day one of the rarely acknowledged legacies of that era.

During the early decades of Utah's development as a territory and then as a state, it had remained somewhat outside the United States' mainstream. Thus, it had to an extent been insulated from some of the country's broader trends and experiences, including periodic panics and recessions. However, Utah was gradually but steadily integrated into the national scene during the first three decades of the twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> For instance, apace with the rest of the country, Utah's population gradually grew more urban and industrial. (Interestingly, in 1930, about 25 percent of the state's labor force was still agricultural, even though only about 3 percent of the state's land was arable.)<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, "The Changing Economic Structure of the Mountain West, 1850-1950" (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), 12-13.

<sup>2</sup> Richard D. Poll et al., *Utah's History* (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 481; Frank H. Jonas, "Utah, Crossroads of the West," in Frank H. Jonas, ed., *Western Politics* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1961), 301.

Regardless of the extent to which Utah was slowly but surely blending with its neighbors, its people still faced some unique and perplexing challenges. The region had not remotely recovered from the implications of a post-World War I recession that had lingered in the west when the Great Depression began to make itself felt in 1930. In some respects conditions in Utah in the early 1920s may actually have been just as severe as they were subsequently during some stages of the Great Depression.<sup>3</sup> For instance, in 1929, before the Depression was fully underway, Utah's per capita personal income stood at \$559. For the region the average was about \$606, and for the nation it was \$703. In relative terms, Utah was 8 percent behind the average for the region and 20 percent behind the average for the nation.<sup>4</sup>

The crux of the problem was ably laid out in a 1931 study which analyzed Utah census data from 1920 and 1930. Developed by Rolland A. Vandegrift and Associates, it painted a portrait of a state facing daunting challenges during the coming decade, with or without a national depression thrown into the picture. The core of the report's analysis focused on the established relationship between population growth and economic prosperity—that they tended to vary directly. Thus a statewide gain or loss in population would normally be interpreted as reflecting a similar movement among key economic indicators, and vice versa. The simplest expression of this relationship suggested that the rate at which a population increased rose when things were going well and declined when

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<sup>3</sup> Poll et al., *Utah's History*, 464-469; Leonard J. Arrington, "Utah, The New Deal and the Depression of the 1930's," Dello G. Dayton Memorial Lecture, 25 March 1982, (Ogden, Utah: Weber State College Press, 1983), 9.

<sup>4</sup> Leonard J. Arrington and George Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes in the Western States, 1929-1960," *Western Economic Journal* 1 (Summer 1963):205-217.

times were tough.

“Census Facts and Utah’s Future” observed that the state had just passed through a difficult decade economically and demographically and was inexorably entering another. As would be noted with alarm by others during the coming years, Utah had become quite literally an exporter of its greatest resource—men of working age.<sup>5</sup> Utah’s population had increased by over 58,000, or 13 percent, during the previous decade. (The national population increase stood at 14 percent for the same period.) However, after accounting for the state’s excess of births over deaths, the increase should actually have been 89,000, or 19.8 percent. Utah had in effect exported about 30,000 residents through emigration, many of them males of working age.

The root cause was not hard to identify—it was Utah’s economy. The state’s capacity to create new jobs was not expanding nearly fast enough to provide employment for all of its citizens seeking work. The study stated the matter succinctly: “It is apparent that, in order to have prevented losses by emigration, . . . [the] industrial development of Utah would have had to increase half again as rapidly as it did. . . .” The grimness of this assessment was accentuated when Utah’s losses through emigration were fully analyzed. The heaviest loss of population had been concentrated among men, ages 24 to 64.<sup>6</sup>

The report further argued that when “gains by immigration and losses by emigration are equal, a state may be said to be holding its own from an economic

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<sup>5</sup> Rolland A. Vandegrift and Associates, “Census Facts and Utah’s Future,” 15 Jun. 1931, Lowry Nelson Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collection Library, Harold B. Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, (hereafter cited as Nelson Papers), 6-8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 18, 21.

standpoint. Under such conditions the state's actual population change will be equivalent to the normal excess of births over deaths. . . ." Thus any expansion or contraction of the population beyond what is accounted for by births and deaths is a potent indicator of the economic health of a community. Put simply, are people moving in or moving out? In Utah's case people were moving out in significant numbers and were likely to continue to do so unless something in its economic structure was altered.<sup>7</sup>

The projections for the next ten years did not bode well for the state. The study's message was straightforward: "Utah . . . should look to the future with apprehension rather than optimism." And, "from the . . . analysis of the 1930 census figures, Utah's future does not look particularly bright." Glumly, the study forecast a net population growth for the 1930s of about 50,000, or 10 percent, assuming that Utah broke even in terms of its immigration/emigration ratio. The actual figures for the decade fell well below the study's projection, just 42,463, or an 8 percent rate of growth. Thus, ironically, the study's somewhat conservative, even pessimistic, analysis proved to be optimistic in light of actual experience. The difference between the forecast and the reality reflected in a very tangible way the socioeconomic impact of the Great Depression.<sup>8</sup>

The study's prescriptions offered little hope for an immediate turnaround. Given the nature of Utah's economy at the time, mining, manufacturing, and wholesale distribution were the sectors most likely to generate sustained economic growth. These

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 6-8.

represented Utah's primary, or export, industries. Though only accounting for about one-third of Utah's employment activity at the time, they would control the fate of the remaining components of the state's economy which held little potential for generating sustainable growth in their own right. As the study asserted, "all the service industries . . . are dependent for their growth and prosperity upon the basic or primary industries."<sup>9</sup>

In its final analysis, the report resisted putting a gloss on Utah's predicament. Agriculture was acknowledged to be at a standstill. It had developed about as far as it could, given the limited arable land available. Mining was deeply depressed but in the long run showed a promise of revival and growth. Manufacturing also was considered one of the state's long-term hopes even though little could be done to expand its potential in the short run. One of the report's conclusions was particularly discouraging, and ultimately revealing. Utah's "future population growth . . . is dependent upon the expansion and development of mining and manufacturing." During the Great Depression years, Utah's population would only grow 8 percent.<sup>10</sup>

The question of out-migration, its causes, and its impact on the state became something of a recurring theme among Utahans as the Depression lingered and took its toll. When it became apparent that Utah was receiving very significant amounts of federal aid, disproportionate aid in some estimations, one persistent argument was proffered in support of such federal largesse. It suggested that it was simply Utah's due, given the state's exportation of significant numbers of its well-educated, working-age

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 11.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 48-49.

men to other states. The validity of this argument could certainly be challenged. However, its value lies not so much in its accuracy as in its reflection of the temper of the times.

Dean R. Brimhall argued that Utah could expect to receive little in return for all those it had supported, educated, trained, and then exported to other states. In this context, federal relief aid was simply fair compensation for Utah's loss and other states' gain.<sup>11</sup> In 1938, Nels Anderson, another Utahan serving as an official with the Work Projects Administration, echoed this sentiment. He wrote to George S. Ballif, "The real problem is that the Mormon population has outstripped the land supply and the wealth of Zion has to be expended in an expensive training program to educate the surplus children for export. Brigham Young brought them in at \$200 per head and Utah now ships them out at \$10,000 per head. Zion can't prosper at that rate. The world gets the benefit."<sup>12</sup>

In a 1940 speech before the Utah State Conference of Social Work, Anderson identified emigration as one of the chief underlying causes of Utah's high ranking in terms of federal relief dollars. This condition, he maintained, left Utah with a disproportionate number of young and elderly residents who were not of employable age. He concluded his analysis of Utah's unemployment situation by suggesting that federal work relief efforts were just and fair, especially given his views on the problem's root causes. "Some states, including [Utah] have more than a proportional share of the nation's unemployment. The federal work program. . .serves to redistribute some of the

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<sup>11</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Lowry Nelson, 1 Oct. 1937, Nelson Papers.

<sup>12</sup> Nels Anderson to George Ballif, 19 Feb. 1938, Dean R. Brimhall Papers, Manuscript Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Brimhall Papers).



wealth [of the nation] and thus even up somewhat the imbalance.”<sup>13</sup>

Wilford G. Frischknecht, National Youth Administration state director, calculated the loss at \$14.4 million annually. He argued that 2,000 trained and semi-trained youth left Utah each year. He arrived at the \$14.4 million figure “on the basis of \$7,000 for each high school graduate. At the age of 18, using the government’s \$400 income tax exemption as a basis for computing annual cost, a youth represents this investment. . . .”<sup>14</sup>

Regardless of the causes of the difficulties afflicting the mountain west during the 1920s, Utah was wholly unprepared to address the staggering welfare and relief needs that manifested themselves as the 1930s unfolded. In 1930, seven Utah counties were responsible for 80 percent of the state’s income. Salt Lake County alone, with the largest population in the state, provided 51.1 percent. No other county was remotely close to that total, with Weber at 10.5 percent, Utah 6.8 percent, Carbon 4.5 percent, Cache 3.7 percent, Box Elder 2.5 percent, and Davis 1.8 percent. The majority of this income, 73.2 percent, was derived, not surprisingly, primarily from mining, agriculture, and manufacturing. Mining led the way with 35.8 percent of the state’s income, followed by agriculture at 18.6 percent and manufacturing at 17.6 percent.<sup>15</sup>

The Depression’s impact was astounding and Utah was exceptionally hard hit. All

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<sup>13</sup> Nels Anderson, Director, Section on Labor Relations, Work Projects Administration, “Utah’s Unemployment Problem,” paper presented at the Utah State Conference of Social Work, Salt Lake City, Utah, 15 Nov. 1940, Nelson Papers.

<sup>14</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 12 Dec. 1937.

<sup>15</sup> A. Smith Pond, “An Analysis of Effective Income Distribution in the State of Utah,” in Vasco M. Tanner, ed., *Proceedings: Utah Academy of Science* (Provo: Brigham Young University) 11 (1934): 121-122.

three critical economic sectors experienced dramatic downturns during the first three years of the Depression's reign. Mining fell a staggering 85 percent, while agriculture declined by 66 percent, and manufacturing 65 percent. Though these figures represent a more-than-catastrophic collapse, the impact was slightly mitigated by a less pronounced drop in purchasing power as prices inevitably fell as well. In 1932, for instance, purchasing power was estimated at about 50 percent of what it was in 1929, and personal income stood at 54 percent of the 1929 level.<sup>16</sup>

In July 1931, a report published in the *Proceedings: Utah Academy of Sciences* noted that the "present depression" was already one of the most severe on record. Several indices charted the impact on business activity in Utah. One showed a decline of 22.9 percent through December 1930. Another pegged the regression at around 25.5 percent by January 1931, while yet another pointed to a decline of 33.8 percent for the same period. Regardless of the particulars, all registered a continuous downward spiral over a fourteen-month period.<sup>17</sup>

The analysis also presented a particularly troubling hypothesis given Utah's economic orientation. Apparently both raw material and agricultural products were susceptible to significant decline during the early stages of a recessionary cycle and also tended to fall further and faster than other sectors. Given Utah's preponderant dependence on mining and agriculture, the prognosis suggested that Utah could expect

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 121-122.

<sup>17</sup> Dilworth Walker, "A Statistical Analysis of Periods of Prosperity and Depression From 1875 to 1930," in Vasco M. Tanner, ed., *Proceedings: Utah Academy of Science* (Provo: Brigham Young University) 8 (1 Jul. 1931): 78.

exceedingly difficult times if the depressed conditions persisted.<sup>18</sup>

On the other hand, the forecast was not entirely without a silver lining of sorts. When a recovery cycle took hold, such sectors as mining and agriculture could expect to be among the first to be revitalized. The argument in this regard was deceptively simple. When prices fall, the costs of production lag behind and remain relatively high for such industries as mining and for agriculture, thus wiping out the profit margin and resulting in substantial losses. Conversely, when a recovery took hold the prices of such products as raw materials and farm products would rise more rapidly than the cost of production. Thus, though Utah's economy might stagger during the early stages of a recessionary cycle, its economy should rebound rapidly during the recovery period.<sup>19</sup>

During the depth of the Depression, almost 36 percent of the state's workforce was unemployed, representing as many as 61,500 men and women. For farmers and agricultural workers the effect was almost as devastating, with market prices declining and the prospect of foreclosure looming. The production of minerals in the mining industry virtually collapsed, plummeting 80 percent, from \$115 million to \$23 million.<sup>20</sup>

In Utah, assistance for those in greatest distress was initially administered collaboratively by state and county government, private charities, and the LDS Church. Each had relatively limited resources to expend. When substantial federal aid began reaching the region in 1933, it was embraced by many who had been left destitute by the

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 78

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>20</sup> Poll et al., *Utah's History*, 482.

Depression—35,151 Utah residents received public assistance in 1933. In 1934 about 20 percent of Utah's population was on direct relief.<sup>21</sup>

Senior citizens also struggled. The development of an integrated social safety net maintained by communities, states, and the federal government only emerged conceptually during the course of the New Deal. At the outset of the Depression, community resources upon which the elderly could fall back were extremely limited. A 1935 study illustrated the extent to which aid for seniors had already proved woefully inadequate. The study revealed that as of 1934, Utah still operated four poorhouses in three counties. These housed about 365 persons, with an average expenditure of \$76.64 per person per year, or \$6.39 per month. Eleven counties did provide old-age pensions, however seven others had been forced to discontinue their programs by 1934. The state's remaining eleven counties had never adopted a pension program for its residents. The average pension was \$7.43 per month, or \$89.16 per year. This was at a time when it was estimated that a pension of at least \$25 per month was needed to maintain a subsistence level of existence. About 29 percent of Utah's population age 65 or over was classified as indigent.<sup>22</sup>

Accounts drawn from the pages of local newspapers suggest something of the evolution of these early relief efforts and the collaborative nature of public and private initiatives during the first few years of the Depression. For instance, Lowry Nelson, a

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 483.

<sup>22</sup> Arthur L. Beeley, Virginia E. Parsons, and Elizabeth Deuel, "Survey of Old-Age Dependency in Utah: Methods and Results," in Vasco M. Tanner, ed., *Proceedings of the Utah Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* (Provo: Brigham Young University) 12 (1935): 135.

noted Utah sociologist, had a Depression chronicle of sorts created out of the pages of the *Provo Herald*, a Utah County newspaper. The result was an evocative portrait of the valiant efforts of local citizens, private charities, civic groups, and government officials and agencies on all levels to come to grips with a crisis that unexpectedly kept growing and intensifying. Whether intended or not, this chronicle offers a glimpse of the human dimensions of the Depression as events outstripped a community's ability to adapt to very dynamic circumstances and succor all its citizens.<sup>23</sup>

The "Great Depression" was first mentioned in the *Herald* in the spring of 1930 and that was in the context of how lightly the area had been hit so far. However, by May the "indigent fund" had become the second biggest item in Utah County's budget. That summer some formal "relief" efforts were initiated, though the city of Provo and Utah County, in general, still did not consider themselves particularly hard hit. However, the *Provo Herald* did sponsor several specific but rather low-keyed responses to worsening conditions. It encouraged its readers to "Buy Now" on its editorial pages and it also offered a free employment service.<sup>24</sup>

In the fall of that year some note was taken of employment opportunities created through such public work projects as road construction. Yet the community still perceived itself as just mildly affected and exhibited only a low-level consciousness that conditions were gradually but steadily growing worse. To an extent this was a reflection of the widely held perception that depressions in general were relatively short-lived and

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<sup>23</sup> Lowry Nelson, "A Chronology of Depression Events as Recorded in the *Provo Herald* from October 1, 1929 to January 1, 1934," Nelson Papers.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-3.

that there was no reason to assume this one would be an exception.<sup>25</sup>

In truth, the record of the past certainly supported such optimistic assessments. The following year, a study published in the proceedings of the Utah Academy of Sciences indicated that “the most probable expectation of the future . . . would be improving business activity during the next 12 or 15 months, approaching normal about a year from next summer. The year 1932 should be a normal business year and the year 1933 should be better than normal.”<sup>26</sup>

As the first full year of the Depression drew to a close, recognition that some families were beginning to suffer increased. Together, as they had in other seasons of distress, civic and governmental leaders formally joined hands to cooperate with each other, avoid duplication of effort, and attempt to answer the needs of their friends, neighbors, and fellow citizens.<sup>27</sup> The list of those who committed themselves and their organizations in Utah County was substantial. The LDS Church was represented by the Utah Stake Presidency, ward bishoprics, and stake and ward Relief Societies. Both the Utah County and Provo city commissions participated. Brigham Young University, Chamber of Commerce, Business and Professional Women, Columbia Steel, American Legion, Rotary, Kiwanis, Elks, Masons, Odd Fellows, Woodsmen of the World, Knights of Pythias, and other local businesses and organizations stepped forward.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>26</sup> Walker, “Statistical Analysis,” 82.

<sup>27</sup> Garth Mangum and Bruce Blumell, *The Mormon's War on Poverty: A History of LDS Welfare, 1830-1990* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1993), 75-93.

<sup>28</sup> Nelson, “Chronology,” 4-5.

In Provo, the Relief Society was called upon to conduct a survey of unemployment in the city. Other organizations drew up an inventory of potential jobs in the area. Several public work opportunities were identified. Such concerted activity was certainly justified, as the ranks of those in need of work, 350 men in Provo alone by November 1930, swelled.<sup>29</sup>

A sewer project was undertaken and there were clothing drives. The Provo sewer project provided employment to thirty of the 100 workers who applied. The Utah Stake Relief Society reported contributing \$3,500 for relief in 1930. Yet, even with public and private resources combined, it simply was not enough to tackle the ever expanding dilemma.

Early in 1931 the unemployed organized themselves and formed committees. Soon they approached the county and city governments for more public works and other forms of aid.<sup>30</sup> Later that year, Governor George H. Dern appointed J. W. Gillman to organize and serve as chairman of a countywide council for relief. A survey completed in October 1931 revealed that at least 316 heads of families and another 367 single individuals were unemployed. Over 100 families were in urgent need of help. Again, the community members rallied to do what they could as another unemployment fund was created. This fund would be supported by workers donating 2 percent of their salaries for the ensuing six months.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 6-10.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 11-12.

Such gestures represented the spirit found throughout the county as its citizens fought as best they could the ever intensifying economic and social consequences of the Great Depression. It was the sort of grassroots, independent, self-reliant, all-American effort President Hoover had envisioned. In a sense, Utah County was but a microcosm of the nation—state and local governments in cooperation with community-based charities, organizations, and businesses attempting to provide an adequate measure of help to friends and neighbors in need.<sup>32</sup>

It was a vision born of the belief that America was a chosen and noble nation—built and run from the bottom up, not the top down. It was a view that held that Americans were inherently determined, stout-hearted, generous, and undefeatable. Underlying it was also the assumption that though times were tough, very tough, and getting tougher, the people would pull the country through if they could just press on a little longer. It reflected an acceptance of depressions as a natural part of the economy's business cycle—unfortunate, unpreventable, and usually mercifully short-lived. It also reflected a complete lack of comprehension of the crisis which had befallen the county, the state, and the nation. How inadequate county, state, and federal efforts were proving to be was clearly demonstrated as the Depression moved into its third year.

All this is rather difficult to comprehend or appreciate today, when the concept of a social safety net to protect all Americans from economic adversity is regarded as an entitlement to be provided by the national government. In the 1920s and early 1930s

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<sup>32</sup> See Pamela Riney-Kehrber, *Rooted in Dust: Surviving Drought and Depression in Southwestern Kansas* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1994), 44-66.



economic safety nets, if they existed at all, were something to be spun independently by each “rugged individual.” During the course of the Great Depression, billions of dollars in federal expenditures hardly stemmed the tide. How could private citizens and local communities have ever thought their hundreds and thousands of dollars would be more than token gestures? Regardless, they willingly tossed in their mites.

At the end of 1931, Mayor Jesse N. Ellertsen of Provo issued a plea for more relief funds. Fish from a nearby lake and rabbits and were distributed to the needy. During that year the Utah Stake Relief Society contributed \$7,241.18 to the county to fight the Depression. By February of the following year the county’s employment committee reported that its funds were depleted, with at least 365 families in need of emergency help. In an attempt to do something, if only to boost morale, the American Legion declared a “War on Depression.” In March the Provo Chamber of Commerce announced that 634 people had been provided employment during the previous winter, earning \$5,000 in wages. And, during the same period, the workers who were donating 2 percent of their income had contributed \$5,574.84 to the unemployment fund. Still, none of these endeavors dented the core problems of lost jobs and lost wages. When work on Vineyard Road in the county commenced, 638 applicants competed for forty-five jobs.<sup>33</sup>

The Red Cross was able to assist some of Utah County’s residents that spring by providing flour and feed. One-half million pounds of flour were promised and 350,000 pounds of feed. June 1932 saw unemployment in Utah County reach 15 percent, or 2,362 based on estimates made by the county relief committee. And for the coming fiscal year

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 13-15.

the county expected to need \$18,510 for relief. That was in addition to whatever local charities, businesses, and the state and federal government might provide. The Provo city relief organization hoped to solicit \$20,000 through various fund-raising activities and continuation of the 2 percent donation from workers.<sup>34</sup>

As summer turned to autumn, things remained difficult throughout the county. A Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) grant of \$3,200 (really a loan requiring repayment) helped, as did a public works project in American Fork Canyon. The project was slated to employ 600 men and cost \$50,000. Utah County received \$17,500 in October as its share of a \$125,000 RFC grant to the state. Yet, despite such injections of funding for public works projects and other initiatives, 628 residents filed for relief aid in Provo alone in November.<sup>35</sup>

As 1933 began, the news from around the county continued to darken. It was reported that RFC allotments would need to be cut significantly. This was disappointing news, since in February alone RFC funds assisted 3,200 residents at a cost of \$20,928. Relief estimates for March indicated that 20 percent of the people in Provo were receiving help, and in Payson the total was thought to be about 50 percent. The unemployed continued to organize and challenge local government leaders to do more to alleviate their immediate plight. But there was little government could do with the limited resources available. Nevertheless, the private sector continued to pitch in with all its might. A “renovizing” drive in Provo which sought to generate as many “make work”

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 17-19.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 19-20.

projects as possible for the community began that May. By June over \$175,000 in pledges was gratefully received.<sup>36</sup>

Such occasional positive notes were easily offset by the reality of RFC cuts which took place that summer. In July the cut was 50 percent. Another cut in August reduced the county's allocation to \$10,000 for the month, or one-third the amount anticipated. Still, the New Deal was beginning and the citizens of the area provided enthusiastic support. For instance, when the National Industrial Recovery Administration's program was launched, it received broad support. An NRA army was formed and compliance with initiatives was widespread. August also witnessed the formation the Utah County Re-employment Committee as part of a nationwide effort. It consisted of seven members, including representatives from labor, civic groups, local industry, local government, ex-servicemen, and even a professional sociologist. By the close of the year a number of New Deal programs were underway in the state.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout the period from late 1929 to 1933 circumstances were equally challenging in neighboring Salt Lake County. Though the numbers were different—larger, more troubling—and the scale of activities greater, the nature of local initiatives was familiar. As elsewhere, unemployment alone was not the sole measure of the Depression's depredations. Wages decreased even for those who retained their employment. In Salt Lake County the hours available shrank by a day or more. As transportation, mining, and other sectors suffered, small businesses and service industries

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 22-24.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 27.

were directly affected. The economic multiplier effect worked in both directions, and so when critical or dominant sectors declined other dependent enterprises soon followed suit.<sup>38</sup>

In Salt Lake City the Chamber of Commerce coordinated the governmental and community-based relief efforts, including those of local churches. The city and county also acted jointly in their official capacities. Substantial public works projects were undertaken. During the period from 1931 to 1932, projects totaling \$340,000 were initiated. Voters endorsed a \$600,000 bond issue for a sewer project.<sup>39</sup>

July 1933 saw countywide unemployment reach 24,239, with 11,500 cases on the relief rolls as statewide per capita income fell to \$275, or 49.2 percent of the 1929 level. As in Utah County, some wage earners lent what help they could by donating a percentage of their income. State employees pledged 4 percent. Other public servants such as school employees and private sector workers also contributed 2 percent of wages.<sup>40</sup>

Aside from such anecdotal accounts, a palpable sense of conditions throughout Utah can occasionally be gleaned from official documents. A Reconstruction Finance Corporation press release dated September 2, 1932—late in President Hoover's term of office—was particularly revealing. At this juncture, efforts to deal with the Depression, which was deep into its third year, had sapped both local and state resources. Tax

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<sup>38</sup> Linda Sillitoe, *A History of Salt Lake County* (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1996), 168-203.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 168-203

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 168-203.

revenues and charitable contributions were insufficient to meet the demands made on public and private relief organizations. Given the tenor of the times, deficit spending was looked upon as irresponsible and counterproductive by all levels of government. Debt was assumed by local and state entities only with great reluctance, as it was on the federal level. As the nation continued to wrestle with seemingly insurmountable economic turmoil, federal aid to the states in the form of “grants” to be administered by the Reconstruction Finance Corporation were authorized on an emergency basis.

Apparently, Utah qualified as the text of the following release indicates:

The Reconstruction Finance Corporation upon application of the Governor, made available today, to the State of Utah, the amount of \$390,000 to meet current emergency needs. These supplemental funds are to benefit the county of Salt Lake to the extent of \$360,000 and the county of Tooele to the extent of \$30,000 and were made available to the State under Title I, Section I, subsection (c) of the Emergency Relief and Construction Act of 1932.

The Governor will administer the relief funds through the State Relief Committee.

Supporting data from the Governor of Utah pointed out that ‘due to abnormal delinquencies in tax payments through the State, resulting in a severe shrinking of current revenues, the State was compelled, after paring operating expenses to the bone, to resort to a short time loan of \$1,000,000 in June on tax anticipation notes to carry on its purely governmental operations.’ Another loan of this type may be necessary to provide for the purely governmental activities to the close of the year.

The Governor also asserts that the county government in these counties is confronted with an impossible burden and facing a real crisis. Salt Lake City has current obligations in the form of tax anticipation notes and it is committed not to increase its indebtedness until these notes are retired. In the case of Tooele county, the emergency needs have been precipitated by the great curtailment of mining operations resulting in a payroll reduction from \$200,000 to around \$35,000 per month. Both banks within the county have failed.<sup>41</sup>

In extending such aid to the states the Hoover administration was still attempting

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<sup>41</sup> Reconstruction Finance Corporation, press release concerning Utah relief, 2 Sep. 1932.

to stay within the parameters it had defined for the federal government in the crisis. In an address delivered at the Welfare and Relief Mobilization Conference in Washington, D.C. on September 15, 1932, Reconstruction Finance Corporation Chairman Atlee Pomerene reminded those concerned:

The ultimate responsibility for furnishing relief to the people in distress, does and should rest with the States, the Political Subdivisions of the States and the Municipalities. The National Government did not and does not presume to assume this responsibility. The funds which Congress has made available through the Act are to be reimbursed the Corporation. As the Board of Directors of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has often stated, they are not in lieu of, but simply to supplement State, local and private funds. This Act must not be construed in any to lessen the continued responsibility of the State and Local Government or of Private contributions. These funds are for emergency relief.

The Corporation feels that its objectives will be better obtained, its funds more prudently distributed and yield better results if these loans are made to furnish relief for short periods of time. Most of the loans thus far made extend relief for periods of one month to three months. If these loans were to be made for a long period of time there would be a greater temptation to depend upon the Federal Government rather than upon the State or Local Government or private charities. This is evident to anyone who has studied relief problems.<sup>42</sup>

This fear that the needy might become addicted to the “dole” and the states become dependent on the federal government was not just a product of narrow, bureaucratic thinking. It was shared by many throughout the country. To an extent it would curb the New Deal and inhibit Roosevelt’s administration.

Though RFC had offered some immediate aid at a time of deepening discouragement throughout the country, it proved inadequate in and of itself to turn the tide. FDR’s prescription required more aggressive federal involvement. Hoover had relied on individual initiative and minimal governmental involvement not because he did

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<sup>42</sup> Atlee Pomerene, Chairman of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, “Address to be delivered to the Welfare and Relief Mobilization Conference,” Washington D.C., 15 Sep. 1932.

not care, but because he believed so strongly in an American spirit of self-reliance and rugged individualism. Americans could do anything, and that included taming a worldwide depression. He believed the people could and would take care of themselves.

In contrast, Roosevelt did not see the Depression as a challenge to be met by character and fortitude alone. Reasoning that economies, like frontiers, could reach a point when they became closed, FDR interpreted the Depression as a sign that the American economy had fully matured and was now closed to significant growth. Accepting such a scenario as an underlying premise resulted in the conviction that the problems of unemployment and the existence of a perpetual underclass had become permanent realities. Under such circumstances no state could have sufficient resources or talent to press forward on its own. It was now time for the federal government to step forward in partnership with the states and conscientiously address the needs of the people for the duration.

Without abandoning a belief in the power of the people to respond magnificently and valiantly to the test, FDR's strategy suggested that more would be needed. The matter was simply too grave and too complex to be managed by anything less than the united resources of the entire country for the benefit of all. The only one in a position to rally the nation and coordinate such an undertaking sat in the White House, and FDR knew it.

For instance, at the beginning of the New Deal the agricultural sector was thought to hold the key to a return to prosperity. By boosting farm prices and thus farm incomes and farmers' purchasing power, the entire economy could be reinvigorated. Roosevelt

and his advisors believed a task of this dimension required a level of support and coordination only the federal government could provide. A corollary to this analysis suggested that a better balance between rural and urban areas would facilitate recovery. Again, it was held that only the federal government possessed the means to promote such a redistribution of the nation's population. Similar creative thinking was to be encouraged as the best and the brightest were invited to Washington to share their insights and proposals. Ultimately, the results would prove to be rather uneven and experimental. Nevertheless, Roosevelt persisted in his efforts to bring about relief and recovery.<sup>43</sup>

Though the first hundred days of Roosevelt's administration provided a great psychological boost, tangible results were harder to come by. The problems faced thus far had proven insoluble and were truly beginning to appear to be permanent. A hint of the dimensions of the task that lay ahead in Utah was provided by a survey undertaken in the spring of 1934. The Civil Works Administration's work relief program had seen many through the difficult winter of 1933 to 1934. However, it had only been a stopgap program and was scheduled to be phased out.

In response to CWA's anticipated termination and in preparation for other efforts getting underway, a committee consisting of Robert H. Hinckley (State Administrator, Utah Emergency Relief Administration), Dr. Arthur L. Beeley, Dr. Lowry A. Nelson, and Dr. Joseph A. Geddes examined the problem of what was termed "stranded households"

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<sup>43</sup> Patrick J. Maney, *The Roosevelt Presence: A Biography of FDR* (New York: Twayne Publishers), 48-49.



in non-farm, non-urban areas of the state. Stranded workers were defined for the purposes of the study as those “living in single-industry communities in which there is no hope of further employment.” The survey committee intended to get a handle on the dimensions of the rehabilitation effort facing the state after CWA’s phaseout.<sup>44</sup>

Relief cases were examined in “worked-out” or “closed-industry” areas of the state. This resulted in the identification of 2,068 stranded cases, representing a total population of 10,123. Given the exclusion of urban centers such as Salt Lake City proper and predominately agricultural counties with little mining, industry, or manufacturing, such as Daggett and Grand, most of the cases were found to be concentrated in smelter and mining districts. Among the cases reviewed, about 280 had experienced unemployment for over four years. About 520 had been unemployed for over three years, 840 for two or more years, and 1,400 for over a year.<sup>45</sup>

Of the total number of cases, 1,296 were entirely unemployed, while the remainder had some degree of limited, insufficient employment. The survey noted that stranded cases represented one-sixth of all relief cases in the areas surveyed. By extrapolation then, the surveyed areas included about 12,000 relief cases of all categories, representing about 60,000 Utahans at the time of the study in 1934.<sup>46</sup>

The committee noted that such statistics were not unexpected, given employment conditions in key sectors of the state. For instance, metal mines had experienced a 65

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<sup>44</sup> Irvin Hull, Division of Research and Statistics, Utah Emergency Relief Administration, “Survey of Stranded Population in Utah,” undated, Nelson Papers.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-5.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-5.

percent decline in employment between 1929 and 1932. Smelter and furnace employment had fallen 63 percent between 1924 and 1932. Coal mine employment declined 47 percent during the same period; food and allied industries, 35 percent. Of course, payrolls had fallen proportionately. From 1924 to 1932, metal mine payrolls fell 69 percent, smelters and furnaces 65 percent, coal mines 46 percent, and food and allied industries 33 percent.<sup>47</sup>

The survey observed that these families had lived comfortably before the Depression. Subsequently, their standard of living had been seriously compromised by employment conditions in the state. “Over 95% of the stranded cases received no assistance before January 1, 1930. Over 75% of all assistance received by stranded households, between January 1, 1930 and March 1, 1934 was received from Civil Works, direct-relief and work-relief. . . . This is a sad picture of a once self-sustaining and important class of people.” Though the study was selective in that it excluded agricultural and urban centers, it provided a snapshot of the bleak circumstances facing many throughout the state prior to and during the initial phases of the New Deal.<sup>48</sup>

Regardless of the hardships that persisted during the early stages of the New Deal, the transition from the Hoover administration to FDR’s was dramatic, representing a substantive shift in emphasis. The election of 1932 proved to be something of a referendum on the policies of the preceding three years. President Hoover and many Republican officeholders around the country fell victim politically, just as so many others

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 1-5.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 1-5.

had economically, to the oppressive power of the Great Depression. President Roosevelt would immediately initiate a multi-dimensional, multi-tiered attack on the most conspicuous consequences of the Depression.

As noted, the supporters of the new administration, which took office March 4, 1933, re-examined the role of the federal government in the crisis and found room for what would be cast as a federal-state partnership. Utah's new governor, Henry H. Blood, sought whatever aid the New Deal could extend to Utah. The state participated in applicable New Deal programs aggressively throughout the remainder of the 1930s. Revenues were allocated to comply with the matching-fund requirements of federal programs. State agencies were reorganized or created in accord with mandates associated with a number of New Deal initiatives.

A sense of the ebb and flow of the New Deal years in Utah during Blood's two administrations can be culled from reports carried by the state's major newspapers, such as the *Deseret News* and *Salt Lake Tribune*. Curiously, much of this story revolves around the governor's efforts to balance the state budget in the midst of an unprecedented depression while drawing extensively on the resources of the federal government's New Deal programs. One must wonder what might have been the state's response to Utahans' plight if there had not been such a magnanimous influx of federal dollars.

A report published in December 1932, just prior to Blood's inauguration, indicated that the state had a bonded indebtedness of over \$40 million and anticipated a deficit of \$2 million by the coming June. Utah was borrowing to meet its payroll and fund the state's agencies. A loan for \$1 million had been obtained in the east, \$400,000

had been transferred from redemption funds, and another \$500,000 from the gasoline tax fund.<sup>49</sup>

A little over eight years later, Blood's successor, Governor Herbert Maw, was able to report that "because of a wise and careful administrative policy Governor Blood has been able to balance the budget during every year of his administration, make up the general deficit, and reduce bonded indebtedness to a net of \$2,155,000." This was quite a feat given the prevailing conditions when Blood first took office.<sup>50</sup> In between lay some of the toughest years fiscally and socially the state had ever faced.

Upon assuming office Governor Blood openly acknowledged the severity of the conditions facing the state and its people. Things appeared dire. In his words:

Basic farm commodity prices in recent weeks have reached levels never before reached in modern times. Our mines are nearly all closed. The price of silver has now reached an all-time low, while other metals have suffered similarly. Manufacturing and business in general feel the loss of purchasing power. Stagnation exists in financial circles. Shrinkage of values is making private and public incomes uncertain. Unemployment stalks the city streets, and reflects its shadow in rural life.<sup>51</sup>

It is hard to imagine a bleaker summary of the dominant conditions throughout the state.

Evidence of the conventional economic wisdom of the time—that balanced budgets were essential during economic downturns—would be manifested in Governor Blood's subsequent message to the legislature on January 9, 1933. He announced that appropriations would have to be decreased by almost \$2 million over the amount

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<sup>49</sup> *Deseret News*, 15 Dec. 1932.

<sup>50</sup> Utah State Legislature, *House Journal*, 13 Jan. 1941, 6-13.

<sup>51</sup> *Deseret News*, 2 Jan. 1933, 2.

authorized by the 1931 legislature in order to balance the state budget. However, the governor had no qualms about submitting a request for \$57 million in federal expenditures for public works at the same time.<sup>52</sup>

In a further nod toward reliance on the New Deal, the Utah Industrial Recovery Act came before the legislature in July 1933. The Act was deemed necessary to bring Utah into compliance with provisions of the federal government's relief programs. The measure reconciled the state's statutes with federal regulations as well as creating the necessary administrative structure to support large-scale relief and public work efforts. As the year proceeded, more federal money poured into Utah. Significant funds were designated for building and construction projects, including schools. Over \$5 million was appropriated for the unemployed.<sup>53</sup>

The flood of dollars flowed on into 1934. As the year began another \$13 million in federal outlays was promised to the state. That June, \$1 million was earmarked for aid to drought victims. Despite such timely appropriations, circumstances in Utah remained among the most challenging in the nation. With about 20 percent of its residents on the "dole," Utah stood fourth among the states in that category, at a time when the national average was reported to be 12.8 percent. In some months upwards of \$1.2 million were spent for emergency relief, the majority of it from federal sources.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Utah State Legislature, *Senate Journal*, 9 Jan. 1933, 68-118; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Apr. 1933, 1.

<sup>53</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 10 Jul. 1933, 1; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 12 Jul. 1933, 1; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 13 Jul. 1933, 4; Wayne Stout, *History of Utah*, v. 3 (Salt Lake City: self-published, 1971), 117-118, 128.

<sup>54</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Jan. 1934, 16; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 26 Jun. 1934, 4; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 Dec. 1934, 4; Stout, *History of Utah*, 135-153.

The continued demands of the Depression and shifts in New Deal policies provoked additional action on the state level. In January 1935 the state legislature was considering the regulation of alcoholic beverages (necessary after the repeal of Prohibition—an action some consider part of the New Deal’s reforms), various tax levies, and questions raised by federal adjustments in relief policies. Despite continued federal expenditures it was anticipated that Utah would need to allocate as much as \$2 million per year on its own relief activities for the foreseeable future.<sup>55</sup>

Expressions of gratitude for the federal contributions were not lacking on Governor Blood’s part. He praised in particular federal drought relief (\$14 million) and purchases of sheep and cattle. In his State of the State message for 1935, Blood once again acknowledged federal leadership as he encouraged the legislature to enact provisions that would be in conformity with new national unemployment insurance guidelines. He asked that “social legislation be of a nature to permit the state to participate in whatever Federal grants may be made to assist states with their problems of unemployment. . . .” He also observed, “economy and efficiency in government operations call for centralization and unification of administration activities. . . .”<sup>56</sup>

This was not to say that the state looked exclusively to Washington when it came to shouldering Depression-related burdens. For instance, Governor Blood was able to report that for the period from June 1933 to December 1933, over \$2.4 million were collected through the state’s sales tax for emergency relief purposes. Though a

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<sup>55</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 14 Jan. 1935, 4.

<sup>56</sup> *Senate Journal*, Jan. 1935, 11-24; Stout, *History of Utah*, 158-167.

significant sum, it does pale somewhat when compared with typical monthly expenditure for relief at the time. In March 1935, \$1,135,317 was expended for such purposes in Utah. Of that total the federal government was responsible for \$967,995. The state contributed \$161,090 from revenues raised through the sales tax.<sup>57</sup>

Other statistics indicated that Utah continued to outpace the rest of the nation in terms of relief needs. Utah stood 8 percent above the national average in the number of families receiving public assistance. In March of 1935, 32,270 cases appeared on the rolls, representing 127,384 men, women, and children, or about 25 percent of the state's total population. Garfield County experienced the highest percent of such cases in the state, at 54.9 percent. Salt Lake County was among the six lowest, with about 20 percent of the population receiving aid. However, not every indicator was as bleak. Faint glimmers of recovery were beginning to appear as 1935 drew to a close. For example, mining began to revive, improving from \$16.3 million in production in 1933 to \$34 million.<sup>58</sup>

By mid-1936, evidence of a quickening recovery was beginning to mount. Tax revenues increased, up 20 percent from fiscal 1935, and the sales tax had generated almost \$3 million towards state relief assistance. A \$2 million surplus was reported as the 1937 fiscal year approached in June 1936. Utah's state finances were actually described as being "in the strongest financial position in history." This obvious anomaly in the midst of the Great Depression underscores the degree to which a reliance on

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<sup>57</sup> *Senate Journal*, Jan. 1935, 11-24; Stout, *History of Utah*, 158-167; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 2 May 1935, 4.

<sup>58</sup> *Deseret News*, 21 Dec. 1935, 10.

conservative, traditional fiscal policy in times of crisis continued to hold sway on the state level. Even under the immense pressure of a deeply felt national and international financial meltdown, Utah had managed to produce budgetary surpluses.<sup>59</sup>

As had been the case previously, the state persisted in keying off federal initiatives as it sought to further its participation in the New Deal. In August 1936, a special session of the legislature was called to enable Utah to adjust its statutes to conform to requirements of the Social Security Act. Governor Blood described the situation:

The call for a special session of the legislature at this time is in line with a policy I have all along followed in the effort to have Utah law conform with the federal Social Security Act. . . .In line with that policy I am calling the legislature for the sole purpose of reaching this objective through proper legislation on unemployment insurance. This legislation will enable Utah to receive full benefits, along with other states having proper participating legislation, from that section of the federal social security law which set up a plan of unemployment reserves for the jobless. . . .

Utah was also to become the tenth state to qualify for grants under provisions of the Social Security Act, which provided aid to the aged, blind, and to dependent children.<sup>60</sup>

As Governor Blood inaugurated his second term, both the state and the nation seemed to be enjoying a genuine economic resurgence. Bonded indebtedness in Utah declined by 32 percent, and it was projected that the biennium ending June 30, 1937 would close without a deficit. (In fact, the state was able to achieve surpluses from 1934 to 1939.) Such critical sectors as agriculture, mining, and manufacturing were continuing

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<sup>59</sup> *Deseret News*, 29 Jun. 1936, B1; *Deseret News*, 6 Jul. 1936, 1.

<sup>60</sup> *Senate Journal*, 12 Jan. 1937, 12-31.



to revive. Manufacturing statistics revealed that there had been a 36 percent increase in the number employed since 1933. Wages had increased 52 percent for the sector. And the value of the goods produced had risen 66 percent.<sup>61</sup>

Many expected to see an acceleration of a return to normalcy. But as 1937 unfolded, such was not to be the case. Things got off to a rough start as the governor was forced to order departments to cut their budgets. This was a direct result of a decline in state revenue following an exemption from taxation extended to certain classes of property which was approved in the last election. Drought returned. And by mid-year, signs of an incipient recession materialized, the “Roosevelt Recession” as it was to be known. Prices fell and unemployment rose. Another year would pass before the tide would turn for good, and conditions remained discouraging well into 1938. The people of Utah would once more experience rising unemployment rolls and pervasive underemployment. In early 1938, a total of 18,916 were reported as unemployed and another 13,607 as underemployed, for a combined total of 32,523. That number would reach a combined 43,526 before the recession subsided. State revenues would also decline substantially. Receipts declined about 19 percent, and expenditures a concomitant 17 percent during the period.<sup>62</sup>

Even as the recovery renewed and the era neared its end in 1939, Utah continued its dependence on federal initiatives and expenditures. The governor once again called on the legislature to enact legislation in harmony with federal provisions, in this case the

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<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-31; *Senate Journal*, 30 Jan. 1937, 213..

<sup>62</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 Feb. 1937, 4; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 4 May 1938, 17; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 16 Aug. 1938, 7.

Fair Labor Standards Act. In April 1940, Congressman Abe Murdock reported that during the previous fiscal year the federal government had expended \$32,883,000 in Utah on such programs as CCC, WPA, SSA, and other relief activities. During that period Utahans paid \$3,441,000 in federal taxes. Utah's Secretary of State disclosed that since 1933, Utah had received \$173 million in various forms of federal support.<sup>63</sup>

In some respects the state was in better economic shape in 1940 than it had been in 1929. It is improbable that such a recovery would have been possible without the state's aggressive, and at times controversial, participation in the New Deal. Yet, it should be remembered that in terms of average per capita income at that time, Utah (\$487) was 18 percent behind the nation (\$595), and 12 percent less than the region (\$553). Thus, though Utah and the region's circumstances had rebounded a little more strongly than they had for the nation, Utah still lagged behind the other mountain states in terms of average per capita income.<sup>64</sup>

As the Depression began to fade, the scope of its impact remained astounding and it was obvious Utah had been affected more deeply than most other states. It was not surprising, then, that during the course of the New Deal, Utah benefited disproportionately in comparison with most states in terms of federal relief expenditures, loans, and insurance programs.

There was some understandable sensitivity about this situation among a people that prided themselves on their self-sufficiency and self-reliance. In analyzing why Utah

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<sup>63</sup> Governor Henry H. Blood, "Message to the Legislature," *House Journal*, 10 Jan. 1939, 12-36; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 27 Oct. 1940, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Change," 205-217.

had been so distressed and had drawn so heavily on the federal “dole,” Nels Anderson, a Utahan and New Deal official with WPA, offered his insights. His list of causes mirrored the list of weaknesses identified in the 1931 report, “Census Facts and Utah’s Future.”<sup>65</sup>

The mining sector had been particularly hard hit during the Depression, catastrophically so, as things turned out. Unfortunately, Utah had been very dependent on that industry. Adding to the burden was recognition that the mining industry in Utah was in out-of-state hands. Additionally, agriculture could not be expanded significantly during the era since arable land was scarce, thus limiting Utah’s potential for economic growth in that sector. Demographically, the state had a high birth rate but also a high emigration rate among its most productive age groups. After expending resources raising and educating those who emigrated, the state received no return on its investment.<sup>66</sup>

Regarding alternatives to New Deal policies such as greater emphasis on grassroots mutual or cooperative efforts, Anderson argued that if any people could have made such programs work, Utahans would have been the ones. Self-help plans were just not practical because they require a significant degree of isolation from the national economy if they were to be successful on a statewide scale.

Continuing his argument, Anderson indicated that Utah had suffered disproportionately during the Depression. In 1940 average per capita income nationwide stood at about \$536, while in Utah it was only \$449, or \$87 less per person. When calculated in terms of Utah’s total population it represented a deficit of about \$40 million

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<sup>65</sup> Anderson, “Utah’s Unemployment Problem.”

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

per year. In comparison, Anderson pointed out that federal relief expenditures in Utah for such programs as WPA, CCC, SSA, and so on, for the years 1937, 1938, and 1939 taken together, totaled \$40 million. Thus, these expenditures only covered about one-third of Utah's annual per capita shortfall.<sup>67</sup>

Regardless of the sensitivities and rationalizations concerned with the level of assistance Utah received from the federal government, the New Deal had been a fortuitous reality for the people of the state for seven years. Utah's various economic interests profited from the relationship in disparate ways. Labor benefited from some features of federal legislation affecting unionization, wages, and working conditions. Utah was one of five states to develop legislation modeled on the Wagner Act. Mining was subsidized by federal silver price supports. Banking was assisted by such provisions as deposit insurance, while the state's bankers came to resent the competition they faced from an array of federally sponsored loan programs. Agriculture received some assistance through an assortment of New Deal initiatives such as AAA, Farm Security Administration, and Farm Credit Administration, even though these programs were not particularly tailored to Utah's needs.<sup>68</sup>

Politically, the Democratic party was a big winner during the New Deal era. Utah politics had been something of a roller coaster ride after the advent of statehood. Republicans had dominated the governor's office up until World War I. By the onset of

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Frank H. Jonas, "Utah: Sagebrush Democracy," in Thomas C. Donnelly, ed., *Rocky Mountain Politics* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1940), 38-46. Regarding silver subsidies, see Richard Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 100, 121.

the Depression, William King, a Democrat, and Reed Smoot, a Republican, had been in the U.S. Senate together since 1916. Republicans had controlled Utah's House seats from 1920 until the 1932 election. The Democrats would remain in control until 1950.

In 1932, Democrat Elbert D. Thomas, receiving 57 percent of the vote, was able to decisively defeat Smoot. Some observers detected in Smoot's defeat a stunning setback for the LDS Church and its leadership's influence on state politics. Other such blows were to follow when Church leaders endorsed Republican Alf Landon for president in 1936. Landon was rejected at the polls in Utah as elsewhere. Roosevelt's margin of victory was more than two-to-one. In 1938, Franklin Harris, president of Brigham Young University, unsuccessfully ran against Senator Thomas, now a staunch and established New Dealer. Though he was granted a leave of absence to conduct his campaign and attempted to call upon LDS members through a letter distributed to bishops in Utah, Harris was easily defeated. He received 44 percent of the vote. Utah's drift to the Democratic party camp lasted through World War II, after which the Republicans once more proved successful.<sup>69</sup>

At the close of the New Deal it was apparent that Utah was moving in new directions in terms of government organization and structure. In January 1941, the new governor, Herbert Maw, furthered the process of expansion and consolidation promoted by the New Deal that had incrementally altered the profile of Utah state government. The governor advocated that:

. . .existing commissions, boards, and government units created by past

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<sup>69</sup> Jonas, "Utah, Crossroads of the West," in Jonas, ed., *Western Politics*, 276-278.

legislation be dissolved and that all the functions of the state be assigned to the following newly created departments—Department of Finance, Department of Engineering, of Public Welfare, of Lands and Water, of Service and Inspection, of Health, Board of High Education, Tax Commission, Industrial Commission, Liquor Commission, and Department of Publicity and Industrial Development. . . .If legalized the general effect will legalize the following innovations. Control of state administration will be taken from more than a hundred boards, bureaus and commissions.”<sup>70</sup>

Could such changes be attributed solely to the impact of the Depression and the influence of the New Deal? Some have argued that change was coming anyway because society was growing more complex. Populations had been shifting from a rural to an urban base for the nation. Changes in communications, transportation, finance, and a myriad of other aspects of life were altering the look and feel of things, changing attitudes and behavior in the process. Change, as always, whether slow or rapid, was upon the land. However, the intensity of the Depression and the innovations of the New Deal conveyed shape, direction, and velocity to at least some of what transpired.<sup>71</sup>

A catalog of the New Deal’s tangible and enduring effects includes the expanded role of the presidency and the liberal shift in American politics. The fiscal structure of the nation was altered through the regulation of banking and financial markets. The New Deal promoted home ownership and reinvigorated agriculture. Its various programs renovated American towns and the countryside. Such initiatives as TVA elevated underdeveloped regions of the country. Labor, women, and minority groups benefited as well. The beginning of the end of racial segregation and gender discrimination is traced

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<sup>70</sup> Governor Henry H. Blood, “Message to the Legislature,” *House Journal*, 13 Jan. 1941, 6-3; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 30 Jan. 1941, 4.

<sup>71</sup> James T. Patterson, “The New Deal and the States,” *American Historical Review*, 73, no. 1 (1967): 70-84.

by some to Roosevelt and his New Deal. And, perhaps more significantly from the world's perspective, at a time when totalitarianism was on the rise, a democracy endured.<sup>72</sup>

Utah also drew dividends from its new relationship with the federal government for years to come. Building on portions of the infrastructure laid down during the Depression years, the federal government continued to invest heavily in Utah and its economy during World War II. The Ogden Arsenal and Hill Air Force Base began their development during the Depression and expanded rapidly during the war. Wendover Air Force Base began development in 1940, and the Tooele Ordnance Depot was constructed after the United States entered the conflict. Under the impetus of war other sectors of Utah's pre-Depression-era economy recovered as mining and manufacturing revived. Though still dependent on out-of-state investment, Utah was no longer the virtual ward of absentee landlords. Its relationship with and dependence upon the federal government would endure until the 1980s.<sup>73</sup>

Following World War II, Utah's economy, like those of other mountain west states, shifted emphasis away from agriculture and mining toward other sectors. During the war Utah's economy had been stimulated by federal spending on military installations and depots, as well as by developments such as the Geneva Steel plant near Provo.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> William E. Leuchtenburg, "The Achievement of the New Deal," in Harvard Sitkoff, ed., *Fifty Years Later: The New Deal Evaluated* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1985), 211-230.

<sup>73</sup> Thomas G. Alexander, *Utah: The Right Place* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 1995), 308-361, 409-413.

<sup>74</sup> Gerald D. Nash, *The Federal Landscape: An Economic History of the Twentieth-Century West* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999), 21-54.

Defense remained a critical component of Utah's economy into the postwar period as well. By the late 1950s government and public administration had become the state's largest employer. Wholesale and retail trades followed closely behind, and manufacturing employment exceeded agriculture and mining by a substantial margin. In 1959, defense-related spending in the state rose to almost \$250 million during a year in which personal income totaled about \$1.6 billion. Altogether, federal aid from all sources amounted to about 31 percent of Utah's revenue. This represented quite a substantial change in all sectors compared to the situation just prior to and during the Great Depression in Utah. Though its economy was still considered semi-colonial in many respects, Utah's relationship with the federal government had carried it through the Great Depression and into a new era.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Alexander, *Utah: The Right Place*, 308-361; Jonas, "Utah, Crossroads," 284.



## FEDERAL RELIEF

In the final analysis, the story of Utah's passage through the Great Depression is in many respects really America's story. The Church Security Plan played its part in providing for some of the state's Mormons. The state managed its affairs as best it could with its limited resources and commitment to fiscal conservatism. However, the federal government through the New Deal was the dominant force at work in Utah carrying the burden of relief and recovery.

It has been argued by some that "security" was the overarching theme of the New Deal.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, it might be said that "partnership" was the watchword governing federal-state relations during the period. This was not just a bit of idle rhetoric. President Roosevelt genuinely believed that a partial answer to the crisis sweeping the nation lay in the creation of cooperative federalism. If democratic capitalism was to survive, FDR recognized that some remedial action must be taken by the federal government in collaboration with the states. The evolution of the New Deal's policies and practices provided the answer to the question of exactly what action should be taken.

To an extent, President Hoover had recognized the same need and offered it on a less dramatic scale. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) extended some federal assistance to the states. Intended as loans euphemistically labeled "grants," these federal allocations were made available to the governors of qualifying states for use on a grassroots level. They were issued with some hesitation and much concern. Though the

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<sup>1</sup> See David M. Kennedy *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

funds were welcomed, they proved meager, given the enormity of problems facing the states. Many were broke and falling deeper in debt, stretched thin and confronting diminishing revenues.

Something far more substantial was required if the states and ultimately the nation were to escape an economic and social meltdown. The Hoover administration was careful to recognize state sovereignty. It only intruded itself as far as it felt absolutely necessary through limited injections of federal funds. The result had not even begun to put a dent in the pressures and demands besieging state executives. A by-the-bootstraps-oriented initiative simply had little prospect of success—the resources, organization, talent, and vision simply did not exist on the state and local level to do the job effectively. Yet what more could the federal government do without subverting the sanctity of states' sovereign rights and responsibilities?

In response, Roosevelt, as had Lincoln before him, reinvented the role of the federal government and redefined its relationship with the states, communities, and the people. It was not exactly a “new birth of freedom,” though in time it was reconceptualized as the “four freedoms.” However, FDR introduced the concept of a collective security, not against some external enemy, but against the internal ravages of poverty and despair. He evoked the image of war in his inaugural address. As president of a nation in full retreat, he assumed the powers of commander-in-chief to make war on the Depression. With great prescience he recognized that the essential question facing the nation by 1933 was not how long the Great Depression would last, but how long the United States would last.

The president did not intend to become Caesar and have Washington become a new Rome, but, as president, FDR intended to lead and to act. All the resources that the federal government could muster or create were to be unleashed in support of the states and their relief efforts. In the president's eyes things were simply too grave and too complex to be resolved in any lesser way. All this was to be done while respecting the Constitution—though stretching it liberally when warranted—and refraining from any deliberate violation of state sovereignty.

In practice the New Deal organized and channeled national resources—brains as well as dollars—into the states. The short-run consequence was the establishment of a crude working relationship championing relief and recovery, if not always reform. In the long run the new partnership would prove to be more than a temporary expedient. It resulted in an open-ended expansion of the federal government's theoretical jurisdiction. If a number of New Deal programs failed to survive much beyond the outbreak of World War II, FDR's assertive redefinition of the role and authority of the federal government surely did.

Such measures as the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA) and Social Security Act (SSA) permanently altered the nature of American federalism. States appointed coordinators to interface with federal agencies and programs. These state-level coordinators in time became federalized for all intents and purposes. For instance, Robert H. Hinckley was appointed by Governor Blood as the director of the Emergency Relief Program for Utah. When the national government set up its relief organization,

Hinckley became the federal director as well.<sup>2</sup> Federal field agents were assigned to provide assistance to the state administrators. In time, the field agents came to dominate the state coordinators—after all, there were rules to be enforced and compliance to be verified. Cooperation gradually became submission. Money flowed from Washington to the states, power flowed away from the states to Washington. FERA in effect forced states to centralize relief operations. In time, programs such as Social Security controlled even local administration, imposing additional requirements and need for centralization on the states. And, so it went.<sup>3</sup>

In 1936, Darrell J. Greenwell, then serving as both the Work Projects Administration (WPA) state administrator and Utah director of the Department of Public Welfare, outlined federal and state roles, responsibilities, and expenditures under provisions of the Social Security Act:

The Social Security Board is providing Utah with funds to pay half the grants given to the needy aged, one third the sum being paid to dependent children and one half the sums being paid the needy blind.

Utah is meeting its share of the cost of the public assistance phases of the social security program with funds from the sales tax and from approximately \$30,000 a month which the counties are contributing toward this program. The state is still left with the burden of providing care for those persons who are unemployable but who do not fit into the classifications outlined above. . . .It is apparent that the counties will have to be called upon for further contributions to the relief problem as the social security program develops. . . .

The Utah Welfare Board has pending before the Children's Bureau and the Public Health service a program for maternal and child health services in predominately rural areas of Utah. . . .

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<sup>2</sup> Dean R. Brimhall letter of reference for Robert H. Hinckley, undated, Dean R. Brimhall Papers, Manuscript Division, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Brimhall Papers).

<sup>3</sup> James T. Patterson, "The New Deal and the States," *American Historical Review* 73, no. 1 (1967): 50-51, 74, 88, 111.

In return for contributions by the State, generous grants will be made by federal agencies to carry on these welfare activities in Utah. . . .

You have heard complaints that Utah's social security program is not in harmony with the desires of the President and the spirit of the Social Security Act. . . .As the State Department of Public Welfare developed its plans . . . every phase of the program of the program was submitted to competent welfare persons, including Social Security board people in Washington, to insure that we were on the right track.<sup>4</sup>

In October 1939 an article in the *Deseret News* further reflected this predictable evolution in the federal-state partnership. A headline noted "Working Wives Rule Is Suspended by Board." A sub-headline reported "Public Welfare Official Will Not Remove Married Women From Jobs." The article went on to note that federal Social Security officials had "recommended" that the Utah State Board of Public Welfare not implement a legislative resolution encouraging state agencies to not employ "working wives." They noted that under federal regulations employment status could only be determined on a merit basis. The federal officials went on to inform the State Board that "if the 'working wives' resolution were put into effect, Federal Social Security funds, amounting to \$2,500,000 annually, might be jeopardized. . . ." Immediate action was taken to avoid the potential loss of these funds. A not very subtle message had been sent and understood.<sup>5</sup>

This sort of end result was not so much the consequence of intention as it was of necessity and circumstance. Cooperative federalism in the shadow of the Depression led, almost inevitably, to welfare, revenue, and labor policies which altered the nature of state administration. At the close of the New Deal, states spent more, taxed more, and

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<sup>4</sup> Darrell J. Greenwell, address to Ogden Rotary Club, 15 Apr. 1936, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>5</sup> *Deseret News*, 25 Oct. 1939.

provided much more than they had two decades before. During the course of the New Deal it was estimated that 46 million Americans (35 percent of the population) received federal aid.<sup>6</sup> The arrangements contrived to offer relief and reform could not help but alter the national landscape.

One ardent proponent of Roosevelt's aggressive approach was Senator Elbert D. Thomas of Utah. Throughout the New Deal era Thomas remained an impassioned spokesperson for administration policies and practices. He even offered an able defense of such controversial initiatives as FDR's effort to reorganize the Supreme Court. In numerous speeches and addresses, Senator Thomas repeatedly explained to the people of Utah why a revised federal-state partnership was now necessary and how it was consistent with the Constitution, especially in regard to the powers reserved to the states. The crux of Thomas' arguments lay in the dimensions of the crisis at hand, that it was simply too big for any one state to cope with effectively, and that it was therefore not just right and proper for the federal government to act in concert with the states, but it was constitutionally requisite.

In addresses given in Oakland, California and Washington D.C., Thomas elaborated his understanding of the symbiotic relationship of the states and the nation:

Our Constitution is Federal in nature. The powers of the state in their spheres and the powers of the Nation in its sphere are the things generally stressed. The Roosevelt Administration has moved forward in the development of the cooperative powers of the Federal system. It is in the joint and cooperative development that we may expect our future constitutional growth. . . . Under our Constitution the American people have a dual citizenship with dual

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<sup>6</sup> James Patterson, *The New Deal and the States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 198-201; James T. Patterson, *America's Struggle Against Poverty* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 76.

responsibilities. In return for these responsibilities each citizen is entitled to the concern of both his state and nation. . . . There must be a harmonious and mutual endeavor on the part of both the state and national officials.<sup>7</sup>

He argued that “the problem became national because its answer is not possible locally. The solution, and the only solution, lies in a united front. . . . When we speak of a united front in America, we mean thru federal action. That in turn means federal aid for those in need. . . .” He added, “The partnership idea is the one that I will stress. Partnership between Federal and the states; partnership between the young and old; partnership between the employer and the employee. . . .”<sup>8</sup>

Under Democratic party leadership, Utah would become a part of the new federal-state partnership. Even before Governor Henry H. Blood took office in 1933, Governor George H. Dern’s administration had initiated Utah’s involvement in federal relief efforts through participation in Herbert Hoover’s RFC program. Prior to federal funds becoming available in Utah, public assistance was a very decentralized affair. It was administered by county commissioners utilizing funds generated by property taxes. Special levies funded “widows’ pensions” that were actually providing aid for dependent children. Old-age pensions and aid for the blind were also financed through special levies. These levels of assistance were not mandatory and so the range of programs available from county to county varied. Apparently, county commissioners did much of this work

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<sup>7</sup> Elbert D. Thomas, “Address delivered at the Oakland Municipal Auditorium,” 29 Oct. 1936, Senator Elbert D. Thomas Manuscript Collection, Utah State Historical Society, Salt Lake City, Utah (hereafter cited as Thomas Collection).

<sup>8</sup> Elbert D. Thomas, “Remarks delivered on ‘American Forum on the Air’ program over the Mutual Broadcasting System, 14 May 1936, Thomas Collection; Elbert D. Thomas, “Social Security,” radio address, 24 May 1936, Thomas Collection.

themselves, though in Salt Lake County there was a charity clerk and administrative officers to handle widow and old-age pensions. No county employed a professional social worker.<sup>9</sup> In light of the scale of the expenditures and administrative complexity the New Deal relief efforts introduced, all this seems rather quaint in comparison.

Even under the RFC program as administered during the Hoover administration, reception of grant funds for emergency relief was not a simple proposition. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation was created by an act of Congress on January 22, 1932. It initially advanced nearly \$300 million under the Emergency Relief and Reconstruction Act and subsequently an additional \$1.5 billion as loans to the state and local governments. In 1938 Congress reclassified these loans as expenditures and cancelled the states' accrued debts under the program. (By February 1939, RFC had received over \$13 billion in authorizations.)<sup>10</sup>

RFC sought to help stabilize the economy by capitalizing banks, businesses, railroads, agriculture, and other financial institutions across the nation through a variety of lending entities such as the Commodity Credit Corporation, Federal National Mortgage Association, and RFC Mortgage Company. In Utah RFC activities provided an early source of relief funds to aid struggling communities. By December 1935 it had also loaned Utah banks almost \$4 million.<sup>11</sup> From 1933 through 1939, the RFC would expend

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<sup>9</sup> Bureau of Research and Statistics, "Type and Extent of Available Data Relative to Public and Private Assistance in Utah," Utah State Department of Public Welfare, 24 Feb. 1939, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>10</sup> Jesse D. Jones, Chairman, *Reconstruction Finance Corporation Seven Year Report*, 2 Feb. 1932 to 2 Feb. 1939, 1.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-16; *Summary of the Activities of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation and Its Condition as of December 31, 1935* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1936).



\$19,573,000 in Utah, or \$37 per capita for the seven-year period.<sup>12</sup>

During the initial stages of RFC relief effort, funds were made available directly to the states to be further distributed at the discretion of the governor. This was not as straightforward a matter as it might superficially appear. From the outset there were rules to be followed and funds to be apportioned among contending interests. On the state level, regulations were drawn up and regular meetings were held. Reports were received from the counties, requests for aid considered, and field agents designated to visit the counties to assess and advise. Often the grants were rather insubstantial, given the scope and urgency of the problems faced by state and local administrators.

An excerpt from the minutes of the December 13, 1932 meeting of the Governor's Central Committee in Utah provides an illustration of the difficulties that could arise over the extension of seemingly trivial amounts of aid. An issue arose over Carbon County's request for \$10,000 in assistance. An account of a Mr. Reed's interview with the Governor's Central Committee was recorded. Mr. Reed and others attended the meeting as representatives of Carbon County. The minutes of this meeting offer an intriguing window on how such a program actually functioned on the state and local level. For this reason the transcript of the meeting is quoted at some length:

Representatives from Carbon County were admitted and Mr. Reed submitted their request. He advised that they had received a letter refusing their recent request for \$10,000 and they did not understand the reason for the refusal. . . .

Mr. Holman [a member of the Governor's Central Committee] then read the minutes of Executive Committee meeting held November 21<sup>st</sup> in which the

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<sup>12</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, "The New Deal in the West: A Preliminary Statistical Inquiry," *Pacific Historical Review*, 38 (August 1969): 311-316.

committee recommended a further advance to Carbon County provided that an additional allocation was made by the RFC. Mr. Holman explained that the money is not yet available and that Carbon County is the only county that has exceeded its allocation. They are using Salt Lake County's allocation at the present time. He further stated that it would be necessary for Carbon County to be the last to receive their money in case the RFC money is delayed. Mr. Holman read the rules and regulations calling for provision of compensation insurance, and advised that Mr. Robinson, Field Representative, had advised that Carbon County has not complied with this provision. Mr. Reed advised that they are now carrying this insurance.

Mr. Holman stated that he had received reports to the effect that the Carbon County records are not satisfactory, and that Mr. Robinson is scheduled to visit the county this week to check up. Mr. Holman advised further that he had received reports that four individuals connected with the relief committee have been paid substantial wages out of RFC funds. Mr. Reed advised that \$500 had been paid for office help from RFC funds, but as soon as the tax money was received this \$500 was replaced. Mr. Holman submitted names and figures of payments made to individuals, and Mr. Reed advised that all of these amounts have been replaced in the RFC funds. Mr. Holman asked Mr. Reed to admit that at former meetings held in Mr. Holman's office, at which the Carbon County representatives were present, that he had been frank with them and willing to assist in every way possible. Mr. Reed admitted this.

Mr. Holman was of the opinion that there should be no objection on the part of Carbon County to have Mr. Robinson look into the records before the next check is given to them, and that a communication should be directed to Governor Dern advising that the insurance matter has been taken care of. Mr. Reed said that Mr. Williams of the RFC [the federal government's field representative over Utah] had advised him that where RFC work is being done, the city should pay for the insurance.

Senator Miller [also representing Carbon County] advised that conditions were getting worse in Carbon County, and they now have on file over 1773 cases. Senator Miller stated further that this county is now \$6,000 in debt.

Upon motion of Mr. Bamberger, the committee went into Executive session.

Drury suggested that Mrs. Maxwell be given complete responsibility of making investigations in Carbon County.

Mr. Holman reported that the RFC money had just been received from Washington.

Upon motion of Judge Anderson, duly seconded and carried unanimously, it was decided that the committee recommend to the Governor that an advance of \$10,000 be given to Carbon County, on condition that Mr. Robinson takes the check down personally and satisfies himself that they have complied with the

necessary provisions.<sup>13</sup>

Thus ended the saga of Carbon County's request for an additional \$10,000 in aid. In truth, everyone involved was simply being diligent. Funds had to be administered in a responsible way and accounted for by the recipients. The county reported to the state and the state reported to the federal government. The state appointed a field representative over the counties and the federal government appointed a field representative over the state. Rules and regulations were set forth so that everyone understood the conditions and procedures that applied. However, if this much effort went into allocating \$10,000 under the governor's discretion, what would hundreds of millions of dollars allocated by a distant and very political Congress generate? Under the strain of such practicalities, FDR's federal-state partnership would inevitably shift toward one in which the states virtually became wards of their federal benefactor.

Following President Roosevelt's inauguration in March 1933, federal-state relations entered a new phase. Under the provisions of the Federal Emergency Relief Act of 1933, FDR created the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA). Initially funded by grants from the RFC and subsequently from additional earmarked appropriations, FERA attempted to assist states with direct and work relief efforts through matching funds and outright grants. It appeared to be the very "spearhead of the whole New Deal," at least in the eyes of such observers as Lorena Hickok. It consisted of four divisions respectively governing relations with the states, work relief, statistical

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<sup>13</sup> "Minutes of Meeting of Governor's Central Committee on Emergency Relief for Utah Held at the State Capitol Tuesday, December 13, 1932," Lowry M. Nelson Papers, L. Tom Perry Special Collections Library, Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah (hereafter cited as Nelson Papers).

and financial reporting, and rural rehabilitation. Ten regional field representatives were appointed to “interpret Federal policies to State officials and State policies to the Administrator.” Initially funded at \$500 million, it would subsequently receive additional infusions of federal dollars.<sup>14</sup>

Distribution of these funds was carried out in a manner similar to RFC grants. The governors of the states applied to FERA’s administrator for aid and the resulting allocations were channeled through a state relief administrator to local political subdivisions. It was intended that the federal relief money would ultimately reach needy families and individuals through local public relief agencies, which operated under the state relief administrator’s supervision. Local agencies, in turn, would be responsible for documenting cases by conducting investigations establishing individual or family need and maintaining the requisite relief rolls.<sup>15</sup>

Under this scheme, the state administrator was responsible to both the federal government and state executive while maintaining oversight of local operations. This reflected President Roosevelt’s commitment to the concept of a federal-state partnership. It also enabled an agency such as FERA to get up and running rapidly by having the states provide administrative support and supervision.

As FDR noted at a conference of governors and emergency relief administrators in June 1933, “The Emergency Relief Act is an expression of the federal government’s

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<sup>14</sup> Richard Lowitt, *The New Deal and the West* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 8; *Purpose and Activities of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1935), 2.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 2-3.

determination to cooperate with the states and local communities with regard to financing emergency relief work. It means just that. It is essential that the state and local units of government do their fair share. They must not expect the federal government to finance more than a reasonable share of the total.”<sup>16</sup>

J. W. Gillman, director of Utah’s Department of Public Welfare in the 1930s, provided a revealing account regarding the unstructured nature of early relief efforts. While commenting on FERA during a 1939 interview he observed:

With the inauguration of the FERA program, county committees were appointed in each county, and later the members of these committees served as the nucleus for the establishment of the new county boards of public welfare. In every county there was at least one old FERA board member on the new board. Before the establishment of the Department of Public Welfare the general relief program was carried on in some counties by an agreement to abide by state board rules and regulations, even though no state law existed during that transition period requiring them to do so.<sup>17</sup>

At the peak of FERA’s fifteen months of active operation, the agency employed almost 2.5 million Americans under its work-relief provisions. The program expended over \$20 million in Utah, or \$40 per capita. Its activities included such projects as improvements to public property, remodeling and repair of housing, and production of necessities for the unemployed.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>17</sup> Louis Hosch, “Interviews on Utah Situation,” transcript of interview with J. W. Gillman, Director, State Department of Public Welfare, 11-15 Jan. 1939, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>18</sup> Harry L. Hopkins, Administrator, *The Emergency Work Relief Program of the F.E.R.A., April 1, 1934-July 1, 1935*, (Work Division, 31 Dec. 1935), 1, 6-10; Bureau of Budget, *Report No. 10: Utah*, vol. II (Office of Government Reports, Statistical Section, 1939), 2; *Deseret News*, 3 Apr. 1935; Leonard J. Arrington, “The New Deal in the West: A Preliminary Statistical Inquiry,” *Pacific Historical Review* 38 (Aug. 1969): 311-316.

Though technically a separate entity, the Civil Works Administration was partially supported by FERA funds. During its brief existence, November 1933 to March 1934, it employed approximately 4 million Americans. Its funding was actually derived from three sources. PWA diverted \$400 million of funding to CWA. When this was exhausted, FERA provided an additional \$89 million. Legislation in February 1934 allocated another \$345 million for the effort. Expenditures in Utah reached \$4.76 million, or \$9 per capita.<sup>19</sup>

Of course, the New Deal was not limited to general relief and work relief activities. As it broke into full stride, every economic sector of Utah's economy was affected. A summary of the scope of the programs that came spilling out of Washington, D.C. suggests how comprehensive and experimental Roosevelt and the New Dealers intended to be.

Utah's agricultural sector was sorely afflicted by the combination of depression and drought. Cash income dropped from \$58 million in 1929 to \$24 million in 1932, a decline of \$34 million. By 1937 income had rebounded to \$50 million, or a little more than double the 1932 level. Large harvests in 1938 depressed agricultural prices once more, with income falling to about \$46 million for that year. Still, by the late 1930s the agriculture sector evidenced unmistakable signs of recovery. Forced sales of farms and bankruptcies both abated during the mid and late 1930s. Federal programs strove to lighten the burden of Utah's farmers and to a significant degree had succeed in

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<sup>19</sup> "Purpose and Activities," 4 ; Edward Ainsworth Williams, *Federal Aid for Relief* (New York: Aims Press, 1939), 119; *Deseret News*, 3 Apr. 1937; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316.

ameliorating some of the harsher aspects of the Depression.<sup>20</sup>

Roosevelt administration efforts to regulate agriculture during the first stage of the New Deal were authorized under the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933. Programs subsidized by the Act focused on the reduction of a perceived excess of production which resulted in the accumulation of price-depressing surpluses. Questions of land management and soil conservation were also addressed. In 1934, the Agricultural Adjustment Administration purchased livestock which was slaughtered, canned, and distributed to the needy through FERA and Federal Surplus Relief Corporation.<sup>21</sup> The Supreme Court overturned the Agricultural Adjustment Act in 1936 and brought to a close that particular phase of the government's attempt to induce modification of existing agricultural practices.

Under the Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act of 1936, attention turned to the enhancement and preservation of soil fertility. During that year, almost 15,000 Utah farmers, representing 70 percent of the state's agricultural acreage, participated in AAA programs. The Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 continued the emphasis on soil conservation and improvement. In addition, it also reconstituted efforts to stabilize farm commodity prices—once again through regulation of production. These activities were supplemented by the Price Adjustment Act of 1938 and the Department of Agriculture Appropriations Act for the fiscal year ending June 1940.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *Report No. 10*, 7-10.

<sup>21</sup> Lowitt, *New Deal and West*, 34.

<sup>22</sup> *Report No. 10*, 11-13, 43.

Agriculture Department programs did precipitate some change in farm practices. Thousands of acres were shifted from production of wheat and corn to “soil conserving” crops or other uses. Hundreds of thousands of dollars were expended for conservation and parity payments. During the fiscal year ending June 1939, for instance, sugar beet producers received almost \$2.5 million under the Sugar Act of 1937. Other farmers received more than \$1 million in 1937 and \$624,000 in 1938 for conservation. From 1933 through the fiscal year ending July 1939, AAA expended over \$10 million in Utah.<sup>23</sup>

Other agricultural-oriented programs, such as the Farm Credit Administration, substantially aided Utah’s ailing farm economy. The Farm Credit Administration offered loans to individual farm owners, farm cooperatives, and private institutions involved in agricultural financing. Production credit organizations offered short-term loans. Long-term lending was provided through the Federal Land Bank of Berkeley and the Land Bank Commissioner. The Berkeley Bank for Cooperatives lent to farm business associations involved in marketing and purchasing, as well as grain elevators and irrigation. Over \$25 million in short-term loans, \$20 million in long-term mortgages, and over \$1 million in credit to cooperatives were extended to Utah farmers in the 1930s. All totaled, the Farm Credit Administration provided over \$48 million in credit to Utah agriculture.<sup>24</sup>

Another New Deal entity with a substantial impact on Utah’s farm community

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 1-2, 13.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 15.



was the Farm Security Administration. This agency attempted to reduce dependence on relief among low-income farmers by enabling them to become more self-sufficient. It offered loans to farmers at low interest rates, without requiring significant collateral. Three approaches were pursued: rural rehabilitation loans, a homestead program, and a tenant purchase program. Introduced in 1935, it assisted over 5,000 Utah families by 1939, loaning almost \$5 million.<sup>25</sup>

The rural rehabilitation program provided small subsistence loans and other resources enabling low-income farmers to become more productive. County supervisors worked with farm operators in developing plans and maintaining records in an effort to upgrade farm operations. This program also encouraged community-based group or cooperative purchases of equipment. Moreover, it provided assistance with medical care and debt adjustment. One survey among participating Utah farmers indicated that the net worth of about 3,500 affected farms had been increased by \$2.5 million, or \$710.80 per family.<sup>26</sup>

The Homestead and Tenant Purchase provisions played a lesser role in the rehabilitation of Utah agriculture. The Homestead program attempted to create model rural communities where low-income farmers could be relocated from submarginal land. In Utah the Farm Security Administration developed the Sevier Valley Farms and

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<sup>25</sup> Frank H. Jonas, "Utah: Sagebrush Democracy," in Thomas C. Donnelly, ed., *Rocky Mountain Politics* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1940), 43.

<sup>26</sup> *Report No. 10*, 16-18.

Widtsoe Resettlement projects.<sup>27</sup>

The Bankhead-Jones Act authorized loans designed to assist tenant farmers, sharecroppers, and farm laborers in purchasing their own farms. Only four counties in Utah were designated to participate in the program. Enough funds for about nineteen loans were allocated, totaling \$130,000, through the 1940 fiscal year.<sup>28</sup>

Yet another agency, the Surplus Commodities Corporation, distributed surplus agricultural commodities to those on relief as a supplement to the other aid they were receiving. The corporation purchased surplus production of thirty-nine commodities in an attempt to improve market conditions and relieve distress among the needy. In 1936, the Corporation distributed nearly one million pounds of food staples to eligible relief recipients in Utah. In 1937 the total reached over six million pounds, valued at \$369,000. Commodities included dried and fresh apples, beans, onions, peas, potatoes, prunes, flour, and tomatoes.<sup>29</sup>

The Rural Electrification Program also fell under the Department of Agriculture. It proved to be less effective in the mountain west than in other regions.<sup>30</sup> Though authorized in May 1935 by executive order under provisions of the Relief Act of 1935, projects did not commence in Utah until 1938. The Moon Lake Electric Association, Inc.

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<sup>27</sup> Brian Q. Cannon, *Remaking the Agrarian Dream: New Deal Rural Resettlement in the Mountain West* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 1-8; see Brian Q. Cannon, "Remaking the Agrarian Dream: The New Deal's Rural Resettlement Program in Utah" (master's thesis, Utah State University, 1986).

<sup>28</sup> *Report No. 10*, 16-18.

<sup>29</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 8 Jun. 1937; *Deseret News*, 11 Oct. 1938.

<sup>30</sup> Lowitt, *New Deal and West*, 33.

served Duchesne and Uintah counties. Garkane Power Company, Inc. carried electricity to Garfield and Kane counties. Peoples Light & Power Company of Loa, Utah developed service for Wayne, Piute, and Sevier counties. Other cooperatives were initiated in LaPoint and Tabiona. Only \$559,000 was committed throughout all of Utah by August 1939.<sup>31</sup>

FDR undertook the reorganization of a number of his New Deal agencies under the Reorganization Act of 1939. Included under the aegis of a newly created Federal Security Agency were such prominent programs as the Civilian Conservation Corps, the National Youth Administration, and the Social Security Board.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was created in June 1933 by an act of Congress. As originally conceived, CCC relied on the cooperation of the War, Interior, Agriculture, and Labor Departments in conjunction with state relief and conservation agencies. Its goal was the alleviation of unemployment among the youth of the nation and the rehabilitation and conservation of national resources. It provided work and income by employing young men on projects such as improving forests and developing national parks. Though its activities were severely curtailed by the latter stages of the Depression, it was technically authorized through June 30, 1943. However, Congress effectively ended the program in June 1942 when it eliminated CCC funding.<sup>32</sup>

Substantial sums were spent in Utah under the program. By 1939 the total had

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<sup>31</sup> *Report No. 10*, 19.

<sup>32</sup> *Report No. 10*, 22; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; see Kenneth W. Baldrige, "Nine Years of Achievement: The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah (PhD thesis, Brigham Young University, 1971); Beth R. Olsen, "Utah's CCCs: The Conservators' Medium for Young Men, Nature, Economy, and Freedom," *Utah Historical Quarterly* 62 (Summer 1994): 261-74.

reached \$37 million. The number of Utahans working in the state for CCC varied over time. For instance, in 1937 the *Salt Lake Tribune* reported that only 1,315 Utahans were among the 4,573 CCC workers engaged in projects in Utah. A report for August 1939 noted that only 1,200 of the 6,079 current enrollees working in the state listed Utah as their residence. However, by the end of 1938, over 15,000 enrollees had participated in the program, as well as 3,358 non-enrollees working as supervisors and camp officials.<sup>33</sup>

The National Youth Administration began its tenure as part of the Works Progress Administration in 1935 before being transferred to the Federal Security Administration in 1939. Its expenditures in Utah might be considered modest in comparison with other New Deal programs, but it did assist over 5,000 of the state's youth. Through June 1939 expenditures amounted to about \$1.5 million. Work was performed in schools and colleges throughout Utah. Out-of-school youth as well as high school, college, and graduate students were employed in a variety of tasks. Projects included work on library stacks, city beautification, recreation projects, soil conservation, and construction. The program was finally abolished by Congress in 1943.<sup>34</sup>

Historian Leonard J. Arrington paid tribute to that program in a 1983 lecture he gave at Weber State College: "Having come from a large and very poor farm family which could not support me in college, I worked my way through the university under a program sponsored by a New Deal agency, the National Youth Administration. This lecture gives me an opportunity to express my gratitude for that help by telling something

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<sup>33</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 11 Jun. 1937; *Report No. 10*, 22, 45.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 23; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 Jul. 1937.

of the accomplishments of that and other New Deal agencies in Utah.”<sup>35</sup>

The Social Security Act passed into law in 1935. A few of its features have remained prominent and well known, though the Act initially authorized a total of ten different programs concerned with social insurance, relief, health, and welfare. Old-age insurance provisions were administered solely by the federal government, while other provisions required state participation. The full panoply encompassed the following initiatives: old-age insurance, old-age assistance, aid to dependent children, aid to the needy blind, unemployment compensation, maternal and child health services, child welfare services, services for disabled children, vocational rehabilitation, and public health work.<sup>36</sup>

During the latter part of the Depression, unemployment compensation and public assistance were the most significant elements of the Social Security program for Utahans. The Social Security Board approved Utah’s program for the aged, blind, and dependent children in March 1936. Utah’s unemployment compensation provisions were approved by the Social Security Board in September 1936. Under aid to the aged, blind, and dependent children, the federal government expended \$5,605,451 by mid-1939. By August 1939, Utah provided \$3,740,073 in unemployment benefits. In addition, the federal government granted \$676,770 for the administration of the Utah Employment Service, which placed 17,355 applicants during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1939

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<sup>35</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, “Utah, The New Deal and the Depression of the 1930’s,” Dello G. Dayton Memorial Lecture, 25 Mar. 1982 (Ogden, Utah: Weber State College Press, 1983), 7.

<sup>36</sup> *Report No. 10*, 25.

alone.<sup>37</sup>

The 1939 overhaul of federal agencies also created the Federal Works Agency. This encompassed the Public Roads Administration (formerly Bureau of Public Roads), Public Works Administration, and the Work Projects Administration (formerly Works Progress Administration). All three agencies had a tremendous impact on the development of Utah's physical infrastructure.

During the New Deal era, numerous miles of federal-aid and state roads in Utah were built or improved. In addition, railroad crossings were upgraded by the introduction of overpasses, underpasses, signals, and relocation. Expenditures amounted to over \$16 million by the end of June 1939. By that time, almost 1,400 miles of roads were improved in the state and an average of 3,500 workers a month had been employed. For the period beginning in 1933 and ending in 1939, \$18,515,000 was spent, or \$35 per capita.<sup>38</sup>

The Public Works Administration came into being in 1933. It provided funding for the development of state and local construction projects in an effort to strengthen the economy through the long-term effects of significant public works. Under the non-federal portion of the program, which operated on a matching basis, PWA contributing 45 percent of the cost of approved projects. PWA also undertook construction and repair work on federal properties.

PWA's contribution to the Ogden River reclamation development amounted to

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 28-29; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316.

\$3,742,630. The Moon Lake Reservoir received an allocation of \$1,360,000, and the Provo River Project received \$800,000. PWA also allocated almost \$3.5 million towards the construction of fifty-seven schools. Waterworks systems benefited from loans of \$1,391,350 and grants totaling about \$1.6 million for ninety-two projects.<sup>39</sup>

By the end of June 1939, PWA had undertaken 238 federal projects including development of streets, sewers, waterworks, flood control, aviation, and other improvements to federal property at a cost of \$17.8 million. It also supported 182 non-federal projects including development of streets, sewers, waterworks, buildings, monuments, and other projects through the allocation of \$9,358,853 in grants and loans. The total federal and non-federal project expenditure in Utah from grants and loans amounted to \$31,417,237 at that time.<sup>40</sup>

The Works Progress Administration (later Work Projects Administration) succeeded the works program initiated by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration. This was perhaps the most high profile and controversial program sponsored by the New Deal. It was the agency most directly and visibly sponsoring work-relief throughout the later part of the Depression. Though it did not offer any direct relief payments, it continued to be associated in some people's minds with the "dole." This would prove to be a point of controversy between The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and WPA after the introduction of the Church Security Plan in 1936.

Tens of thousands of Utahans, including farmers, were employed by WPA at one

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<sup>39</sup> *Report No. 10*, 30-34.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-36.

time or another on its numerous projects. In January 1936, over 29,000 Utahans were eligible for work with the agency. As late as June, 1939, 10,267 were still working under the WPA banner. At that point, WPA reported that over \$33 million had been spent in Utah on wages and materials. Throughout the period an average of about 9,500 workers were employed at any given time. Under the program over 200 buildings were erected and nearly 400 others upgraded throughout the state. Roads and streets were completed or improved. Athletic fields and parks were developed. Waterlines and storage tanks were built. Even clothing was produced and food was distributed.<sup>41</sup>

A 1939 *Salt Lake Tribune* article offered its readers a summary of some of WPA's accomplishments in Utah. Under the subheading "Top Projects in State Since 1935" it listed the following: construction of an ordnance depot near Ogden; improvements at Fort Douglas; construction of armories at Logan, American Fork, Nephi, Mt. Pleasant, Fillmore, and Cedar City; school administration building and general school rehabilitation in Salt Lake City; lining miles of irrigation ditches and canals; noxious weed control; construction of water and sewer systems; Little Cottonwood Canyon road; farm-to-market road program; construction of six buildings in Sanpete County; damsite investigation and underground water survey; adult education and nursery school program; Salt Lake airport; recreational leader program; sewing projects for the needy;

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 35-36; Glen D. Reese, Director, Division of Employment, Works Progress Administration, "Know Your Government" National Emergency Council radio address transcript, 19 May 1937, Brimhall Papers; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 May 1939; Jonas, "Utah: Sagebrush Democracy," 49; Lowitt, *New Deal and West*, 37.



and a dam and reservoir building program.<sup>42</sup>

A brief description of the role of WPA was given in July 1938 by Darrell J. Greenwell, WPA state administrator: "The WPA remains a 'last resort agency.' At least 95 per cent of the persons who work on WPA projects must be persons who are employable, who have exhausted their resources and who have been certified as needy by the welfare department of the county. These persons may continue to work on WPA projects only so long as there are no other jobs open to them. Persons who refuse private work at the recognized wage for private work are dismissed. . . ."<sup>43</sup>

Something of the human drama hidden in such reports and descriptions can be garnered from a 1938 letter from Commissioner Marion Henrie of Millard County to Darrel J. Greenwell. The letter is a rather poignant report on the conditions which prevailed in Millard County from the onset of the Great Depression until that time. In its straightforward honesty it sums up much about the people's feeling toward the New Deal and programs such as WPA; therefore it will be quoted at length:

Dear Mr. Greenwell:

Your request for an appraisal of work projects in Millard County was taken up with the board of County Commissioners last meeting, you know the Commissioners and our entire office force are very busy, really overworked, they felt they did not have time to go into the matter sufficiently to give you any satisfaction, so I am going to try and write you what I think of it and believe the other Commissioners feel the same way. Forgive mistakes I am having quite a wrestle with typewriter and the language as well.

When I took the oath of office January 1, 1933 and got a view of conditions it was the blackest picture I ever looked at people were terribly discouraged a great percentage would of moved out if there had been a place to

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<sup>42</sup> Walter Everett, "WPA Reports \$33,131,372 Spent In Utah Since '35," *Salt Lake Tribune*, 7 May 1939.

<sup>43</sup> *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 Jul. 1938.

go, our taxing units were all bonded to the limit, business men all on the rocks, and all our citizens were in debt that could get in, investments they had made when prices were inflated to limit, we had been suffering from one of the most devastating drouths and panics that had ever hit the Sevier water shed, what few assets that were left were frozen down so tight you could not stick an ice pick into them anywhere. . . .The time for generalities and promises had long passed. . . .Well, Mr. Greenwell the State and Federal Governments came through with . . . help in a big way, we did not have a payroll in this County and we were all out of a job, through your departments the RFC, CWA, FERA, and WPA supplemented with the security act each place around two thousand on the payroll, and they bought our livestock killed the best of them shipped them back for us to eat and some of us had not tasted meat for years. . . .But the big thing of it all was that it meant work, jobs, building improvements we never would have gotten any other way, the works program part of it turned the liabilities of drouth and depression into assets and the results are we are again ready to go . . . we have incentive to go because we feel we have a chance to live and own our farms and homes, every soul in Millard County should feel grateful to the President, the Governor, and Yourself the entire program and particularly the work part. . . .I hope the State and Federal Governments can carry on a while longer, we cannot afford to loose the gains we have made and go back to chaos. . . .

This letter is altogether to long but I am depending on your patience. . . .

Very Respectfully,  
Marion Henrie<sup>44</sup>

Other New Deal agencies had their impact as well. Along with the rest of the nation, Utahans benefited from such entities as the Federal Home Loan Bank System, Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation, Home Owners' Loan Corporation, Federal Housing Administration, and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. For example, by the end of 1938 FHA had insured 2,795 mortgages and issued over 7,500 loans for modernizations and repairs, while HOLC had extended over 10,000 loans in Utah. By January 1937 the total for HOLC alone had reached \$25 million.<sup>45</sup>

For the period 1933 to 1939 the federal government spent \$173,886,682 in Utah in

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<sup>44</sup> Marion Henrie to Darrell J. Greenwell, 7 Mar. 1938, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>45</sup> *Report No. 10*, 43; *Deseret News*, 3 Apr. 1937.

grants, payments or other expenditures through various New Deal agencies and relief programs. During this same seven-year period, \$97,505,718 in federally sponsored loans were extended in the state. An additional \$17,909,381 benefited Utahans through New Deal insurance programs. The total of these three categories reached over \$289 million, for an average of \$41.3 million per year. This total amounted to the equivalent of \$569.67 for every man, woman, and child in Utah over the course of the Depression, calculated on the basis of Utah's 1930 population statistics. On an annual, per capita basis, this represented \$81.38 a year for seven years.<sup>46</sup>

As significant and generous as these appropriations appear—especially in comparison to the national relief and recovery effort in which per capita expenditures for the seven-year period averaged \$364, or 64 percent of what Utah received—they were at the low end of what the eight mountain west states received. The region as a whole benefited disproportionately from New Deal activities, while Utah stood near the bottom of the regional rankings.

The following set of charts attempts, through the use of relative rankings and comparisons, to grapple with the enormity of dislocations brought on by the Great Depression and to summarize their impact. The limitations of such an approach are apparent. Statistics can only indirectly hint at the social and psychological costs of the Depression, or the human side of the equation.

The following statistics, drawn from a number of studies of the period, create a

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<sup>46</sup> *Report No. 10*, 1-2; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Don C. Reading, "New Deal Activity and the States, 1933 to 1939," *Journal of Economic History* 33, no. 4 (1973): 792-810; Leonard J. Arrington and George Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes in the Western States, 1929-1960," *Western Economic Journal* 1 (Summer 1963): 205-217.

startling portrait of a nation, a state, and a people in an almost incomprehensible crisis. They also illustrate the extent to which Utah benefited from New Deal programs in relation to both the nation and the mountain west region in terms of federal allocations (expenditures, loans, and insurance). The comparisons highlight the degree to which the Roosevelt administration favored the west in general, and thereby the mountain west, and how Utah fared compared to its sister states in the region. Unless otherwise noted the charts are extrapolations of data provided in Bureau of the Budget, *Report No. 10*, and from works published by Leonard Arrington, Don C. Reading, and George Jensen.<sup>47</sup>

The first two charts offer information on population totals and percentages as reported in the 1930 and 1940 censuses:

**United States and Mountain West Population Figures for 1930 and 1940**<sup>48</sup>

	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>Average</u>
United States	122,775,046	131,669,275	127,222,161
Mountain West	3,701,789	4,150,003	3,925,896
Arizona	435,573	499,261	467,417
Colorado	1,035,791	1,123,296	1,079,544
Idaho	445,032	524,873	484,953
Montana	537,606	559,456	548,531
Nevada	91,059	110,247	100,653
New Mexico	423,317	531,818	477,568
<b>Utah</b>	<b>507,847</b>	<b>550,310</b>	<b>529,079</b>
Wyoming	225,565	250,742	238,154

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<sup>47</sup> Leonard J. Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection: New Deal Expenditures in the Western States, 1933-1939," *Pacific Historical Review* 52, no. 1 (Feb. 1983):1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>48</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

**The Mountain West States' Populations as Percentages of Total Mountain West**

	<u>Population</u> <sup>49</sup>	
	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>
Arizona	11.8%	12.0%
Colorado	28.0%	27.1%
Idaho	12.0%	12.6%
Montana	14.5%	13.5%
Nevada	2.5%	2.7%
New Mexico	11.4%	12.8%
<b>Utah</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>
Wyoming	6.1%	6.0%

(In 1930 the region's population constituted 3% of the U.S. population, and 3.2% in 1940.)

Another measure, which places Utah within the larger mountain west context and the region within the national context, is personal income (wages, salaries, self-employment, rental income, pensions, and benefits available for taxes, investment, and all other routine expenditures). The following tables provide information on total and per capita personal income in the nation and the region. The data is from 1929, 1932, and 1940. These charts provide a comparison of where the region stood in relation to the nation and where Utah stood in relation to both. (At that time, the subsistence level for a family of four was estimated at about \$2,000 per year.<sup>50</sup>)

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<sup>49</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>50</sup> Patterson, *Poverty*, 16.

**Total Personal Income in the United States and Mountain West States for 1929 and 1940**<sup>51</sup>

	<u>1929</u>	<u>1940</u>
United States	\$85,661,000,000	\$78,522,000,000
Mountain West	\$2,118,000,000	\$2,144,000,000
Arizona	\$254,000,000	\$ 248,000,000
Colorado	\$642,000,000	\$617,000,000
Idaho	\$225,000,000	\$242,000,000
Montana	\$312,000,000	\$318,000,000
Nevada	\$78,000,000	\$99,000,000
New Mexico	\$171,000,000	\$199,000,000
<b>Utah</b>	<b>\$284,000,000</b>	<b>\$269,000,000</b>
Wyoming	\$151,000,000	\$152,000,000

(The total personal income of the mountain west states represented 2.5% of the U.S. total personal income in 1929. It represented 2.7% in 1940. As noted above, the region represented about 3% of the U.S. population in 1929 and 3.2% in 1940.)

**Personal Income by State as Percentage of Regional Personal Income**<sup>52</sup>

	<u>1929</u>	<u>1940</u>
Arizona	12.0%	11.6%
Colorado	30.3%	28.8%
Idaho	10.6%	11.3%
Montana	14.7%	14.8%
Nevada	3.7%	4.6%
New Mexico	8.1%	9.3%
<b>Utah</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>
Wyoming	7.1%	7.1%

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<sup>51</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>52</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

**Per Capita Annual Personal Income in the U. S. and Mountain West States for 1929, 1932,  
and 1940<sup>53</sup>**

	<u>1929</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1940</u>
United States	\$703	–	\$595
Mountain West	\$572*	–	\$517
Arizona	\$591	\$309	\$497
Colorado	\$637	\$360	\$549
Idaho	\$503	\$268	\$461
Montana	\$595	\$319	\$568
Nevada	\$878	\$577	\$898
New Mexico	\$407	\$205	\$375
<b>Utah</b>	<b>\$559</b>	<b>\$303</b>	<b>\$489</b>
Wyoming	\$677	\$406	\$606

\*Mountain west average derived using 1930 population total.

(Per capita personal income in mountain west was 81% of the national average in 1929 and 87% of the national average in 1940.)

The following charts offer a comparison of federal allocations (expenditures, loans, and insurance) for the nation, region, and Utah. The first table provides information on each state's New Deal allocations from 1933 to 1939 by category and includes the per capita value for the seven-year period based on the 1930 population census.

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<sup>53</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

**Federal Expenditures, Loans, and Insurance 1933-1939 in the Mountain West States**<sup>54</sup>

	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Loans</u>	<u>Insurance</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Per Capita</u>
Arizona	\$261,368,351	\$ 67,866,224	\$15,842,884	\$345,077,459	\$ 792.24
Colorado	\$375,101,905	\$130,686,722	\$18,743,253	\$524,531,880	\$ 506.41
Idaho	\$209,057,598	\$111,894,931	\$10,287,395	\$331,149,924	\$ 744.11
Montana	\$381,382,693	\$141,835,952	\$ 7,415,036	\$530,633,681	\$ 987.03
Nevada	\$102,881,055	\$ 28,472,659	\$ 5,091,380	\$136,445,094	\$1498.44
New Mexico	\$223,301,907	\$ 61,907,530	\$ 6,559,504	\$291,768,941	\$ 689.25
<b>Utah</b>	<b>\$173,886,682</b>	<b>\$ 97,505,718</b>	<b>\$17,909,381</b>	<b>\$289,301,781</b>	<b>\$ 569.67</b>
Wyoming	\$141,185,431	\$ 52,878,973	\$ 8,639,232	\$202,703,636	\$ 898.65

(The allocation for the mountain west totaled \$2,651,612,396. The allocation for the nation reached \$44,691,782,948. The mountain west received 5.93 percent of the total federal allocation for 1933 to 1939. On a per capita basis the mountain west averaged \$716.31, while the nation averaged \$364.01. The mountain west received 194.9 percent of the national average.)

**Mountain West States Allocations as Percent of Total Mountain West Allocation**<sup>55</sup>

Arizona	13.0%
Colorado	19.8%
Idaho	12.5%
Montana	20.0%
Nevada	5.2%
New Mexico	11.0%
<b>Utah</b>	<b>10.9%</b>
Wyoming	7.6%

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<sup>54</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>55</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.



**Mountain West States Allocations as Percent of Average Mountain West Per Capita**

	<b><u>Federal Allocation</u></b> <sup>56</sup>	
Arizona	(\$792.24)	110.6%
Colorado	(\$505.41)	70.7%
Idaho	(\$744.11)	103.9%
Montana	(\$987.03)	137.8%
Nevada	(\$1498.44)	209.2%
New Mexico	(\$689.25)	96.2%
<b>Utah</b>	<b>(\$569.67)</b>	<b>79.5%</b>
Wyoming	(\$898.65)	125.5%
Mountain West	(\$719.31)	194.9%

**Mountain West States Allocatons as Percent of Average U.S. Per Capita Federal**

**Allocation**<sup>57</sup>

(Average federal per capita allocation 1933-1939 = \$364.01. This includes expenditures, loans, and insurance.)

Arizona	(\$792.24)	217.6%
Colorado	(\$505.41)	139.1%
Idaho	(\$744.11)	204.4%
Montana	(\$987.03)	271.2%
Nevada	(\$1498.44)	411.7%
New Mexico	(\$689.25)	189.4%
<b>Utah</b>	<b>(\$569.67)</b>	<b>156.5%</b>
Wyoming	(\$898.65)	246.9%

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<sup>56</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>57</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

National Ranking of Mountain West States in Terms of Per Capita Allocations<sup>58</sup>

Nevada	1
Montana	2
Wyoming	3
Arizona	4
Idaho	5
New Mexico	8
<b>Utah</b>	<b>9</b>
Colorado	14

Mountain West States Average Per Capita Personal Income as Percentage of U.S. Average

Per Capita Personal Income, 1929 and 1940<sup>59</sup>

	<u>1929</u>	<u>1940</u>
United States	– (\$703)	– (\$595)
Mountain West	83% (\$580)	86% (\$509)
Arizona	84% (\$591)	84% (\$497)
Colorado	91% (\$637)	92% (\$546)
Idaho	72% (\$503)	78% (\$464)
Montana	85% (\$595)	96% (\$570)
Nevada	125% (\$878)	147% (\$876)
New Mexico	58% (\$407)	63% (\$375)
<b>Utah</b>	<b>80% (\$559)</b>	<b>82% (\$487)</b>
Wyoming	96% (\$677)	102% (\$608)

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<sup>58</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>59</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

**Mountain West States Average Per Capita Personal Income for 1932 and 1940 Compared  
with 1929, Shown as a Percentage<sup>60</sup>**

	<u>1929</u>	<u>1932</u>	<u>1940</u>
United States	(\$703)	—	85% (\$595)
Mountain West	(\$580)	—	88% (\$509)
Arizona	(\$591)	52% (\$309)	84% (\$497)
Colorado	(\$647)	57% (\$360)	86% (\$546)
Idaho	(\$503)	53% (\$268)	92% (\$464)
Montana	(\$595)	54% (\$319)	96% (\$570)
Nevada	(\$878)	66% (\$577)	100% (\$876)
New Mexico	(\$407)	50% (\$205)	92% (\$375)
<b>Utah</b>	<b>(\$559)</b>	<b>54% (\$303)</b>	<b>87% (\$487)</b>
Wyoming	(\$677)	60% (\$406)	90% (\$608)

The final table, which follows, summarizes the annual total expenditures by the federal government in all relief-related categories as reported in the Bureau of Budget, *Report No. 10*.

**Federal Expenditures in Utah, 1933-1939, on an Annual and Cumulative Basis<sup>61</sup>**

<b>Fiscal year ending June 30, 1933</b>		<b>Cumulative Total</b>
Repayable loans	\$15,771,512	
Insured loans	\$ 0	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$ 5,642,516	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$21,414,028</b>	<b>\$ 21,414,028</b>

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<sup>60</sup> Arrington, "Sagebrush Resurrection," 1-15; Arrington, "Statistical Inquiry," 311-316; Reading, "New Deal Activity," 792-810; Arrington and Jensen, "Comparison of Income Changes," 205-217.

<sup>61</sup> *Report No. 10*.

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1934**

Repayable loans	\$26,853,375	
Insured loans	\$ 0	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$20,986,268	
Total	\$47,839,643	\$ 69,253,671

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1935**

Repayable loans	\$17,794,876	
Insured loans	\$ 0	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$28,936,841	
Total	\$46,731,717	\$115,985,388

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1936**

Repayable loans	\$12,604,020	
Insured loans	\$ 4,871,683	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$30,801,333	
Total	\$48,277,036	\$164,262,424

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1937**

Repayable loans	\$ 8,834,331	
Insured loans	\$ 4,868,216	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$28,808,822	
Total	\$42,511,369	\$206,773,793

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1938**

Repayable loans	\$ 8,328,659	
Insured loans	\$ 3,076,703	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$25,827,829	
Total	\$37,233,191	\$244,006,984

**Fiscal year ending June 30, 1939**

Repayable loans	\$ 7,318,945	
Insured loans	\$ 5,092,779	
Grants, payments or expenditures	\$32,883,073	
Total	\$45,294,797	\$289,301,781

Taken together, the various statistics associated with the relief effort in the mountain west and Utah reveal something of the Great Depression's crushing impact and

the federal government's response. They also demonstrate that although Utah received a disproportionate amount of aid compared with the national average, it did not fare as well when compared to other states in its region. And as is to be expected, as dramatic as these totals are, they do not reveal the full story in economic or human terms.

From an economic perspective, the period from 1933 to 1939 is frequently identified as the New Deal era. Much of the literature on federal expenditures focuses on this period, in part, out of convenience. Government reports prepared for Roosevelt's anticipated re-election campaign in 1939 offer readily accessible data summaries on most New Deal programs.

Considered in this light, the above total of \$289,302,781, if viewed as representing all New Deal relief expenditures in Utah, is a bit misleading. Many federal relief programs continued into the 1940s. Some, such as Social Security, agricultural subsidies, and home loan insurance, are still with us. The Reconstruction Finance Corporation, of course, predated the New Deal. Though there is certainly some logic behind the defining the New Deal era as 1933 to 1939, such an approach inherently ignores those relief-related efforts that continued into the early 1940s. Federal expenditures did not conveniently cease at the end of either the 1939 fiscal or calendar year.

It would require some additional study to accurately calculate the full breadth of federal assistance to Utah during the actual tenures of all Depression-related programs. For instance, Utah's 1940 relief expenditures were projected at \$8 million, 35 percent of which was to be supplied by Washington. In March of that year, 21,408 households

(52,128 individuals) were identified as receiving some form of relief, including 10,588 workers and their family members, because of unemployment. WPA spent an additional \$4.7 million in Utah during the 1940 fiscal year. A September 1940 WPA report noted that 8,165 workers were employed on projects throughout the state. Another 3,949 were available for work, but the quota for Utah had been met. The total certified number of cases eligible for WPA work in July stood at 15,099. Obviously, significant expenditures were still being made in the state after the 1940 fiscal year closed.<sup>62</sup>

There were also indirect subsidies which affected Utah's economic recovery. New Deal administrator, Dean R. Brimhall, writing to congressman Abe Murdock in 1938, noted,

Among other things I have discovered that the present Administration has interfered with the mining business in Utah to such an extent that it has contributed \$4,700,000 cold cash to silver producers to purchase their silver above the world market price, 40¢. . . The increase in the price of gold established by the New Deal Administration brought gold producers in Utah another four and one half million more than they would have received at the old world price of \$20.67.

All in all the excess prices paid to the precious metal producers in Utah cost the federal government about two million dollars more during 1937 than the entire WPA Works Programs, which was some thing over seven million."<sup>63</sup>

In the final analysis, regardless of the amount the federal government ultimately spent on Depression-related assistance in Utah during the 1930s and beyond, some other fundamentally sound conclusions can be reached. Leonard Arrington, in his *Dello G.*

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<sup>62</sup> *Deseret News*, 3 April 1940; *Salt Lake Tribune*, 3 May 1940; *Report on the Progress of the WPA Program* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1940), 126; Darrell J. Greenwell, State Administrator, to Howard O. Hunter, Deputy Commissioner, Federal Works Agency, Work Projects Administration, 18 September 1940, Brimhall Papers.

<sup>63</sup> Dean R. Brimhall to Abe Murdock, Aug. 1938, Brimhall Papers..

Dayton memorial lecture given in 1982, discussed his understanding of the impact federal relief efforts had on the state of Utah. He spoke from the perspective of a historian grappling with the past and the present as well as a direct beneficiary of New Deal programs. He saw the Great Depression as a watershed, a time when “the nation developed a consensus that the federal government, as the agent of compassionate humanity, has a responsibility not only maintain the health of the economy, but to help provide public assistance as well.”<sup>64</sup>

After summarizing many of the federal government’s contributions to Utah’s recovery, Arrington ultimately described the New Deal’s influence in purely economic terms. Income rose as did bank deposits, payrolls, the value of farm products, and the amount of taxes paid. By this measure he judged that thus the “health and welfare of the population was substantially improved.”<sup>65</sup>

Another fiscally oriented assessment of the federal relief efforts was offered by John F. Bluth and Wayne K. Hinton in their contribution to a volume on Utah history. The heart of their analysis was simple and straightforward: “The financial condition of Utah was better in 1940 than it was in 1929. The improvement was essentially attributable to federal aid.” They noted, “The depression struck a blow to the Utah economy and social order that they might not have survived without federal aid.” However, they were able to draw attention to other, wider ranging implications. Their closing observations suggested that even though Utah had not fully recovered under the

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<sup>64</sup> Arrington, “Depression of the 1930’s,” 8.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 24-25.

New Deal, “the results of looking to Washington for solutions included a number of enduring public improvements, renewed vigor in the labor movement, plenteous social and reform legislation, a liberalization of Utah politics, and Democratic political control that lasted almost twenty years.”<sup>66</sup>

Howard O. Hunter, deputy administrator, Federal Works Agency, Work Projects Administration, observed in January 1940:

I was looking over the annual review issue of the Salt Lake City Deseret News the other day and was struck by the fine collection of new buildings and structures of all kinds that have been put up in the State of Utah in the last 10 years. The paper points with pride to these achievements of ‘progress’: included are pictures and descriptions of numerous libraries, town halls, court houses, schools, hospitals, bridges and drainage projects, several new airports, . . . an art center, an ‘elegant’ new State University field house, and many other public improvements. . . .I was interested to discover on checking the various projects mentioned that over two-thirds of them were either WPA or PWA projects.<sup>67</sup>

The above analyses recognize the many tangible accomplishments attributable to federal assistance which poured into Utah. The New Deal in particular affected all sectors of Utah’s economy as well as the lives of the state’s citizens. Agriculture, mining, banking, transportation, government, and education all benefited. These were real achievements and they sustained Utah through its journey across the seemingly impassable morass that was the Great Depression.

But is that all that can be said about the federal relief effort? Certainly many millions of dollar poured into the state as grants and loans. The structure of government

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<sup>66</sup> John F. Bluth and Wayne K. Hinton, “The Great Depression,” in Richard D. Poll et al., *Utah’s History*, (Provo: Brigham Young University Press, 1978), 494-495.

<sup>67</sup> Howard Hunter, transcript of speech, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, 31 Jan. 1940, Brimhall Papers.



was altered in response to federal initiatives and mandates, sometimes in enduring ways. The infrastructure of the state was modified as buildings, roads, airports, and reservoirs were constructed. This is all true enough. But, perhaps the most significant impact was also the most intangible. Simply put, hope was given when hope was needed.

And, the direction that hope came from has left an abiding legacy. In their time of crisis the people of Utah turned to the man who sat in the White House, Franklin D. Roosevelt, for help, if not answers. Election returns from the period surely demonstrated Utah's allegiance to FDR and the programs he guided through Congress and the courts for seven climactic years.

To this day the nation remains oriented to the federal government for the resolution of many critical questions. Certainly public welfare, conservation, and a myriad of other policy priorities have remained under the purview the national government. Despite the sincere rhetoric of the early New Deal, a true federal-state partnership—a working alliance among equals—unintentionally, but inevitably, fell by the wayside. Today, state governments often find their actions bound and proscribed by federal law, judicial fiat, and bureaucratic regulation to a degree inconceivable before the Great Depression. Perhaps that was the unavoidable price, given the course Utah and the nation chose to take during their passage through the Great Depression. As the loveable pig in the movie *Babe* is frequently reminded, “That’s the way things are.”

In the end, Utah, as a state and a people, did not fare so differently than other states. Though harder hit than many other states, receiving more aid than most, Utah faced the same challenges and sought the answers in the same places as the rest of the

nation. True, the LDS Church offered a unique alternative to federal relief efforts, but, as previously noted, it did not diminish the state's participation in the New Deal. Utah retained its dependence on federal expenditures long after the Depression had faded. However, it had been a colonial economy before the Depression. Seen in this light, cannot it not be said that Utah's story, when considered in its most fundamental terms, was a retelling of America's story?

POSTLUDE:  
ROADS NOT TAKEN

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time

—T.S. Eliot, “Four Quartets”

Paul Appleby, administrative assistant to Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace, recounted a telephone conversation between Wallace and President Roosevelt: “Henry Wallace phoned the President to warn him of an action the Department of Agriculture was about to take. . . .He fumbled for words, and from these Roosevelt drew the impression that Wallace himself was in some kind of trouble. ‘I was standing a few feet away,’ Appleby remembered years later, ‘but I could have heard what the President said if I had been across the room, and what I heard out of the receiver was, ‘Bring it over to me, Henry. My shoulders are broad.’”<sup>1</sup>

How curious that fate called forth a man crippled by polio to lead a nation crippled by a catastrophic economic depression. Perhaps there was something in the personal trials Franklin D. Roosevelt faced and overcame that enabled him to confront the extraordinary challenges of his presidency with inspiring confidence. Regardless of the ultimate verdict of history, his shoulders helped carry the nation through the turmoil of the Great Depression for seven daunting years. Roosevelt justly stands remembered

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth S. Davis, *FDR: The New Deal Years, 1933-1937* (New York: Random House, 1986), 204.

among the great leaders of American history for that service.

That said, other issues linger. American history presents something of a dialectic dialogue. The nation's recurring effort to resolve its inherent contradictions has produced episodes of near-revolutionary change. The American Revolution, the market revolution, Jacksonian democracy, the Civil War, the Progressive movement, the New Deal and others all attempted to reconcile some set of dissident forces at work within the body politic. The results were not fully satisfying or entirely enduring, but in each case tensions subsided long enough for yet another dialectic contest to begin.

The Great Depression offered the nation an opportunity to evaluate and choose among competing "solutions" to the crisis. In that respect, it is essential to know what eventually happened. However, it is just as crucial to know what did not. With every new course set, a fresh journey began. Certainly, the legacy of that era is the sum of the roads taken. However, its legacy is equally the sum of the all those roads not taken.

As President Hoover tackled the crisis, he envisioned the nation as a host of rugged individuals having a bad day economically. The country was sound, business was sound, and the people were sound. In his heart and mind it was the people's innate strength, wisdom, and perseverance that would see the nation through. In the meantime, neighbor would help neighbor and the government would discretely bolster commerce and industry until the emergency inevitably passed. Hoover expected that in the end things would again be as they had been—a return to the status quo ante. Adam Smith's unseen hand could be trusted to right the ship in the course of time.

FDR was far less sanguine. Just as the American frontier was declared closed in

1893, Roosevelt declared the economic frontier closed in 1933. The United States had reached the pinnacle of its industrialization—growth and development had climaxed. No amount of rugged, bootstrap-pulling individualism could see the nation through the crisis. The problem was too large and too complex for the people to remedy on their own. Unemployment was a fact of life. The economy would stagnate unless it was fundamentally reorganized and restructured. The only viable solution was direct and massive government intervention.

It was now Washington's duty to coordinate production and distribution, to manage supply and demand, to regulate the marketplace, and to become the "partner" of business, industry, finance, and the states. Furthermore, the national government was to guarantee security to the forgotten man. The federal government was to be, in a literal sense, Adam Smith's unseen hand made manifest.

A confrontation between Hoover's and Roosevelt's contending visions never quite played itself out on the national stage. True, the people rejected Hoover's conservative approach in the 1932 election. FDR's first hundred days seemed to promise something new, something even "revolutionary." Yet, as events unfolded, compromise after compromise imposed itself on Roosevelt's administration. In time, the objective became not so much the remaking of America as the remodeling of America. When World War II intervened, it altered the equation and rendered the issue moot.

The impassioned zeal of the early New Deal, when a collective, grassroots, new birth of economic democracy seemed possible, gradually faded. It yielded to the notion that the old order was not so much to be abandoned as amended. Materialistic,

consumptive capitalism could not only be saved, it could be rehabilitated sufficiently to become the obedient servant of the people as personified by the national government. The remedy became, in substance, Hooverism with a vengeance, given that many New Deal initiatives were, in fact, Hoover's old program carried to an extreme.

There is considerable exaggeration in this, of course. But the essence of the argument remains. In the end a confrontation between Hoover conservatism and Roosevelt liberalism never really took place. Ultimately, the nation was offered not a revolution, but a variation on a theme.

All this suggests an additional question. Were there other alternatives, other roads? For instance, could some of the early New Deal dreams of a truly collective, democratic, economically egalitarian society have borne fruit? Some thought so at the time, only to face ultimate disillusionment.

One who stood outside the political arena and yet became enmeshed in the debate over America's future was Charles A. Beard. Beard was not a stranger to controversy. His economics-driven interpretation of American history had already earned him a certain degree of notoriety.

During the Great Depression and New Deal years, Beard became concerned with contemporary politics and the implications of America's fate for the world. Given the upheavals and dislocations of the Depression and the reversion of much of Europe and Asia to fascism and totalitarianism, a worldwide plunge into an apocalyptic political-economic abyss seemed all too possible. A great discontinuity appeared to be ushering in a new age, and as it did many of the indications were not positive. The conventional

modes of understanding the customs, trends, and tendencies characteristic of society and culture no longer seemed adequate—including the scientific method and empiricism.

“This ‘crisis in thought, economy, and politics’ portended not merely the collapse of the social systems of the West, but also, more fundamentally, the failure of the social philosophies and interpretations of history on which they rested.”<sup>2</sup>

As Beard reacted to these perceived and realized crises, he focused on the concepts of “civilization” and American “exceptionalism.” Beard reached the conclusion that there was something unique about American society and culture that set it apart from the rest of the world; he was convinced that the United States was the anointed bearer and keeper of constitutionalism and democracy. And, American democracy had a particular destiny or mission which had to be honored—the creation of a collective economic and social democracy. The anticipated polity would be distinguished by the centralization of the means of material welfare in the hands of a government fully responsive to the will of the people for the purpose of refining and perpetuating a “good society.”

As Beard refined this progressive, even utopian, interpretation of America’s destiny, he envisioned a nation that would be self-contained and self-reliant. The implications of this vision were manifested in Beard’s promotion of the idea of “continentalism,” which signified a turning inward on the part of the United States. This was not mere introspection or isolationism, but a literal husbanding of the democratic and material strengths and virtues which defined America temporally and spiritually.

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<sup>2</sup> David W. Marcell, “Charles Beard: Civilization and the Revolt Against Empiricism,” *American Quarterly*, 21, no. 1 (1969): 65.

Beard imagined an America insulated by the oceans and by its resources and industrial capacities. The convergence of these circumstances offered America an opportunity to create a good society in which reform could lead to a freedom from want and to a fully participatory democracy. Henry Wallace noted that “Beard dreams a great dream of a beautiful and peaceful land, remote from the predatory course of foreign nations. We would stay at home and provide an adequate army, navy, aviation force and coast defenses to take care of the United States proper, setting an example to other nations of a land at peace and a happy race of people engaged in promoting high living standards and an appreciation of all that is finest and best.”<sup>3</sup>

Initially, Beard embraced the New Deal as step in this direction, at least to the extent that a hint of collectivism seasoned the first New Deal’s nominal ideology. Ultimately, Beard’s faith in the New Deal would turn to bitter disappointment. He came to see Roosevelt as just another tool of special interests seeking to prop up the existing order. In a polemical sense, Beard’s continentalism and exceptionalism represented a philosophical alternative to Roosevelt’s internationalism and New Deal compromises that never quite took root.<sup>4</sup>

As events unfolded during the 1930s, whatever opportunities or dangers lurked in the direction of continentalism and democratic collectivism passed. Yet, it is not difficult to notice similarities between Beard’s vision of exceptional and self-reliant

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<sup>3</sup> Henry Wallace, “Beard: The Planner,” *The New Republic*, 81, no. 1048 (2 Jan. 1935): 227.

<sup>4</sup> The most complete treatment of Beard’s thought on this subject was expressed in Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The American Spirit; A Study of the Idea of Civilization in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1942).



Americans building an idealized “good society” and J. Reuben Clark Jr.’s vision of equally exceptional and self-reliant Saints building “Zion” through the Church Security Plan. Goals were similar and the end result of both was to be the establishment of the metaphorical “city upon a hill” which would shine before the world and point the way to temporal, if not spiritual, salvation. Of course, such an analogy does not bear too close a scrutiny. For instance, it is just as plausible to characterize the media contest between WPA and CSP as a symbolic extension of the ideological clash inherent in Hoover’s narrow interpretation of federalism and the New Deal’s far broader construction, with all it implied. However, it does suggest that as the New Deal unfolded, there was a segment of society that saw in its programs not just a missed opportunity, but a wrong turn.

From a less lofty perspective, there were many other roads not taken and alternatives spurned that were of substance and significance. For example, when Washington succeeded in checkmating or co-opting the more radical impulses emerging during the 1930s, it reduced the number of options under consideration by the nation. How much was actually lost cannot realistically be calculated. One can simply note that for better or worse, their potential was effectively negated.

In a similar vein, during the first hundred days Roosevelt was presented with a unique prospect. He had a literal mandate to remake the national economy as well as completely redefine the relationship between the people and the federal government, especially as it was filtered through the states. Roosevelt passed on the former but pursued the latter.

For a long moment in 1933, the president held the requisite moral authority to

nationalize banking and finance, transportation, communications, and utilities. One can hardly begin to gauge what sort of consequences would have followed in the wake of such an attempt. However, FDR chose to move in a less aggressive direction and preserve some form of democratic capitalism. The opportunity to transform critical sectors of the national economy was thus forfeited.

In contrast, his endorsement of a revised federal-state partnership bore undramatic but tangible consequences. Significant welfare and labor reform were uniformly introduced throughout the nation. Infrastructure was improved through the activities of PWA and WPA. Agriculture was subsidized and stabilized. Relief efforts were gradually centralized and rationalized. Localities yielded authority to the states and, in turn, the states to the federal government—but no one complained too much.

Curiously, the federal government's gradual centralization of control over a variety of ostensibly state-administered New Deal initiatives was probably unintentional. At the outset, New Deal agencies lacked the manpower to staff their programs in the field. As a practical expedient, state personnel were thrown into the breach. This arrangement pulled the local personnel into Washington's orbit. Furthermore, it helped preserved a patina of partnership.

It is true that some agencies simply bypassed state administration and functioned directly on the local level. Others were administered directly from Washington. But such programs as FERA, WPA, and PWA were not so much imposed on the states as they were invited. In a sense, the states adopted the federal government. Benign or not, this new arrangement permanently altered the relationship of citizens with their local,

state, and national governments.

However, the engine that drove some of the most significant changes that resulted from the New Deal was the promise of “security.” In a very real sense the land of opportunity became the land of federally sponsored security. It is not hard to understand why a people battered and beaten by remorseless economic turmoil embraced the idea of government-subsidized security. However, the price was local, state, and personal autonomy. With “security” came the apparatus needed to make it a reality—administration, regulation, depersonalization, and dependency. Rugged individualism and self-reliance were replaced by a mandatory system of shared risk management. It certainly lacks the ring of “rugged individualism,” but it was the road chosen all the same.

At the same time, it is not entirely fair to heap responsibility for all the transformations in social, political, and economic relationships that emerged during the Great Depression upon the New Deal. Before either arrived on the scene life in the modern world was growing complex. Technology, communications, transportation, and a myriad of other developments were impinging on the average person’s world. Some social, political, and economic adjustments were inevitable.

However, because of the intensity of the Depression, solutions to some of the problems of modernity were pursued under duress. To complicate matters, the federal government believed it had a moral obligation to act. This perception was not unfounded—it had been endorsed by the clear and resounding voice of the electorate in two national elections. Still, it meant that many alternative approaches were not or could

not be explored. For instance, the notion of state experimentation which might yield a plethora of possible solutions for consideration was only paid lip service. The urgency of the moment demanded that national and state governmental leaders act promptly.

In the case of Utah, as elsewhere, when state leaders acted, they did so by turning to Washington. Consequently, Utah managed to balance its budget throughout the better part of the Depression on the federal government's back. Within the state this was saluted as good government, even though it was federal deficit spending that sustained Utah's neediest citizens. Still, it is hard to fault this arrangement. Practically speaking, even under the best of circumstances, Utah only had limited funds available for welfare. The state government did not have a viable alternative. Perhaps more could have been spent by the state on its relief activities, but such expenditures would only have been of marginal utility.

And for those who stood in need of assistance throughout the country, embracing federal relief aid was not so much a philosophical decision as it was an instinctive impulse. A rope was being thrown to those who were drowning, and they grasped it. But in Utah an alternative was proffered—the Church Security Plan. And for many members of the Church this became the road not taken.

Church leaders would characterize those who stayed on federal relief as being weak, greedy idlers willing to take something for nothing. In retrospect this seems almost cruelly unfair. No doubt to some the federal government's largesse was more attractive than the Church's more restrictive assistance. Yet, personal accounts suggest that in a number of instances, members had not felt themselves able to pay tithing in their

reduced circumstances and thus were not considered members in good standing. Those bishops who strictly enforced the provisions of the Church Security Plan would not extend them aid.<sup>5</sup> For whatever reasons, the fact remains that the majority of Utahans in need chose federal programs, such as WPA, over CSP.

Much more could be said on this and other subjects, but perhaps a brief consideration of one other issue will suffice. After all the analysis of what happened when and why during the Great Depression is considered, “big” questions remain. Why did democratic capitalism and republican government persist? Why did the country not turn to socialism, totalitarianism, or facism? What really held the country, the people of Utah, and the LDS Church together for the duration of the Depression? Why were other roads not taken? FDR, the New Deal, federal aid, state relief, local charity, a sense of everyone being in the Depression together, or a dozen other tangible possibilities suggest themselves. Weighed in the balance, the sum of these responses seems to fall a little short of being completely satisfying. Something is still missing.

Charles Beard believed America really was “exceptional,” a land of destiny possessed of a greater mission. It would seem he was not alone. If any event should have dealt a crushing blow to the spirit and self-image of a people, it certainly was the Depression. America was humbled, Utah was humbled, and the Latter-day Saints were humbled. No one was immune, and in the case of Utah, few suffered more. The Depression lingered longer in America than it did in Europe. Utah’s economy collapsed

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<sup>5</sup> Allen T. Sanford, State Director, to Frank Hamlin, Field Administrative Assistant, Office of Government Reports, 14 Aug 1939, Brimhall Papers.

more completely than in most other states. Proportionately, more Mormons received relief than non-Mormons. Yet, in the United States, in Utah, and among the Mormons, a belief in a self-referential exceptionalism survived the Great Depression.

There seems to be something of a mystery in this. Though Charles Beard thought American exceptionalism was genuine, it is no longer politically correct to do so. It cannot be quantified, measured, or proven. Conceptually, such a notion can only be viewed as being chimerical—an illusion. But, it must be admitted that even mirages and illusions have their power. The people who passed through the crucible of the Great Depression somehow managed to endure to the end and not lose their sense of identity and purpose. Their triumph stands as yet another witness to the power of an idea.

In this postlude I have not focused very intently on Utah's passage through the Great Depression or its New Deal legacy. I have addressed issues that might be considered of a more ecumenical nature. This reflects a conclusion reached earlier in this account. In the final analysis, Utah's story is but America's story, writ small. The state endured what the nation endured. It did receive a great deal of federal aid, more than many other states, but not so much more that it really mattered. Changes in state administration of welfare and other state-supported programs were made. But, in general, aside from CSP, its responses were very much like those of other states.

The Great Depression was a bad thing, people everywhere suffered, choices were made, and some roads were not taken. The ones chosen have brought us to today. On the whole, Utah made its passage through the Great Depression in company with the rest of the nation. The people who completed that journey immediately faced another one,

even more daunting in its implications. Perhaps they were, as some have suggested, America's "greatest generation."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998).





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## APPENDICES

- Document 1            Memorandum, Mrs. Godwin to Dean R. Brimhall, October 4, 1937
- Document 2            Memorandum, Dean R. Brimhall to Mrs. Godwin, September 22,  
1937
- Document 3            Memorandum, Dean R. Brimhall to Mr. Rauch, March 28, 1939
- Document 4            Wirth Study, Chapters 1-3 and excerpt from Chapter 7



WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION

INTER-OFFICE COMMUNICATION

MEMORANDUM

October 4, 1937

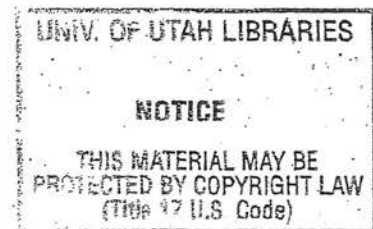
TO: MR. BRIMHALL

FROM: MRS. GODWIN

SUBJECT: Attached: Your memo of Sept. 22 with clipping from NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE re what the Mormons have done toward work and relief for unemployed.

See Mr. Hopkins' penciled note: "I think someone should explode this and your scheme is too slow. HLH"

KG



September 22, 1937

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mrs. Godwin  
FROM: Dean R. Brimhall

Mr. Alan Johnstone, Counsel for the Byrnes Committee, has offered to write a letter to the Herald Tribune expressing interest in the attached editorial and asking for the source of the data it reports. This, of course, would be followed by letters to Mormon Church officials.

If Mr. Hopkins thinks this procedure advisable, I shall inform Mr. Johnstone at once. He will probably ask Mormon officials to appear before the committee later.

I have a mass of current data available.

*Brimhall*  
*I think someone*  
*should explode this story*  
*and I am sure it is to show*  
*WPA*

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March 28, 1939

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Rauch

FROM: Dean R. Brishall

Mrs. Gaffney has informed my Secretary that you desire some detailed information on the Utah Study being conducted under the direction of Professor Louis I. Wirth of Chicago.

In April 1936 the Mormons announced that they were going to take all their members off the State and Federal relief and work relief rolls. A representative of the Mormon church called on President Roosevelt and the President wrote a memorandum to Mr. Hopkins commending the proposal of the Mormon Church.

Mr. Hopkins had me write a report. After some weeks of investigation I reported that the plan proposed by the Mormons was conceived in antagonism to the New Deal and that it was at that time purely a paper affair.

The reactionary press of the country took up the report of the proposals with great gusto. Hundreds of newspaper and magazine articles were written extolling the virtues of the program and in many cases pointing out that Mr. Hopkins should learn from the Mormons about how to handle relief. Mr. Hopkins frequently referred such statements to me and finally, following a long editorial in the New York Herald Tribune extolling the Mormons and depreciating the Government Works Program, he wrote me a memorandum and asked me if something couldn't be done about it. I took the matter up with Mr. Hinckley, who also had been annoyed at the misrepresentations and the use the reactionary press was making of these misrepresentations, and we decided that the W.P.A. should make an investigation itself in order to have the facts.

We tried to obtain the help of several able people but in each case we were unsuccessful owing to the fact that most of the men we wanted to hire were engaged in university work and could not leave for a relatively short job. Mr. Reid Baine, Professor of Sociology in Ohio, was the first who was asked. Then Professor Dangerfield of Oklahoma, a former resident of Utah, was asked and

Memo. to Mr. Raush

March 25, 1939

expressed willingness but the President of his University would not let him go. After consultation with Howard Myers and several other people in the Administration, including Leon Henderson, we decided to ask Professor Louis I. Firth, of the Department of Sociology of the University of Chicago, if he would supervise such a study. Nels Anderson was able to convince him that he should.

In order to keep the Administration record clear I explained the whole problem to Aubrey Williams and received his permission to go ahead. In the meantime, however, Mr. Williams was replaced by Colonel Harrington. I therefore explained the matter to Colonel Harrington in a memorandum which was presented to him by Mr. Niles and received his approval.

Professor Firth's appointment was effective January 3, 1939, and at his request a Mr. Louis E. Bosch, an expert from the American Public Welfare Association in Chicago, was also employed for seven days to make a survey in order to determine a plan for the study. Besides travel costs he was paid \$46.66 and then terminated. Professor Firth was very much gratified by the report turned in by this man.

Upon the recommendation of Professor Firth the following assistants were hired:

Abram J. Jaffe

Appointment effective:	January 11, 1939
Length of service:	Temporary - four months.
Title:	Research Assistant
Salary:	\$1440
Division:	6-C

Felix E. Moore, Jr.

Appointment effective:	January 23, 1939.
Length of service:	Temporary - four months.
Title:	Clerk
Salary:	\$1440
Division:	6-C

Memo. to Mr. Rauch

March 28, 1939

Arnold M. Ross

Appointment effective:	February 1, 1939.
Length of service:	Regular appointment
Title:	Underclerk
Salary:	\$3.50 WAE
Division:	6-C

Professor Wirth was averse to paying high wages to these people in spite of their qualifications and it was necessary therefore to classify them as clerks and as research assistant in order to pay the salaries he proposed. The qualifications of these men are to be found on their personal history blanks, and aside from the fact that one of the best sociologists in the world selected them, show that they are qualified people.

It is a pertinent fact that Professor Wirth is limited to ten days a month for three months but that during the first month he did not charge us anything for his organization of the study and the hiring of the people, and that so far he has put in claim for only a few days. He is, in my opinion, overly conscientious in his claims for time. He has made two trips to Washington. This has been the main expense so far as he is concerned.

It might well be asked why this study was not done by our Social Research organization instead of having it done by setting up a special project. Had we done it ourselves and then published the results the value, however accurate the findings, would have been lessened by the fact that we were ex parte students of the problem. When it is finished it will have the stamp of approval of one of the best departments, in one of the best universities in the world. It will be done much cheaper than we could have done it ourselves. The only possible disadvantage I can see in the method we have used arises out of the fact that Professor Wirth may submerge the Mormon program in the study of other factors affecting the relief requirements in the state of Utah. However, the only way we could obtain his services was by telling him that we would not control or direct his activities other than present the problem to him. He felt that in a case of this kind he had his professional standing at stake and that

that he would have to make an objective study in his own way. Mr. Gill and Mr. Myers are going to cooperate in gathering some of the data necessary to complete his study. Final arrangements on this will be made this week.

I call your attention to the fact that Professor Wirth was limited to three months. However, owing to the fact that he did not get started immediately and owing to the fact that the expense of his employment is relatively trivial, I am asking that his appointment be extended immediately for another three months. I shall have to ask later for the appointments of the other three to be extended.

I originally estimated that the total cost of this study would be under \$5,000; it will not be nearly that much. So far as I can tell, the expenses of these four people will not be over \$3,500.

If there are any other aspects of this research study or any details which I have not made clear I shall be glad to clarify them.

I might add that Professor Wirth hopes to make this study a sample which may be used by any sociologists in making comparable studies in other states. Professor Rogin made a similar study of Wyoming, the cost of which I do not know but my guess is that it was at least five times that of the study now being conducted in Utah. Mr. Gill will be able to tell you something about the Wyoming study. Professor Rogin is now back at his work in the University of California at Berkeley.

DRB/ec

CHAPTER I  
DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS

Growth

The great trek of the Mormon pioneers from Illinois to Utah took place during the 1840's. In 1850 Utah was organized as a territory, and in 1896 it was admitted to the Union as the 45th state.

As can be seen from table 1, there has been a steady increase in population since the first census in 1850. Numerically the greatest increase was registered during the first decade of the twentieth century. Before 1900 there had been an increasingly greater numerical increase from one census period to the next. Since 1910 there has been an increasingly smaller increase from one census period to the next. Evidently, then, the period of greatest growth is over; future increase may be small, both numerically and proportionally.

In comparison with the other selected western states it will be seen that about all of them except California reached their peak numerical growth between the decade 1900-1910. California, like the Nation, showed the greatest numerical increase in the decade 1920-1930. Apparently, then, those social problems related to a rapidly growing population should be less severe in Utah than in California or the Nation, other factors being equal.

Salt Lake City, like Utah, has grown steadily since the census of 1860. Its period of greatest numerical growth was also between 1900 and 1910, although it did not reach the 100,000 class until 1920. Ogden, the second largest city, entered the urban classification in 1870 and since then has grown proportionally, about as fast as Salt Lake City. Provo, the third largest city, entered the urban classification in 1880, and since then has grown comparatively little; in 1930 it was only about one-third

TABLE 1

TOTAL POPULATION IN CENSUS YEAR, AND PERCENTAGE INCREASE OVER PRECEDING CENSUS, UTAH,  
SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1850-1930<sup>a</sup>

Population (in thousands)											
Year	Utah				California	Nevada	Idaho	Montana	Colorado	Wyoming	United States
	State Total	Salt Lake City	Ogden	Provo							
Population											
1930	507.8	140.3	40.3	14.8	5,677.3	91.1	445.0	537.6	1,035.8	225.6	122,775
1920	449.4	118.1	32.8	10.3	3,426.9	77.4	431.9	548.9	939.6	194.4	105,711
1910	373.4	92.8	25.6	8.9	2,377.5	81.9	325.6	376.1	799.0	146.0	91,972
1900	276.7	53.5	16.3	6.2	1,485.1	42.3	161.8	243.3	539.7	92.5	75,995
1890	210.8	44.8	14.9	5.2	1,213.4	47.4	88.5	142.9	413.2	62.6	62,948
1880	144.0	20.8	6.1	3.4	864.7	62.3	32.6	39.2	194.3	20.8	50,156
1870	86.8	12.9	3.1	2.4	560.2	42.5	15.0	20.6	39.9	9.1	38,558
1860	40.3	8.2	1.5	2.0	380.0	6.9	.....	.....	34.3	.....	31,443
1850	11.4	.....	.....	.....	92.6 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	23,191
Increase over preceding census period (per cent)											
1930	13.0	18.8	22.8	43.3	65.7	17.6	3.0	- 2.1	10.2	16.0	16.1
1920	20.4	27.3	28.2	15.4	44.1	- 5.5	32.6	46.0	17.6	33.2	14.9
1910	34.9	73.3	56.8	44.3	60.1	93.4	101.3	54.5	48.0	57.7	21.0
1900	31.3	19.4	9.6	19.9	22.4	-10.6	82.7	70.3	30.6	47.9	20.7
1890	46.4	115.9	145.3	50.3	40.3	-23.9	171.5	265.0	112.7	200.9	25.5
1880	65.9	61.6	94.1	44.0	54.3	46.5	117.4	90.1	387.5	128.0	30.1
1870	115.5	56.1	113.6	17.4	47.4	519.7	.....	.....	16.3	.....	22.6
1860	253.9	.....	.....	.....	310.4 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	35.6
1850	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	35.9

<sup>a</sup>Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population, Vol. I, p. 1097, 1930.

<sup>b</sup>Data incomplete.

the size of Ogden, and one-tenth the size of Salt Lake City.

#### Urban- Rural Distribution

In 1930 the proportion urban in Utah was almost the same as for the Nation, 52 as compared to 56 per cent. Of the other states used for comparative purposes, Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, and Nevada are still predominantly rural. Colorado is just half urban whereas California is about three-fourths urban. In 1920 the proportion urban in Utah was about the same as in the other states. California had a higher proportion, Colorado about the same as Utah, and the other states all had lesser percentages. (See table 2) Insofar, then, as increased relief needs and costs during the depression are associated with increased urbanism, Utah would appear to be worse off than the other selected Western states with the exception of California and perhaps Colorado, and about on a par with the average for the Nation.

TABLE 2

NUMBER AND PERCENT OF POPULATION, URBAN AND RURAL, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES AND THE UNITED STATES, 1920-1930

Year	Utah	California	Nevada	Idaho	Montana	Colorado	Wyoming	United States <sup>a</sup>
1930								
Urban	266,264	4,160,596	54,464	129,507	161,036	519,802	70,097	68,955
Percent	52.4	73.3	37.8	29.1	33.7	50.2	31.1	56.2
Rural	241,583	1,516,655	56,594	515,525	356,570	515,909	15,468	53,820
Percent	47.6	26.7	62.2	70.9	66.3	49.8	68.9	43.8
1920								
Urban	215,584	2,331,729	15,254	119,037	172,011	453,259	57,348	54,305
Percent	48.0	68.0	19.7	27.6	31.3	48.2	29.5	51.4
Rural	233,812	1,095,132	62,153	312,829	376,878	486,370	137,054	51,406
Percent	52.0	32.0	80.3	72.4	68.7	51.8	70.5	48.6

<sup>a</sup>In thousands.

Source: Bureau of the Census, Population (1930), pp. 14-15.

### Age and Sex Composition

The productive portion of a population consists for the most part of the males aged 20-54. Hence, the age and sex composition of a population will influence its productive capacity. Everything else being equal that population which has the greatest proportion of its population in the most productive age and sex groups, will be the best off economically.

Youth.--Utah has a greater proportion of its population under 15 years of age, and also under 20 years of age, than any of the other selected Western states (1930). Since 1920 there has been some slight decrease in these proportions, but not enough to affect materially the age distribution. (See table 3) For the entire state in 1930, 46 per cent of the total population was under 20 years of age. In the selected Mormon counties the figure was 50 per cent, and in the selected non-Mormon counties it was equal to the state average. (Salt Lake County is treated separately) The other states with the exception of Idaho (which contains a large proportion of Mormons) had a little over one-third of their populations in this young age group.

Old.--Since 1920 Utah has had an increase in the proportion of persons over 55 years of age, and in the proportion over 65 years of age (the Old Age Pension limit). Nevertheless Utah still has a lesser proportion of old persons than any of the other states, with the exception of Wyoming. It should also be noticed that the Mormon counties had a larger proportion of older persons than the non-Mormon counties, in 1930.

Ratio of middle aged to young and old.--One way of expressing the relationship of the non-productive to the productive portions of the population is by using the ratio of these under 20 years of age to those 20-54, and those over 55 years of age to those 20-54. (These three age groups will be called, respectively, young, middle aged, and old.)

For Utah the ratio of young to middle aged persons has decreased between





1920 and 1930. Even so, in 1930 the state had a much larger ratio than any of the other states; and the Mormon counties a higher ratio than the non-Mormon.

The ratio of old to middle aged increased between 1920 and 1930. But still, Utah had a smaller proportion of old persons per 100 persons in the most productive age groups, than any other state with the exception of Wyoming. As was the case with the young people, the Mormon counties had a larger ratio of old to middle aged, than did the non-Mormon counties.

By adding these two ratios it is possible to obtain one figure which represents the number of persons in the least productive age groups per 100 in the most productive. When this is done it is found that Utah has a much higher ratio of least productive persons than any of the other states; Idaho is the only state which anywhere nearly approximates Utah (1930). Within Utah the Mormon counties have a much higher ratio of least to most productive age groups than do the non-Mormon counties.

Sex ratio.--Between 1920 and 1930 there was a considerable reduction in the number of males per 100 females. This reduction was more marked in the adult population than in the total population. This is to be expected, since in the population under 15 years of age there should normally be but a very slight preponderance of males.

The sex ratio of the population over 15 years of age in Utah (1930) was lower than that of the other states (table 3) with the exception of Colorado, with which it was equal, and higher than the average for the Nation. About the same differentials exist for the most productive age group, 20-54. Evidently, then, insofar as a higher sex ratio is associated with a larger number of gainfully occupied, and presumably a higher economic position, all other things being equal, Utah is better off than the Nation, about as well off as Colorado, and worse off than the other states.

Ratio of consumption to production units.--Another way of summarizing

the age and sex composition of a population is to apply different weights to the various age and sex groups. Thompson and Whelpton have presented such a set of weights which measure roughly the consumption and economic production capacities of given age and sex groups. These standard weights when applied to a given population thus summarize it in terms of the number of consumption units per unit of economic production.

In both 1920 and 1930 the state of Utah had 1.76 consumption units to each unit of production. This figure is considerably higher than that in any other state, or in the Nation. Thus, although Utah has a relatively smaller dependent old group than the other states, the dependent young group is relatively much larger, and sex ratio is lower. Hence the higher ratio of consumption to production units.

A comparison of the Mormon and non-Mormon counties in Utah in 1930 reveals that the former have a higher ratio than the latter. That of the non-Mormons is about equal to that of the state as a whole, but that of the Mormon counties is considerably above the state figure. (Table 4)

TABLE 4

RATIO OF PRODUCTION TO CONSUMPTION UNITS, UTAH (1920 and 1930),  
SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES; 1930

	Utah		Cal.	Nev.	Idaho	Mont.	Col.	Wyo.	United States
	1920	1930	1930	1930	1930	1930	1930	1930	1930
State	1.76	1.76	1.56	1.50	1.66	1.63	1.67	1.52	1.67
Salt Lake City	1.68	1.66	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Urban (excluding Salt Lake City)	1.76	1.77	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Rural Non-Farm	1.79	1.72	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Rural Farm	1.85	1.90	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Mormon Counties	....	1.86	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Non-Mormon Counties	..	1.74	....	....	....	....	....	....	....

Summary.--All other factors being equal that population which has the maximum proportion of its population in the economically most productive age

and sex groups will be least in need of financial assistance. The data here brought forth reveal that Utah has a larger proportion of dependent elements in its population than the other states or the Nation. Hence, even though it were affected by the depression no more than the other states, or no more than the average for the Nation, (other factors being equal) it would still be in need of larger public (or private) financial assistance than the other states.

#### Vital Statistics

For relief as well as demographic purposes these data are of great importance. A high birth rate, all other factors being equal, means a higher relief cost as well as an increase in population. It means the costs of hospitalization and medical attention have to be included, as well as the obvious increase in the number of dependents. Conversely, a low birth rate implies less necessity for medical attention, and fewer dependents. In specific cases, as is well known to social workers, the absence of births in a given family allows that family to remain off the relief rolls. Other families have had to go on relief because of pregnancies.

Birth rates.--For the entire state the gross reproduction rate appears to have been fairly constant until just after the turn of the century, when it began to decline. Due to the fact the mortality appears to have decreased about as fast as the gross reproduction rate, the net reproduction rate remained fairly constant between the period 1890 to 1920. Indeed, it may even have increased between 1890 and 1900. However, even though the deaths rate continued to decrease between 1920 and 1930 it decreased less than the gross reproduction rate so that the net reproduction rate fell about 12 per cent. Nevertheless, even in 1930 this rate was sufficiently high that within a generation Utah would increase its population by 50 per cent. As can be seen from table 5, this rate is far higher than that of any of the other states, or of the Nation as a whole.

TABLE 5

SELECTED VITAL STATISTICS RATES, UTAH, OTHER WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1920 AND 1930

	Utah							Cal.	Nev.	Idaho	Mont.	Col.	Wyo.	United States
	State	Urban (Excl. Salt Lake City)			Rural Non-Farm	Mormon Counties	Non-Mormon Counties							
		Salt Lake City	Salt Lake City	Rural Non-Farm										
1930														
Net Reproduction Rate	1.50	.98	1.43	1.79	1.79	1.84	1.60	.86	.96	1.37	1.21	1.21	1.25	1.08
True Rate of Increase (per 1,000)	14.3	-0.7	12.6	20.4	20.6	21.6	16.6	-5.3	-1.4	11.1	6.7	6.7	7.9	2.7
Crude Birth Rate	25.0	22.5 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	28.6	27.3	15.1	16.8	22.9	20.0	22.0	22.4	18.9
Crude Death Rate	9.6	10.7	.....	.....	.....	8.8	9.2	11.7	13.6	9.2	10.2	12.4	9.0	11.0
Crude Rate of Increase	16.4	11.8	.....	.....	.....	19.8	18.1	3.4	3.2	13.7	9.8	9.6	13.4	7.9
Standardized Death Rate <sup>a</sup>	9.8	..... <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	9.9	11.1	8.7	9.5	11.3	9.4	10.0
Infant Mortality Rate <sup>b</sup>	56.0	50.9 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	57.3	61.4	59.4	69.9	56.1	61.0	88.9	68.8	64.6
1920														
Net Reproduction Rate	1.70	1.17	1.64	2.06	2.24	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1.17
True Rate of Increase (per 1,000)	18.8	5.5	17.5	25.7	28.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	5.5
Crude Birth Rate	34.5	27.4 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	39.1	37.3	25.9	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	23.7
Crude Death Rate	11.1	12.4	.....	.....	.....	10.3	10.4	13.7	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	13.0
Crude Rate of Increase	23.4	15.0	.....	.....	.....	28.8	26.9	12.2	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10.7
Standardized Death Rate	.....	..... <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Infant Mortality Rate	71.8	75.5 <sup>b</sup>	.....	.....	.....	68.0	73.0	70.4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	82.3

<sup>a</sup>Whites only, Dublin Lotka, p. 80.<sup>b</sup>Salt Lake County

The crude birth rate (which is simply the number of births per 1,000 population) is also much higher in Utah than in the other states or the Nation. For relief purposes this rate is better than the more refined measures of reproduction used previously, for it tells directly the number of new dependents which are annually added to the population.

Within Utah itself, as is to be expected, the rural-farm areas have the highest reproduction rates, and the urban areas the lowest.

In regard to the Mormon and non-Mormon counties (1930) it is evident that the reproduction rate, no matter how measured, is higher among the former than the latter. (See table 5)

Death rates.--The crude death rate in Utah in 1930 was lower than that of the Nation and 4 of the 6 states, and only the very least bit higher than the rates of Idaho and Wyoming. If the population be standardized so as to eliminate discrepancies due to the age and sex composition, it is found that Utah is average as compared to the other selected western states, and just about on a level with the Nation as a whole. (1930). (Table 5)

Rates of natural increase.--As can be readily seen, the true rate of natural increase is higher for Utah than for any of the other states or the Nation. Within Utah the rural farm area had the highest rate and the urban the lowest. In regard to the Mormon and non-Mormon counties, the former have the higher annual true rate of natural increase, just as they had the higher net reproduction rate.

For relief purposes over a short time period, however, the annual net number of dependents added to the population is of prime importance. A state may have a true rate of natural decrease and yet have a surplus of births over deaths. Conversely, a state may have a true rate of natural increase and yet have a surplus of deaths over births. Hence, the crude rates of natural increase are of great importance.

Due to its higher birth rate and lower death rate, Utah has a higher

crude rate of natural increase than any other state, or the Nation. Within Utah the Mormon counties have a slightly higher rate than the non-Mormon counties.

Insofar, then, as the needs for relief are greater in an increasing population, Utah is in greater need of financial assistance, all other factors being constant, than any of the other states, or of the Nation.

Infant mortality.--This is sometimes considered an index of the plane of living -- the lower the infant mortality rate the higher the plane of living. It also is an index of the extent of hospital and medical facilities. Utah has lower infant mortality rates than any of the other states. (This is of great interest in view of the fact that it has the highest birth rate -- usually associated with high infant mortality.) Insofar as this rate means that the population in Utah is used to and expects more and better medical attention for mothers and infants, it becomes an important problem from the relief viewpoint, for medical attention implies the expenditure of funds above what is needed for the minimum subsistence budget.

Vital statistics during the depression.--Exact data are not available for determining birth rates, death rates, and rates of natural increase accurately since 1930. The only data which are available are the reported number of births, deaths, and infant deaths for each year, and the estimated population for 1935 (estimated on the basis of the L. D. S. church census).

On the basis of these data the following rates were computed for 1935:

	Crude birth rate	Crude death rate	Crude rate of natural increase	Infant mortality rate
State	25.9	9.2	14.7	49.3
Mormon Counties	27.7	8.7	19.0	48.3
Non-Mormon Counties	23.3	8.5	14.8	54.1
Salt Lake County	20.5	10.1	10.4	47.2

Apparently there was little change in the Mormon counties between 1930 and 1935 (see table 5). The non-Mormon counties and Salt Lake County,

especially the former, showed a decided drop in the birth, death and increase rates between these two periods. The infant mortality rates declined generally throughout the state.

#### Internal Migration

The subject of internal migration is important from at least two aspects. First, migration generally takes place from areas of lower economic well being to those of higher economic status. A state which has attracted large numbers of migrants is generally a prosperous state. Second, the exporting of population, particularly if it is of young people just out of school, may mean an actual economic loss to the exporting state, and an actual economic gain to the importing state. As long as education is paid for by the individual state, every educated youth who leaves his home state and then makes no cash remittances represents that much of an economic loss to his home state.

Up until 1890 Utah was predominantly an importing state, as can be seen from table 6. During the next couple of decades the numbers of persons

TABLE 6

NET GAIN (+) OR LOSS (-) THROUGH INTERSTATE MIGRATION OF  
NATIVE BORN, UTAH AND SELECTED WESTERN STATES, 1910-1930

State	1930	1920	1910
Utah	- 63,869	- 20,833	- 1,259
California	+ 2,404,288	+ 1,222,727	+ 762,625
Nevada	+ 16,950	+ 12,263	+ 20,943
Colorado	+ 261,448	+ 336,213	+ 340,446
Wyoming	+ 73,144	+ 84,272	+ 64,972
Idaho	+ 105,314	+ 178,235	+ 157,900
Montana	+ 112,762	+ 207,182	+ 144,933

reported as born in Utah and living outside the state were about equal to the numbers reported as living in Utah but born in other states. Since



1910 each census has reported an increasingly larger number of Utah-born persons living outside Utah, than those born in other states and living in Utah. In other words, Utah is no longer attractive to outsiders, and cannot offer sufficient inducements to its native population to keep them within the state.

In contrast all of the other western states are still attracting more migrants than they are sending forth. From these figures it is possible to assume that these other states still offer some opportunities and inducements to migrants -- opportunities and inducements which Utah can no longer offer.

Age and sex of migrants.--It is possible to compute the net migration from Utah between 1920 and 1930 by age and sex of migrants. This is done by aging the 1920 population in specific age and sex group, 10 years. (These numbers of expected survivors are now compared with the numbers as reported in the 1930 census. Where there are more expected survivors than observed, net migration in that particular age and sex group has taken place.) This process can be applied to the various age groups between the limits of 10 and 74.

When this method is applied it is seen that there has been a net migration from Utah in all of the age groups for both sexes, during the period 1920-1930. Perhaps only in the oldest groups did no net migration take place, although data for such are unavailable.

As previous studies have generally shown, the heaviest migration is that of young persons. If the net migration from Utah be expressed as a percentage of the expected number in each age and sex group, it will be seen that the greatest proportion of migration took place between the ages 20-34. Secondary peaks appear at age groups 45-49, and 55-59. Net migration away from Utah took place in all age and sex groups, but was proportionally greater

among the young people, particularly those out of school for only a short while. (See table 7)

TABLE 7  
NET MIGRATION TO (+) OR FROM (-) SPECIFIED AREAS OF UTAH,  
BY AGE AND SEX, 1920-1930

Age and Sex	State	Urban (excluding Salt Lake City)			Rural-Farm		
		Salt Lake City	Salt Lake City	Rural Non-Farm	Number	As Percentage of Survivors	
<b>Males</b>							
10-14	- 571	+ 415	+ 1,065	+ 219	- 2,270	- 23	
15-19	- 1,506	+ 238	+ 668	- 22	- 2,390	- 26	
20-24	- 2,679	+ 872	- 12	+ 518	- 3,857	- 44	
25-29	- 2,614	+ 579	- 73	+ 1,083	- 4,205	- 58	
30-34	- 1,250	+ 257	+ 273	+ 746	- 2,328	- 49	
35-44	- 912	- 100	+ 797	+ 459	- 2,059	- 29	
45-54	- 1,237	- 323	+ 308	+ 97	- 1,319	- 25	
55-64	- 1,171	- 496	+ 81	+ 287	- 1,043	- 27	
65-74	+ 59	- 16	+ 136	+ 321	- 352	- 23	
<b>Females</b>							
10-14	- 179	+ 647	+ 1,246	+ 355	- 2,427	- 26	
15-19	- 1,556	+ 992	+ 835	+ 37	- 3,220	- 36	
20-24	- 2,290	+ 1,684	+ 324	+ 572	- 4,870	- 57	
25-29	- 3,024	+ 496	- 140	+ 634	- 4,014	- 61	
30-34	- 2,143	- 380	- 3	+ 227	- 1,992	- 44	
35-44	- 1,659	- 480	+ 613	+ 40	- 1,852	- 28	
45-54	- 1,442	- 365	+ 233	+ 187	- 1,497	- 30	
55-64	- 816	- 271	+ 174	+ 370	- 1,089	- 35	
65-74	- 107	+ 23	+ 81	+ 320	- 531	- 42	

Of this net migration from Utah, practically all came from the rural farm areas. In the age groups between the years 20 and 34 about half or more of the total rural farm population emigrated. In the age groups under 20 and over 35 from one-quarter to one-third of the total populations emigrated. Some additional net emigration came from the older age groups in Salt Lake City. This emigration, however, constituted but a small proportion of the total emigration from the state. (See table 7)

Movement within Utah.--An examination of the data suggests that persons

from the rural farm areas moved in large numbers to the rural non-farm and the urban areas of Utah. From the non-farming areas there was no net migration in the younger age groups, and relatively little in the older groups. This would appear to indicate that non-farming activities in Utah during the 1920's were able to absorb some of the surplus population available in the rural farm areas. These rural farm areas, however, were flooding over faster than the non-farming areas could absorb them, so that net migration from the state as a whole had to take place.

Data are not available for determining directly the emigration from Mormon and non-Mormon counties. From other data however, it is possible to infer that migration was heaviest from the Mormon counties. This can be shown as follows. The crude rate of increase was higher in the Mormon than the non-Mormon counties in both 1920 and 1930. During this 10-year period, however, the Mormon counties increased their total population only 6 per cent whereas the population in the non-Mormon counties increased 12 per cent. Evidently, then, a larger proportion of the Mormons migrated.

Summary.--In comparison with other states Utah is sending out more native born migrants than it receives from other states. Within the state itself the greatest emigration of native born has come from the rural-farm areas. A comparison of the Mormon and non-Mormon counties suggests that the former have sent out more migrants than the latter.

Migration during the depression.--Until the 1940 U. S. census appears it will be impossible to estimate correctly the net migration from Utah during the depression. Other data are available, however, for allowing some estimates for the period 1930-35. Nelson and Hettig<sup>1</sup> present the estimated

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<sup>1</sup>Nelson and Hettig, "Some Changes in the Population of Utah as Indicated by the Annual L.D.S. Church Census, 1929-33."

population in each county as of 1935. (These figures are based on changes in the enumerated membership of the L.D.S. church).

The percentage changes from 1930 to 1935 are as follows:

	Increase
State	8.7
Mormon Counties	8.4
Non-Mormon Counties	10.3
Salt Lake County	8.0

The non-Mormon counties appear to have increased more than the Mormon, yet the latter have a somewhat higher crude rate of natural increase. Apparently, then, one of two things happened. Either there was a greater exodus from the Mormon counties, or a greater influx into the non-Mormon counties. In either case, the non-Mormon counties should represent a greater relief problem, all other factors being equal.

Between 1920 and 1930 the percentage changes in the total populations were as follows:

	Increase
State	13.0
Mormon Counties	5.9
Non-Mormon Counties	12.0
Salt Lake County	21.9

Evidently, then, since the increase in a five-year period was proportionally greater than in the preceding ten-year period, emigration from the state as a whole was considerably blocked during the period 1930-35. In particular it was actually most blocked in the non-Mormon counties. However, in relation to the period 1920-1930, it would appear that the greatest proportional blockage was in the Mormon counties. During the 10-year period 1920-30 they increased 5.9 per cent, and during the 5-year period 1930-35, 8.4 per cent, or more than double the average annual rate of the previous decade.

From these data it would appear that the Mormon counties showed a

greater change in their migration pattern during the depression than did the non-Mormon counties. Nevertheless, the former continued to send out more migrants (or receive fewer immigrants) than did the latter.

Additional information is available from the 1935 U. S. Census of Agriculture. In this census all persons living on farms were questioned as to their farm or non-farm residence in 1930. It is thus possible to obtain the numbers of persons living on non-farm territory in 1930, who lived on farms in 1935. These figures can then be expressed as ratios of the total rural farm population in 1930.

If this is done the following numbers of migrants to farm territory per 1,000 rural-farm population in 1930, are obtained.

State	86
Mormon Counties	65
Non-Mormon Counties	89
Salt Lake County	186

This evidence would suggest that there has been a greater back-to-the-farm movement in the non-Mormon counties than in the Mormon.

Insofar as back-to-the-land movements are associated with relief problem areas, the non-Mormon counties would apparently represent the greater relief problems, all other factors being equal, of course.

## CHAPTER II

### EDUCATION

The problem of schooling and education is highly important from the relief viewpoint, for several reasons. First, from the strictly economic viewpoint, students in school represent an unproductive portion of the population. Second, not only do they not produce, but they consume goods which have to be supplied by the producing section of the population. Third, in addition to the costs of maintaining them in the role of non-producers, money has to be expended on the school system. Fourth, as far as the immediate relief problems are concerned, every dollar spent on education means that much less cash to spend on relief; to pay the relief burden without decreasing the cost of education means an added tax burden. And it is just when relief is most needed that the ability to pay taxes is at a minimum.

#### The School Population

Size of the school population.--Data are available in the decennial U.S. Census reports for determining the numbers and proportions of the populations at various age groups which are in school. (See table 8) In 1950 Utah had a larger proportion of its population aged 5 to 20 in school than the Nation or any of the other states, except California. In 1920 all of the states here studied, and the Nation as a whole, had somewhat smaller proportions of this age group in school; indeed, at that date Utah had a larger proportion in school than did California.

The age group 18 to 20 consists of college students for the most part. In this age group, about one-third of the number in Utah were in school in 1950, a figure equalled only by that of California. In 1920 about one-fourth of the Utah population in this age group were in school, a figure higher than that of any of the other states or the Nation.

Within the state of Utah there appears to be little difference between

PROPORTION OF POPULATION ATTENDING SCHOOL, BY AGE AND SEX, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES,  
AND THE UNITED STATES: 1920 AND 1930

	Utah							Colorado	Wyoming	Idaho	Montana	California	Nevada	United States
	State Total	Salt Lake City	Urban (Excl. Salt Lake City)	Rural Non-Farm	Rural Farm	Mormon Coun-ties	Non-Mormon Coun-ties							
1930														
Total														
5	10.2	.....	.....	3.8	2.7	.....	.....	19.8	12.9	3.0	7.9	39.6	17.5	20.0
6	63.8	.....	.....	58.9	57.2	.....	.....	70.9	71.1	59.8	67.2	81.7	70.8	66.3
5-6	37.1	58.0	30.2	31.5	30.4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	43.2
7-13	97.9	97.1	97.7	98.3	97.9	98.4	97.3	96.8	98.0	97.9	97.4	97.6	95.7	95.3
14-15	97.1	98.1	97.8	96.4	96.1	96.8	95.8	90.3	93.0	94.1	92.9	97.2	93.6	88.8
16-17	80.9	82.6	82.7	78.4	80.0	81.0	76.9	63.2	68.4	72.3	67.9	82.1	75.7	57.3
18-20	32.7	33.1	35.0	28.9	33.9	36.5	27.6	28.4	26.5	32.9	29.6	32.7	31.2	21.4
5-20	76.8	78.1	76.9	75.6	76.9	.....	.....	73.2	73.7	75.0	74.6	78.5	74.7	69.9
7-20	83.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	84.7	81.5	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Males														
5-20	77.1	79.5	77.5	76.0	75.8	.....	.....	73.0	72.2	74.2	73.1	78.8	74.0	70.2
Females														
5-20	76.5	76.7	76.2	75.1	78.1	.....	.....	73.3	75.3	75.9	76.2	78.2	75.3	69.7
1920														
Total														
5	8.4	.....	.....	3.5	.....	.....	.....	20.2	14.1	7.7	15.6	27.5	17.3	18.8
6	65.5	.....	.....	63.9	.....	.....	.....	72.3	72.3	67.7	71.2	73.0	65.0	63.3
5-6	.....	47.3	35.1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	41.0
7-13	95.5	95.7	96.0	95.3	.....	96.3	94.0	93.9	92.8	95.5	92.8	93.7	90.5	90.6
14-15	93.7	92.6	95.2	93.6	.....	94.5	92.7	86.2	86.2	91.6	89.1	89.1	88.8	79.9
16-17	71.4	63.9	77.9	71.9	.....	75.5	69.8	53.2	52.6	62.3	58.3	54.7	61.4	42.9
18-20	24.7	23.6	26.9	24.4	.....	28.9	20.1	20.2	16.4	22.3	21.2	21.9	22.0	14.8
5-20	73.0	72.2	74.4	72.9	.....	.....	.....	69.6	67.9	71.8	70.5	69.5	68.4	64.3
7-20	79.3	.....	.....	.....	.....	81.7	77.4	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Males														
5-20	73.3	73.5	74.8	72.6	.....	.....	.....	68.7	66.0	71.0	69.6	68.8	66.4	64.1
Females														
5-20	72.8	71.0	74.0	73.1	.....	.....	.....	70.5	69.9	72.7	71.4	70.3	70.5	64.5

the urban and rural sections. Schooling facilities are not concentrated in Salt Lake City to the detriment of the rural areas. When the Mormon and non-Mormon counties are compared, however, the former are found to have a higher proportion than the latter of the age group 7 to 20 in school. This was true in both 1920 and 1930.

In regard to the education of boys and girls there appears to be little if any difference, in Utah. It might be thought that with the Mormon emphasis on motherhood for all women, the schooling of girls would be more neglected than that of boys. From historical data and from the data here presented it is obvious that such is not the case, however.

Ratio of school to non-school population.--In the section on demography it was pointed out that Utah had a larger proportion of young people than the other states. In this section it has been shown that Utah has about the highest proportion of its young people in school. The question may now be raised as to the ratio of students to the economically productive part of the population.

There are available two measures of the size of the economic producer group. One is the male population 20 to 54 years of age; the other is the number 10 years of age and over who are gainfully occupied. In both 1920 and 1930 Utah had a much larger number of students (between the ages of 5 and 20) per 100 males aged 20-54, or per 100 gainfully occupied, than any other state, or the Nation. This means, all other things being equal, that the economic pressure on each producer in Utah is far greater than in the other states. California, for example, had a larger proportion of its young people in school (in 1930) than did Utah. At the same time, however, it had only half as many students per 100 producers as did Utah. Under such conditions the economic burden is much less severe upon the California adult than upon the one from Utah. (See table 9)

Within Utah, the greatest burden is upon the rural farm population, and the least upon that of Salt Lake City. Comparison of the Mormon and non-Mormon counties reveals the former to have a heavier burden than the latter.



TABLE 9

RATIO OF SCHOOL POPULATION AGED 5-20 YEARS, TO SELECTED AGE GROUPS IN THE TOTAL POPULATION, UTAH,  
SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1920 AND 1930

	Utah								Col.	Wo.	Idaho	Mont.	Mal.	Nev.	United States
	State	Salt Lake City	Urban (Excl.)		Rural Non-Farm	Rural Farm	Non-Mormon								
			Salt Lake City	Rural			Coun-ties	Coun-ties							
1930															
Students per 100 males, 20-54 years	122	102	121	122	157	141 <sup>a</sup>	105 <sup>a</sup>	91	78	105	86	67	57	...	
Students per 100 gainfully occupied 10 years and over	83	64	83	90	106	97 <sup>a</sup>	74 <sup>a</sup>	58	56	71	59	44	40	...	
1920															
Students per 100 males, 20-54 years	112	88	116		123 <sup>b</sup>	...	...	79	62	92	72	57	45	...	
Students per 100 gainfully occupied 10 years and over	78	57	...	...	...	...	...	53	47	67	53	38	34	...	

<sup>a</sup> School population, 7-20 years

<sup>b</sup> Total rural

## Financial Aspects

Cost of public elementary and high school education.--Data are available for estimating the cost of public primary and secondary education. In Utah in 1910 the average annual expenditure per pupil was about \$33 as compared to \$24 for the Nation. In 1930 the expenditure had risen to \$84 per pupil in Utah and \$90 in the Nation.

Because of changes in the price level through time, comparisons of actual monetary figures are perhaps more significant as between several areas at a given date, than between two dates. Hence, let us examine the 1910 and the 1930 data separately. At the early date Utah was midway (3 states spending more and 3 less) between the other states in dollars expended per pupil, and above the Nation. In 1920 only one state was spending less. In 1930 Utah had the smallest expenditure per student; California and Nevada spent almost twice as much. (See table 10)

TABLE 10

AVERAGE EXPENDITURE PER PUPIL ENROLLED IN PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE  
UNITED STATES; 1910-1936

Year	Utah	Montana	Idaho	Wyoming	Colorado	Nevada	California	United States
Average Expenditures per Pupil Enrolled in Public Schools								
1936	\$74	\$98	\$72	\$92	\$78	\$133	\$134	\$74
1934	57	75	57	79	71	112	111	65
1932	66	99	72	102	96	123	133	82
1930	84	114	85	119	102	153	138	90
1928	78	110	87	115	104	131	144	87
1920	70	96	75	87	60	98	70	48
1910	33	40	29	32	31	61	49	24
Expenditures per Gainfully Occupied Person								
1930	30	31	30	36	29	36	31	23

If the expenditure per gainfully occupied person (1930) is calculated, it is found that Utah and 4 of the other states spend about \$30 per gainfully

occupied person. The other two (Wyoming and Nevada) spend \$36 per gainfully occupied person. Evidently, then, the producing population in Utah is exerting itself about as much as those in the other states, and above that of the Nation. But because of the much larger proportion of students in Utah, each student can receive but a minimum.

Ability to pay for schooling.--A study made in 1935 compares Utah with the other states and the Nation.<sup>1</sup> On the basis of this study it can be seen that in 1935 Utah had the largest percentage of its population in the age group 6-17 years of any of the states or the Nation. Conversely, the ratio of the population 21 years of age and over to this age group was the lowest.

Two indexes of the ability to pay are the tangible wealth per school child, and the annual income per school child. According to both of these indexes Utah is worse off than the other states or the Nation; it has less tangible wealth and less income per pupil. Following from this (and in agreement with the data in table 10) the expenditure per average daily attendance at school (as well as per pupil) is lower in Utah than in the other states or the Nation.

An important point in school finance is the proportion of the total income spent on schooling. From the data collected by this Utah study it can be seen that California spends a larger proportion of its income on schooling than does Utah. Of the other states and the Nation, only Montana spends as much, all the others spending less. If the relation of school expenditure to tangible wealth be calculated, California again appears to spend more than Utah. Between Utah and the other states and the Nation there appears to be rather small difference. (See table 11)

The question may be asked whether Utah makes a greater or lesser effort to pay for schooling than do the other states or the Nation. If all the states had the same per capita wealth (or income), and the same proportion of their

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<sup>1</sup>State of Utah, Investigating Committee of Utah Governmental Units, School Finance Study, Public Document No. 37, series of July 1, 1934 to June 30, 1936.

TABLE 11

FINANCIAL STATUS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1935<sup>a</sup>

	Utah	California	Colorado	Idaho	Montana	Nevada	Wyoming	United States
Per cent of population 6-17 years of age	27.8	18.5	23.2	26.4	24.4	19.2	23.5	23.7
Number of persons 21 and over per child 6-17 years	1.9	3.7	2.6	2.1	2.4	3.5	2.5	2.3
Tangible wealth per child 6-17 years	\$8,460	\$10,780	\$10,360	\$10,360	\$13,400	\$23,580	\$14,450	\$8,370
Income per child 6-17 years	1,230	2,190	1,980	1,530	1,840	2,850	2,290	1,660
Student expenditure per average daily attendance	73	155	119	85	110	149	122	97
Outlay and expenditure per student	66	133	96	72	99	123	102	82
Outstanding indebtedness per student	86	181	131	81	92	116	133	119
Value of school property per student	244	391	255	185	274	312	270	250
School expenses per teacher, principal, and supervisor	2,250	3,840	2,420	1,880	1,930	2,730	2,090	2,480
Value of school property per teacher, principal, and supervisor	8,370	11,250	6,450	2,810	5,550	6,930	5,520	7,550
Number of students per teacher, principal and supervisor	34	29	25	26	20	22	20	31
Ratio of outlay and expenditure per student to income per child 6-17 years of age	.054	.061	.049	.047	.054	.043	.044	.050
Ratio of outlay and expenditure per student to tangible wealth per child 6-17 years of age	.008	.012	.009	.007	.007	.005	.007	.010
Index of "effort to pay" based on tangible wealth	1.00	1.66	1.34	.95	.96	.73	.97	1.54
Index of "effort to pay" based on income	1.00	1.19	1.01	.92	1.00	.88	.89	.99
Average salary of teachers, principals and supervisors	1,070	1,900	1,170	790	940	1,320	970	1,420

<sup>a</sup>Based on data presented in the Utah Educational Study, presumably referring to 1935.

population as Utah in the age group 5-17, how much would each state then spend on each school child within this age group? If we now construct an index in which the ability of Utah to pay (in terms of tangible wealth) is set equal to 1.00, we find that only one state, Nevada, makes a considerably less effort to supply schooling than does Utah. The Nation and California and Colorado make more strenuous efforts, and the other states about the same. If a similar index is constructed on the basis of income Utah appears to all in the center as far as effort to pay is concerned. California makes a greater effort, two of the states and the Nation as great, and three of the states less of an effort.

In summary, then, on the basis of the data presented in this special report<sup>2</sup> Utah does not appear to be unduly extreme in its efforts to provide schooling facilities for its young people. Indeed, it is fairly close to the average of the Nation. (See table 11)

Other finances.--On the basis of data presented in this study referred to above, Utah appears not to have gone into debt to pay for its schooling relative to the other states. All of them (with the exception of Idaho) and the Nation have a higher indebtedness, per student than does Utah. (See table 11) This is quite evidently related to the value of school property, for Utah has a smaller value of school property per student, than any of the other states, except Idaho, or the Nation.

This lower indebtedness implies relatively smaller interest and principal payments, and perhaps relatively smaller bankruptcy. Hence, relatively greater amounts of money are available for other, including relief, purposes, all other factors being equal.

If school expenses and value of property be expressed as the average per teacher, principal, and supervisor, Utah would appear to be midway between the other states and the Nation. (See table 11) Indeed, the average value of Utah school property is the highest, next to California. This situation arises,

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<sup>2</sup>Op. cit.

however, only through the fact that Utah has a far higher number of pupils per teacher than do the other states or the Nation. This may or may not be an indication of inferior teaching; it may simply represent the consolidation of individual small schools, and the consequently greater teaching efficiency.

Insofar as teacher's salaries are an indication of the quality of the teaching, Utah would appear to be at about the center (3 states paying more and 3 less) and slightly less than the Nation.

In connection with this above discussion, one important factor must be borne in mind. Much of the financial analysis was based on the Utah report put out by the Investigating Committee of Utah Governmental Units. Hence, this analysis can be no more accurate than the data reported. Our opinion, in reading through this report, is that it does not appear too highly reliable for our purpose. It may be sufficiently good for the purpose for which it was prepared, but from our viewpoint it appears deficient. We have no way of checking up on it directly, but the following considerations seem relevant; (1) no basic data are reported; (2) the tables are set up sloppily so that interpretation is not instantly clear; (3) few, if any, sources of data are given; (4) definitions of terms are not always given.

#### Other Aspects<sup>5</sup>

Ratio of students in public primary and secondary schools to population of school age.--According to these data Utah (in 1920, 1930, 1932, 1934, 1936) had a larger proportion of its population aged 5-17 years in school than the Nation as a whole. However, it had less than any other western state with the exception of Montana. These data lead to a conclusion exactly the reverse of that which follows from the data presented in table 8, which was based on U.S. Census of Population Data. Evidently Utah, if it does differ from the other western states, differs very slightly. That it has a larger proportion in school than the Nation is borne out by both sets of data, and is, therefore,

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<sup>5</sup> All data taken from U.S. Biennial Survey of Education.

probably significant. (See table 12)

Length of the school year.--The school year is somewhat longer in Utah than in the Nation. It is equalled by two of the other states, however, and is greater than four of them. In terms of average daily attendance (as a percentage of the total enrolled population) Utah is also at the top of the list. However, it should be pointed out that the basic data are so poor that slight differences are probably due more to errors in the data than to actual differences in the populations being studied. (See table 12)

Increases since 1920 in both the length of the school year and the average daily attendance are apparent from the data in table 12. This implies increasing costs for schooling during the past two and one-half decades.

Students per teacher.--It was pointed out previously that Utah has a higher number of pupils per teacher than any other western state, or the Nation. Insofar as the data from the Census of Population and the Census of Education are in agreement, this can probably be accepted as a fact. In all of the states and in the Nation the number of pupils per teacher has been decreasing since 1910. This, although it may mean better teaching, also means higher teaching costs.

Teachers' salaries.--Utah has always been (since 1920) at about the center in regard to its payments to teachers. In comparison with the Nation it paid higher salaries in 1920, but lower ones in 1930 and 1936. (See table 12)

High school attendance.--High school attendance is important in that the costs per high school student are greater than the costs per pupil in the primary grades. Hence, a relatively larger high school attendance implies higher school costs, with consequently less money for relief and other purposes. In relation to its elementary school population Utah has a larger high school attendance than any of the other states, or the Nation. This was true in both 1930 and 1936. (See table 12)

It will be recalled that Utah had a lower per student expenditure than any of the other states, and since it has a higher proportion of high school

TABLE 12

SELECTED TABLES ON EDUCATION, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES,  
AND THE UNITED STATES, 1910-1936

Year	Utah	Montana	Idaho	Wyoming	Colorado	Nevada	California	United States
Students per teacher in public elementary and secondary schools								
1936	32	21	27	21	27	22	27	30
1934	36	21	27	22	27	22	29	31
1932	34	20	26	20	25	22	29	30
1930	31	19	27	20	25	23	29	30
1928	34	19	26	17	24	21	29	30
1920	30	18	29	19	30	20	36	32
1910	39	39	34	22	33	21	32	34
Average annual salary (teachers, supervisors, and principals)								
1936	1,180	1,070	940	1,020	1,250	1,520	1,780	1,280
1934	1,090	960	790	970	1,170	1,320	1,900	1,250
1932	1,240	1,180	1,170	1,250	1,390	1,480	2,190	1,420
1930	1,330	1,220	1,200	1,240	1,450	1,480	2,120	1,420
1928	1,300	1,140	1,160	1,150	1,450	1,500	2,180	1,560
1920	990	960	930	870	930	1,160	1,270	870
1910 <sup>a</sup>	.....							
Ratio of pupils in elementary to pupils in secondary schools								
1936	2.5	2.5	2.7	2.8	3.4	3.0	2.7	3.4
1930	3.2	3.8	3.5	3.9	4.6	3.8	3.6	4.8
Ratio of pupils enrolled in public schools to population 5-17 years								
1936	88	82	95	94	91	8	99	83
1934	91	83	92	93	90	98	90	82
1932	90	84	93	96	94	94	94	82
1930	90	85	95	94	92	95	94	81
1928 <sup>a</sup>								
1920	87	92	95	92	95	92	8	78
1910	84	81	88	80	90	74	79	73
Average number of days of attendance per pupil per year								
1936	155	156	145	146	132	147	156	146
1934	153	164	144	150	148	147	156	146
1932	148	156	144	148	144	145	154	145
1930	151	152	132	141	143	149	152	143
1928	142	152	141	126	139	142	153	140
1920	139.7	121	127	117	114	126	120	121
1910	125	116	91	102	99	106	142	113
Average daily attendance as per cent of total enrollment								
1936	89	89	84	83	78	84	88	85
1934	89	90	88	84	82	84	88	85
1932	90	90	86	84	81	83	86	85
1930	87	88	81	83	79	83	85	83
1928	87	86	79	73	78	85	84	82
1920	83	73	74	77	68	75	69	75
1910	76	63	67	68	64	73	78	72

<sup>a</sup> Not reported.

\* Over 100



students, and since the costs of high school instruction are higher than those of primary school education, it would seem that education in Utah may be inferior to that in other states. At least as far as monetary expenditures are an index of the grade of schooling, this would appear to be the case.

#### College Attendance

Data are available from both the U.S. Census of Population and the Census of Education for determining the status of college attendance. According to data from the former source Utah and California had the same proportion of their male population aged 18-24 in school. The other states and the Nation had lesser percentages. Insofar as this age group includes mainly college students, it can be said that these two states have a larger proportion of college students than do the other states. (See table 13)

The college attendance data in the Survey of Education cannot very well be related to any specific age group in the population. However, the number of college students can be expressed in relation to the number of high school students, and the index so constructed can be used as an index of college attendance. Such an index shows that Utah (in 1930) had a lower ratio of high school to college students than the other states with the exception of Nevada and California; and about the same ratio as that of the Nation.

By 1934 only California had more college students per high school student than Utah. It will be recalled that Utah had more students in high school in relation to the number in primary schools (as determined from the Survey of Education data); here it appears to be near the top in college attendance. From this it would appear that Utah has a greater school attendance than the Nation or the other states, with the exception of California and possibly Nevada.

The age composition of the base population is very important in an analysis of this sort. Utah may have had a larger proportion of high school and college students only because it had a larger proportion of its population in these

TABLE 15

SELECTED DATA ON COLLEGE ATTENDANCE, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES,  
AND THE UNITED STATES

Item	Utah	Idaho	Nevada	Wyoming	California	Montana	Colorado	United States
Percentage of male population aged 18-24 at school, 1930								
Percent at school	21.0	18.9	17.0	15.8	20.5	16.0	17.6	18.8
Per cent gainfully occupied, not attending school	72.2	75.8	78.3	81.5	74.5	78.0	75.8	80.4
Per cent not gainfully occupied and not attending school	6.8	5.3	4.7	4.7	5.0	6.0	6.6	5.8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
High school students per college student								
1934	4.6	7.6	4.7	11.8	4.0	9.1	5.5	6.2
1932	4.7	7.5	4.3	9.6	3.7	8.0	4.7	5.2
1930	4.7	9.1	3.6	9.5	3.9	7.7	4.9	4.8
1928	3.4	7.3	2.8	6.4	4.0	7.4	4.0	3.9
1920	7.1	9.3	4.2	10.6	5.0	10.3	6.1	4.4
1910	4.7	4.5	2.3	4.0	3.9	5.9	3.1	3.1
Library volumes per college student, 1930								
	37	41	48	64	39	79	61	48
Value of libraries and scientific apparatus per college student, 1930								
	\$220	\$220	\$390	\$450	\$220	\$300	\$340	\$260

age groups which furnish the student population. (For thoroughly checking this point data would be needed giving age by type of school attendance. These data are not now available). Whether this be true or not, however, the fact remains that more education means greater financial expense.

Equipment of the colleges.--From the little data available it would appear that the Utah colleges are not quite so well equipped as are the colleges in the other states. The number of volumes in college libraries per student was about the lowest in Utah (in 1930) of ~~any~~ of the states or the Nation. If the value of the libraries and scientific apparatus per student be calculated, Utah again is found to have about the lowest value of any of the states or the Nation. (See table 13)

#### Education in the Depression

(To be analysed in connection with the economic and church data.)

#### Summary

The following conclusions appear to be borne out by our analysis.

1. A larger proportion of the total population in Utah than in the other western states or the Nation is in the school ages. Hence, the ratio of school children to gainfully occupied, or to the adult population, is higher in Utah than in the other states or the Nation.

2. Of those in the school ages, about as large a proportion are attending school in Utah as in any of the other regions used for comparative purposes. Utah does not appear to have a significantly greater proportion in school; what differences exist are so slight as to be almost negligible.

3. The school expenditures, when measured in terms of per gainfully occupied person, are higher in Utah than the Nation, but not higher than in the other western states. When measured in terms of the proportion of the income spent on schools, California spends a greater portion of its income on education than does Utah; Montana spends as much; the other states and the Nation, a little less.

4. Following from points 1, 2, and 3 above, expenditures per student in Utah are the lowest of any of the western states or the Nation.

5. Although Utah has a relatively greater number of children to educate than the other states, it compensates for this by spending less on each student. The net result is that Utah is not straining excessively to support its school population.

## CHAPTER III

### ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

#### Part I

##### Industrial and Occupational Characteristics

Fundamental to all relief problems is, by definition, the economic problem. There are, however, at least two aspects which can be taken so as to produce two different relief problems. One is the straight forward case in which the unemployed person who must be taken care of, has relatively few dependents. The other is the case in which the unemployed person has a large number of dependents all of whom must be taken care of. The actual relief, or rehabilitation situation, is further complicated by the fact that in the first instance a relatively large number of persons per unit of total population have to become re-employed, whereas in the second situation only relatively few jobs, per unit of total population, have to be found for the unemployed.

##### Characteristics of the Gainfully Occupied

Proportion gainfully occupied<sup>1</sup>--Table 14 shows the percentages of the total population, and of the population 10 years of age and over, gainfully occupied. As is known Utah was settled to a large extent, by a family migration. Further, the birth rate was quite high so that a large proportion of the population consisted of children. Some of the other states as Wyoming or Montana, on the other hand, were settled by single men attracted by the mining and ranching opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup>The term "gainfully occupied" should not be confused with the term "employed and at work." Any person either employed or seeking work fits the census definition of gainfully occupied.

TABLE 14<sup>a</sup>

PERCENTAGE GAINFULLY OCCUPIED OF THE TOTAL POPULATION, AND OF THE  
POPULATION TEN YEARS OF AGE AND OVER, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN  
STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES<sup>a</sup>

State	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890	1880	1870
Per cent of total population gainfully occupied							
Utah	33.5	33.2	35.2	30.6	32.8	27.8	24.8
Salt Lake City	38.5	38.9	40.7	34.2	.....	.....	.....
Montana	40.3	39.0	47.5	47.2	54.7	56.8	68.2
Idaho	36.5	35.5	40.3	38.7	42.0	47.8	72.5
Wyoming	41.0	41.9	50.4	47.8	50.8	42.7	72.9
Colorado	38.9	39.0	42.4	40.4	46.7	52.1	44.1
Nevada	47.1	48.5	54.9	46.8	51.2	51.8	63.3
California	44.0	44.1	48.6	43.4	45.1	43.5	42.6
United States	39.8	39.4	41.5	38.3	37.2	34.7	32.4
Per cent of the population 10 and over gainfully occupied							
Utah	44.0	45.0	47.9	43.0	46.3	41.2	38.1
Salt Lake City	48.0	49.3	51.3	45.1	.....	.....	.....
Montana	49.8	50.8	58.9	59.9	67.1	69.6	77.3
Idaho	46.5	47.1	52.6	52.3	56.5	62.3	62.5
Wyoming	51.7	54.0	62.6	61.4	64.5	53.9	82.5
Colorado	48.2	49.0	52.9	51.3	58.7	64.0	57.9
Nevada	56.4	58.8	64.3	56.7	61.3	63.6	73.4
California	52.0	52.7	55.2	52.7	55.0	55.3	55.4
United States	49.5	50.3	53.3	50.2	49.2	47.3	44.3

<sup>a</sup>Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Population (1930) Vol. IV, table 14.

Thus it is that from 1870 to about 1910 Utah had a far smaller percentage of its total population gainfully occupied than did any of the other western states. In comparison with the U. S. it also had a lesser percentage, but the differences were not as great. Since 1920 there appears to be a tendency for Utah to approach more closely the other states. If the birth rate should fall, in the future, more in Utah than the other states, the differences will become even smaller. This, however, does not appear to be an immediate possibility.

If the population 10 years of age and over is considered, the same differences are observed; Utah has a lower proportion in that group than the other states, or the Nation.

In terms of relief this means that the average amount of relief per unemployed person must be higher in Utah, all other things being equal, since the average Utah gainfully occupied person has a larger number of dependents.

Within Utah, Salt Lake City is better off than the rest of the state. Since relief costs are probably higher in this city than in the other parts of the state, however, this feature of a larger proportion of gainfully occupied, may not mean much.

Child labor.--Children 10 to 15 years of age constitute but a small proportion of the total labor supply. Nevertheless, a high proportion of gainfully occupied children between these ages generally implies a relatively low standard of living, greater poverty, and less schooling. In relation to the other western states Utah has had about the average proportion of child labor; in comparison with the Nation it always has had considerably less. (Table 15) It is also apparent that the males have afforded a greater proportion of the child labor in Utah and the other western states than in the Nation.

The abolition of child labor in the near future would mean an increased dependent burden for the Nation, whereas the situation in Utah and the other

states would remain practically unchanged.

Of course, insofar as children constitute unpaid family labor in agriculture there always will be child labor.

TABLE 15

PROPORTION OF CHILDREN AGES 10 TO 15 GAINFULLY OCCUPIED, BY SEX, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1900-1930

Year	Utah									United States
	State Total	Salt Lake City	Montana	Idaho	Wyoming	Colorado	Nevade	California		
1930	Male	3.1	2.0	3.3	3.1	3.7	4.8	3.0	1.8	6.4
	Female	.5	.6	.6	.4	1.0	1.4	.4	.4	2.9
	Total	1.8	1.3	2.0	1.8	2.4	3.1	1.7	1.1	4.7
1920	Male	7.0	5.6	3.8	5.1	4.9	6.9	3.9	4.7	11.3
	Female	.8	1.3	.8	.7	1.0	1.8	1.0	1.2	5.6
	Total	3.9	3.5	2.3	2.9	3.0	4.3	2.5	3.0	8.5
1910	Male	11.8	6.6	8.1	12.4	11.6	11.2	7.8	8.1	24.8
	Female	1.8	2.8	1.8	1.4	1.8	2.9	1.8	2.6	11.9
	Total	6.8	4.7	5.0	7.1	6.8	7.1	4.9	5.4	18.4
1900	Male	...	...	...	...	...	....	...	...	....
	Female	...	...	...	....	...	...	...	...	....
	Total	6.3	6.7	5.3	7.6	9.8	6.0	5.3	6.1	18.2

The family.--To a large extent relief is centered about the family unit. Hence, it is of interest to observe two factors regarding the family, the number of gainful workers per family, and the proportion of married women gainfully employed. Of the various western states, Utah has the highest per cent of families having 2 or more gainful workers, although the percentage for the Nation as a whole is above that of Utah. Insofar as this means "unemployment insurance" (having more than one gainful worker per family), Utah would apparently be somewhat better off, other things being equal. The evidence is not clear, however, that relatively more gainful workers mean greater family security.<sup>2</sup>

(Table 16)

<sup>2</sup>See Lazarsfeld quoted in the Family in the Depression.



TABLE 16

NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES ACCORDING TO NUMBER OF MEMBERS GAINFULLY OCCUPIED,  
UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1930<sup>a</sup>

	Utah					
	State Total	Urban	Salt Lake City	Urban (excl. Salt Lake City)	Rural Farm	Rural Non-Farm
All families	115,936	63,985	34,410	29,575	21,191	30,760
Families having:						
No gainful workers	7,338	4,480	2,193	2,287	415	2,445
1 gainful worker	77,392	41,638	22,007	19,631	13,912	21,842
2 gainful workers	21,186	12,337	7,048	5,289	4,314	4,535
3 gainful workers	7,193	4,018	2,302	1,716	1,738	1,457
4 or more gainful workers	2,827	1,512	860	652	812	503
Per cent of families having:						
No gainful workers	6.3	7.0	6.4	7.7	2.0	7.9
1 gainful worker	66.8	65.1	64.0	66.4	65.7	71.0
2 gainful workers	18.3	19.3	20.5	17.9	20.4	14.7
3 gainful workers	6.2	6.3	6.7	5.8	8.2	4.7
4 or more gainful workers	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.2	3.8	1.6
2 or more gainful workers	26.9	28.0	29.7	25.9	32.4	21.0

Within Utah the largest percentage of families with 2 or more gainful workers are found in the rural-farm areas, where the wives probably work on the family farms, and in Salt Lake City, where they probably work away from the home for cash. In the first instance the family sinks or swims together; in the second, two gainful workers may mean twice as good a chance to stay off the relief rolls.

Turning to the question of the occupational status of married women, it can be seen (table 17) that Utah has had (since 1890) a smaller proportion of its married women gainfully occupied than the other western states or the Nation. Also, of all gainfully occupied women (in 1920 and 1930) Utah had the smallest proportion who were married.

TABLE 17

MARITAL STATUS OF GAINFULLY OCCUPIED WOMEN, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE UNITED STATES: 1890-1930<sup>a</sup>

Year	Utah	Mont.	Idaho	Wo.	Col.	Nev.	Cal.	United States
Per cent of Married Women 15 and over Gainfully Occupied								
1930	6.9	9.0	8.3	10.3	11.5	13.0	15.5	11.7
1920	4.5	6.0	5.2	7.0	7.4	10.0	10.0	9.0
1910	5.3	6.6	6.1	6.9	7.6	11.7	8.1	10.7
1900	3.7	4.5	3.4	3.9	4.8	8.3	4.7	5.6
1890	2.7	4.2	3.2	3.0	4.0	5.4	3.9	4.6
Per cent of Gainfully Occupied Women 15 and Over who are Married								
1930	23.9	30.3	34.3	38.1	32.1	40.4	35.8	28.9
1920	17.4	23.1	25.3	28.5	23.3	33.3	25.7	23.0

<sup>a</sup>Source: Bureau of the Census, Population (1930) Vol. IV. Tables 13 and 14 (various states). Intro. table 25, p. 68 (U. S.)

It will be recalled that in the extent of child labor Utah was in the center of the other western states. In terms of the proportion of married

women employed it is lowest. But in terms of the proportion of families having more than one gainful worker, it was highest. Evidently, then, there must be a relatively large number of gainfully occupied young people living with their families; that is, persons probably finished with school but not yet married and established in their own homes. If this is the case, the addition of these persons to the various family units may not be the "relief insurance" that they would appear to be. For, what data are available suggest that these young people had relatively greater difficulty than older workers in getting jobs during the depression.<sup>3</sup>

It is also possible that these additional workers per Utah family may be old persons living with their married children. But these old persons, like the youth, were the ones who apparently had the most trouble getting jobs during the depression.

In summary then, the relief problem would tend to be aggravated in Utah by the fact that it has larger size families than the other states or the Nation. (Table 18) This larger size, in turn, does not appear to be compensated for greatly by the fact that a larger proportion of the Utah families had more than one gainful worker.

TABLE 18  
 MEDIAN SIZE OF FAMILY, UTAH, SELECTED WESTERN STATES, AND THE  
 UNITED STATES: 1930

Utah	Montana	Idaho	Wyoming	Colorado	Nevada	California	United States
3.86	3.16	3.47	3.18	3.17	2.50	2.77	3.40

Age and sex composition of the gainfully occupied.--Generally men get paid more than women. Hence it is of interest to see what proportion of the

<sup>3</sup>The Family in the Depression.

total gainfully occupied are males. In four of the states males constituted a larger proportion of the total gainfully occupied population than in Utah. Colorado and California are the two states which have a smaller proportion of males. The Nation, like these two states, also has a smaller proportion of males than Utah (1930). Other things being equal, then, this factor of the sex composition would place Utah in about the center position in comparison with the other western states, and show it to be somewhat better off than the Nation. The same situation was apparently true in the earlier census periods also.

(Table 19)

It was pointed out above that Utah had a smaller proportion of its total male population 10 years of age and over gainfully occupied, than the other states or the Nation. This was true not only in 1930, but also for previous census dates. The question may be raised as to whether this indicates a relatively large number of retired persons, is indicative of a "lazy" attitude on the part of the people so that they do not want to work, or whether it is simply due to the age composition of the populations. This question can be answered by calculating standardized rates for the various states. Standardized rates for the males (1930) were calculated. These rates reveal practically no difference between Utah and the other states or the Nation. (The small differences observed may be due as much to errors in the data as to true differences.) In other words, there is a lesser proportion of the Utah population gainfully occupied only because of the "unfavorable" age composition in that state.

#### Classification by Broad Occupational Groups

Industrio-occupational classification.--The U. S. Census of Population publishes the occupational data in what it terms "general divisions of occupations." This is an industrial as much as an occupational classification, and hence throws some light on both subjects.

In 1930 agriculture was the leading industry in Utah, (in terms of

TABLE 16 (CONT.)

Montana	Idaho	Wyoming	Colorado	Nevada	California	United States
136,210	108,044	56,887	267,324	25,469	1,610,030	29,904,663
7,075	5,735	2,489	19,782	1,704	152,572	1,803,871
97,013	75,524	41,594	176,720	18,710	1,039,611	18,568,705
23,394	19,574	9,590	51,304	3,865	319,224	6,321,816
6,316	5,400	2,366	14,232	888	73,851	2,140,386
2,412	1,811	848	5,286	302	24,772	1,069,885
5.2	5.3	4.4	7.4	6.7	9.5	6.0
71.2	69.9	73.1	66.1	73.5	64.6	62.1
17.2	18.1	16.9	19.2	15.2	19.8	21.1
4.6	5.0	4.2	5.3	3.5	4.6	7.2
1.8	1.7	1.5	2.0	1.2	1.5	3.6
23.6	24.3	22.6	26.5	19.9	25.9	31.9

<sup>a</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census, Population (1930), Vol. IV, pp. 1337-38 and table 11 (various states).



numbers of employees) followed by manufacturing, trade, and transportation. In the Nation, manufacturing industries had the largest proportion of the gainfully occupied, followed by agriculture, trade and transportation. In both Utah and the Nation mining had the smallest proportion of gainfully occupied, next to public service. When Utah is compared with the other western states it is found that agriculture is the leading industry in all of them except California (where manufacturing is the leading industry).

Insofar as there have been differentials in the effects of the depression on the various "general divisions of occupations" Utah should have fared somewhat differently during the 30's, from the other states, or the Nation. Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming had almost half of their gainfully occupied in the two groups, agriculture and mining, which may have been about the hardest hit by the depression. Utah had about one-third of its gainfully occupied in these two groups. In the various white collar "consumers jobs" which may have been hit somewhat less hard by the depression<sup>4</sup>, Utah has a somewhat larger proportion of its 1930 gainfully occupied population, than the four states, Montana, Idaho, Nevada and Wyoming. In comparison with the other two states of Colorado and California, Utah has relatively more white collar workers than the former, and less than the latter. (See table 20)

Trends in the industrio-occupational distribution.--In Utah, since 1910, agriculture and mining have been decreasing in importance; trade, the professional services, and the clerical occupations have been increasing. There has been almost no change in manufacturing, transportation, public service, and domestic and personal service. Approximately the same pattern is found in California. In all of the other states agriculture has increased in importance between 1910 and 1930. Presumably, then, their relief and rehabilitation problems would be somewhat different from those of Utah.

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<sup>4</sup>The Family in the Depression, p. 30.

TABLE

## PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE FULLY OCCUPIED PERSONS BY BROAD OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS IN SELECTED WESTERN STATES AND THE UNITED STATES: 1910-1930

Occupational Group												
	Total population	Agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry	Extraction of minerals	Manufacturing and mechanical	Transportation	Trade	Public Services	Professional service	Domestic and personal service	Clerical occupations		
Utah	1930	100	24.4	6.2	21.7	9.1	13.6	1.9	8.0	8.1	7.7	15.7
	1920	100	29.0	6.8	22.5	8.3	21.1	1.5	6.7	6.8	7.1	13.8
	1910	100	28.4	7.6	25.6	10.4	18.9	1.6	6.1	8.2	4.9	11.8
Mont.	1930	100	37.9	5.9	15.8	8.3	9.6	1.5	5.9	8.0	4.9	12.5
	1920	100	39.7	7.8	15.2	8.8	9.0	1.4	5.9	7.3	4.9	10.8
	1910	100	30.8	10.9	18.8	13.4	7.4	1.5	4.4	9.7	3.1	7.5
Idaho	1930	100	43.8	3.4	16.4	7.1	10.3	1.1	7.0	6.8	4.1	11.1
	1920	100	47.5	3.3	16.0	7.3	9.0	1.1	5.8	6.0	4.0	9.8
	1910	100	44.3	5.1	17.6	9.0	8.1	1.9	5.2	7.1	2.5	7.9
Wyo.	1930	100	34.2	6.8	16.4	10.6	8.4	2.3	7.0	8.0	4.4	11.4
	1920	100	31.9	10.8	18.8	12.1	7.5	1.9	5.1	7.5	4.3	9.4
	1910	100	34.2	10.9	14.9	14.7	5.3	6.2	4.0	7.6	2.2	6.2
	1930	100	26.6	4.3	19.0	8.7	13.6	1.7	8.3	10.2	7.5	15.8
	1920	100	27.3	6.4	20.2	8.8	12.5	1.9	6.8	9.0	7.1	13.9
	1910	100	25.3	8.4	22.2	9.3	11.6	1.3	5.3	10.5	5.0	11.3
Nev.	1930	100	21.1	11.7	18.6	13.7	10.1	1.5	7.3	10.9	5.2	12.5
	1920	100	22.9	16.5	19.1	11.5	7.5	1.6	6.8	10.0	4.6	10.9
	1910	100	19.5	21.9	16.9	11.4	7.6	1.4	5.6	12.7	3.0	8.6
Cal.	1930	100	13.8	1.6	25.5	8.0	17.5	3.4	9.4	11.8	10.1	19.5
	1920	100	18.0	1.6	28.5	8.3	13.8	3.0	7.7	10.2	8.8	16.3
	1910	100	20.3	2.8	26.3	9.4	13.7	2.2	5.7	12.7	6.1	12.5
U.S.	1930	100	21.9	2.0	28.9	7.9	12.5	1.8	5.7	10.1	8.2	14.9
	1920	100	26.3	2.6	30.8	7.4	10.2	1.9	5.2	8.2	7.5	12.7
	1910	100	23.2	2.5	27.8	6.8	9.5	1.2	4.4	9.9	4.6	9.0



TABLE 20 (CONT.)

State	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910	1930	1920	1910
Utah	100	100	100	28.7	25.5	22.3	7.4	7.9	8.9	24.5	24.5	10.0	18.9	10.6	2.1	5.4	4.0	5.1	100	100	100
State	100	100	100	28.7	25.5	22.3	7.4	7.9	8.9	24.5	24.5	10.0	18.9	10.6	2.1	5.4	4.0	5.1	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	22.3	25.5	22.3	8.9	8.9	24.5	24.5	10.5	9.8	2.1	4.2	4.2	4.2	5.8	5.8	100	100	100
Salt Lake City	100	100	100	2.2	4.2	1.8	2.2	2.5	3.0	30.2	32.1	12.4	22.0	19.8	5.2	7.9	7.4	7.0	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	2.2	4.2	1.8	2.2	2.5	3.0	30.2	32.1	12.4	22.0	19.8	5.2	7.9	7.4	7.0	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	4.2	4.2	1.8	2.5	2.5	3.0	32.1	32.1	12.8	19.8	5.5	5.5	7.4	6.5	6.5	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	1.8	4.2	1.8	3.0	3.0	33.9	33.9	15.3	15.3	18.9	7.1	7.1	7.4	7.4	10.9	100	100	100
Mont.	100	100	100	43.4	44.5	35.3	8.1	9.0	12.1	17.6	16.7	9.7	9.4	8.8	1.6	5.5	3.5	3.5	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	43.4	44.5	35.3	8.1	9.0	12.1	17.6	16.7	9.7	9.4	8.8	1.6	5.5	3.5	3.5	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	44.5	35.3	35.3	9.0	12.1	14.8	16.7	19.9	14.8	7.4	1.4	2.9	5.5	5.5	5.5	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	35.3	35.3	35.3	12.1	14.8	14.8	19.9	19.9	14.8	7.4	1.6	2.9	5.5	5.5	5.5	100	100	100
Idaho	100	100	100	49.7	52.6	47.8	4.0	5.8	5.7	18.2	17.1	7.7	9.8	8.7	1.0	4.0	3.0	3.1	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	49.7	52.6	47.8	4.0	5.8	5.7	18.2	17.1	7.7	9.8	8.7	1.0	4.0	3.0	3.1	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	52.6	47.8	47.8	5.8	5.8	5.7	17.1	18.4	7.8	8.7	1.0	4.0	3.5	3.1	2.5	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	47.8	47.8	47.8	5.7	5.7	5.7	18.4	18.4	9.7	8.1	.9	.9	3.6	3.8	1.9	100	100	100
Wyo.	100	100	100	38.4	35.0	36.4	7.9	12.2	11.4	18.6	20.7	15.9	8.2	7.4	4.9	3.7	3.5	2.9	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	38.4	35.0	36.4	7.9	12.2	11.4	18.6	20.7	15.9	8.2	7.4	4.9	3.7	3.5	2.9	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	35.0	36.4	36.4	12.2	11.4	15.9	20.7	15.9	15.9	5.5	6.6	2.6	2.6	4.2	1.8	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	36.4	36.4	36.4	11.4	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	15.9	5.5	6.6	2.6	2.6	4.2	1.8	100	100	100
Col.	100	100	100	32.1	31.9	28.6	5.4	7.7	9.9	22.0	22.3	10.8	14.1	12.9	2.2	5.2	4.1	4.4	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	32.1	31.9	28.6	5.4	7.7	9.9	22.0	22.3	10.8	14.1	12.9	2.2	5.2	4.1	4.4	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	31.9	28.6	28.6	7.7	9.9	9.9	22.3	25.9	10.8	12.9	2.2	2.2	4.1	4.4	4.7	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	28.6	28.6	28.6	9.9	9.9	9.9	25.9	25.9	10.8	12.9	2.2	2.2	4.1	4.4	4.7	100	100	100
NeV.	100	100	100	23.9	25.3	21.1	13.5	18.6	24.2	21.1	20.8	15.4	9.8	7.4	1.6	5.0	6.3	3.4	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	23.9	25.3	21.1	13.5	18.6	24.2	21.1	20.8	15.4	9.8	7.4	1.6	5.0	6.3	3.4	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	25.3	21.1	21.1	18.6	24.2	17.9	20.8	17.9	12.5	7.4	1.6	1.6	4.4	6.1	3.3	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	21.1	21.1	21.1	24.2	17.9	17.9	17.9	17.9	12.4	7.7	1.5	1.5	4.4	8.4	2.4	100	100	100
Cal.	100	100	100	17.2	21.4	23.3	2.0	2.0	3.4	29.7	31.7	9.4	18.3	14.1	3.0	6.8	7.1	6.4	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	17.2	21.4	23.3	2.0	2.0	3.4	29.7	31.7	9.4	18.3	14.1	3.0	6.8	7.1	6.4	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	21.4	23.3	23.3	2.0	2.0	3.4	31.7	28.2	10.7	14.3	5.6	5.6	5.3	6.4	6.0	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	23.3	23.3	23.3	3.4	3.4	3.4	28.2	28.2	10.7	14.3	2.6	2.6	4.4	8.4	4.7	100	100	100
U.S.	100	100	100	25.8	29.8	36.1	2.6	3.3	3.2	32.1	32.9	8.4	13.4	10.8	2.2	4.5	4.7	5.4	100	100	100
1930	100	100	100	25.8	29.8	36.1	2.6	3.3	3.2	32.1	32.9	8.4	13.4	10.8	2.2	4.5	4.7	5.4	100	100	100
1920	100	100	100	29.8	36.1	36.1	3.3	3.3	3.2	32.9	29.4	8.6	10.8	2.3	3.4	3.7	3.7	5.1	100	100	100
1910	100	100	100	36.1	36.1	36.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	29.4	29.4	8.4	10.5	1.5	3.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	100	100	100



Social-economic distribution of gainful workers.--This classification follows Edward's scheme. It attempts to classify the various occupations into a six-fold order in which the jobs with most prestige and which pay about the most money, are at the top. Conversely, those with least prestige and paying the least money are at the bottom.

In general, the non-agricultural white collar persons suffered the least during the depression, and the manual workers the most.<sup>5</sup> Farm laborers were hit about as hard as the non-agricultural manual laborers; farm operators were somewhat better off, but not as well off as the white collar workers. Hence, an examination of the 1930 social-economic distribution of the male population in Utah, should give some idea of the "vulnerability" of that state.

Of the western states, California had the largest proportion (of these states) of its gainfully occupied males in white collar, non-agricultural jobs. Utah, Colorado, and Nevada and the Nation had about the same proportion, and Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, the least. Evidently, then, California was best "situated" to withstand the depression, other things being equal, and Utah was about as well able as the Nation, and more able than the last three mentioned states above. Among the females about the same proportion is found in this occupational classification in all the states. (Table 21)

In general, these expectations are in accordance with the previous discussion in regard to the industry-occupational analysis.

#### Summary

On the basis of the above the following factors would appear to be relevant.

1. Utah has a smaller proportion of its population gainfully occupied; hence, on the average more persons need relief per unemployed than in the Nation or the other western states.
2. The standardized percentage of males 10 years of age and over

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<sup>5</sup>P.M. Hauser in Monthly Report FERA, April 1 through April 30, 1936, p.18

TABLE 21

## PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF GAINFULLY OCCUPIED PERSONS BY SEX, AND BY SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP, 1930

Socio-Economic Group	Utah	Mont.	Idaho	Wo.	Col.	Nev.	Cal.	U. S.
<b>Males - Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional persons	4.8	3.0	3.4	3.0	4.4	4.3	5.7	3.9
Proprietors, managers and officials	25.6	33.0	35.5	27.4	27.2	18.5	17.5	24.1
Farmers (owners and tenants)	17.1	25.0	28.0	19.7	17.5	9.2	6.2	15.1
Wholesale and retail dealers	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.2	4.4	3.8	5.2	4.4
Other proprietors, managers and officials	4.7	4.4	3.9	4.5	5.2	5.5	6.2	4.6
Clerks and kindred workers	12.9	8.5	7.8	7.4	12.7	9.1	17.3	12.8
Skilled workers and foremen	15.2	11.6	10.2	13.5	13.8	16.5	18.7	16.3
Semi-skilled workers	9.5	6.9	6.3	11.2	9.7	8.7	13.7	14.3
Semi-skilled workers in manu- facturing	3.0	2.4	2.2	2.6	3.3	2.2	5.0	7.6
Other semi-skilled workers	6.5	4.6	4.0	8.6	6.4	6.5	8.7	6.7
Unskilled workers	32.0	37.0	36.9	37.5	32.2	42.9	27.1	28.6
Farm laborers	11.2	16.6	17.4	17.1	13.8	13.6	9.9	9.8
Factory and building construc- tion laborers	7.4	5.4	6.9	5.1	5.9	5.9	6.2	8.5
Other laborers	11.2	13.4	11.0	13.4	9.9	19.8	6.6	7.5
Service workers	2.2	1.7	1.5	1.9	2.6	3.5	4.4	2.7
Non-agricultural white-collar workers	26.2	19.5	18.7	18.1	26.7	22.7	40.6	25.7
<b>Females - Total</b>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Professional persons	19.8	24.9	24.9	26.3	19.7	20.5	17.4	13.5
Proprietors, managers and officials	5.7	9.3	8.9	9.6	6.5	8.7	4.7	4.7
Farmers (owners and tenants)	2.5	4.5	4.7	4.2	2.3	2.3	1.2	2.4
Wholesale and retail dealers	1.1	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.4	2.3	1.4	1.0
Other proprietors, managers and officials	2.0	3.3	3.0	3.6	2.9	4.1	2.1	1.2
Clerks and kindred workers	36.7	26.1	28.0	23.7	31.8	28.5	37.9	28.6
Skilled workers and foremen	.6	.3	.7	.5	.7	.4	.8	.8
Semi-skilled workers	19.1	15.7	16.8	14.8	17.9	16.0	21.8	23.5
Semi-skilled workers in manu- facturing	8.2	3.2	4.3	2.4	6.1	2.5	9.4	15.6
Other semi-skilled workers	10.9	12.4	12.5	12.4	11.8	13.5	12.5	7.9
Unskilled workers	18.2	23.7	20.7	25.1	23.4	25.8	17.4	29.0
Farm laborers	.8	2.0	1.4	3.5	2.7	.8	.9	6.0
Factory and building construc- tion laborers	.6	.2	.8	.1	.5	.2	.6	1.2
Other laborers	.4	.3	.6	.3	.4	.5	.3	.3
Service workers	16.4	21.2	17.9	21.2	19.8	24.3	15.7	21.5
Non-agricultural white-collar workers	59.6	55.8	57.2	55.3	55.3	55.4	58.8	44.3

gainfully occupied (1930) is about the same in Utah as in the other states and the Nation. Hence, the peculiar age distribution of Utah is the factor which gives this state such a small per cent of gainfully occupied.

3. On the basis of the industrial and occupational distribution of the gainfully occupied, Utah appears to be better off than Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, and Nevada; as well off as Colorado and the Nation; and below California.

4. Because of the consideration in 1 above, it would appear that any advantage accruing to Utah through 3 above may probably be compensated for. Hence, Utah, if it is not worse off than the other states, most probably, is not better off.

Thomas W. White

Files Sept-1940

Excerpt from Chapter VII - "Meeting the Depression"

During the year 1937 private relief was claimed to be most active in removing employables from the Federal rolls, especially in the Mormon areas of the state. <sup>21/</sup> As far as the available data are concerned, there is no evidence that this private relief program has made any substantial progress.

Before concluding this section it would be of some interest to determine the relative frequency with which members of the various religious bodies appear on the public assistance rolls. The Church of the Latter Day Saints, in particular, has made numerous claims regarding its success in "caring for their own," as has been point out. For the purposes of this study data were obtained which throw light on this contention.

As of May 1939 there were a total of 31,133 unduplicated cases receiving all forms of public assistance in Utah. Of this number 79 per cent claimed affiliation with the LDS Church, and the remaining 21 per cent claimed either affiliation with some other church, or no religious affiliations whatsoever. In the general population as of 1929 61 per cent of the total population was claimed by the LDS Church, whereas only 39 per cent of the total population was claimed by other religious bodies. In other words the LDS Church was over-represented

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<sup>21/</sup> See note 19, above.

on the public assistance rolls by 30 per cent, and the other religious denominations were under-represented by 46 per cent (Table VII-16).

If this total figure is subdivided into its component parts it can be readily seen that in all three types of public assistance - Works Program Employees, general relief cases, and Old Age Assistance - the same results are evident. The over-representation of the LDS Church in these three groups is as follows:

Works Program Employees	-	36 per cent
General Relief	-	8 per cent
Old Age Assistance	-	31 per cent

The under-representation of the other religious groups is as follows:

Works Program Employees	-	57 per cent
General Relief	-	13 per cent
Old Age Assistance	-	49 per cent

On the basis of these data it would appear that despite all the LDS Church may be doing toward caring for its own, it is still greatly dependent upon federal and state public aid for caring for its dependent members. It appears significant, however, that the over-representation of LDS members is greater on the Works Program than on the General Relief rolls. This difference may result either from the fact that the church is aiding some of its members who are in need of assistance, but are not eligible for the Works Program, or that its members have been more successful in securing and holding Works Program employment. No conclusive data on the point are available.

It should be pointed out that in making these comparisons, 1939 public assistance data have been compared with 1929 population data. This was necessary since data on LDS membership, while published annually for the entire church, are not available for Utah alone. Only if the percentage of LDS membership in the total population increased from 61 per cent to 79 per cent during this decade would the above proportions lose their significance. An increase of this magnitude would not seem probable, in view of the data at present available.

It has been contended that not all of the persons on the public assistance rolls who have called themselves LDS members are really LDS members in good standing. This could be the case; no data are available for proving or disproving the statement.

Summary.— The Mormon counties are poorer than the rest of the state, and hence, in need of greater amounts of relief. During the depression period it appears to be quite certain that more public assistance was actually extended in these counties than in the rest of the state. Further, private relief appears to have been of minor importance, a fact which is brought out more clearly in the next section.