Negative microfilm
received from university

66–6683

RePASS, David Eugene, 1931–

THE EFFECT OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES: THE PSYCHO–POLITICAL IMPACT OF THE BUSINESS CYCLE ON NON–FARM POPULATIONS, 1956–1960.

The University of Michigan, Ph.D., 1965
Political Science, general

University Microfilms, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan

THE EFFECT OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ON POLITICAL ATTITUDES: THE PSYCHO-POLITICAL IMPACT OF THE BUSINESS CYCLE ON NON-FARM POPULATIONS, 1956-1960

by

David Eugene RePass

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Political Science in the
University of Michigan
1965

Doctoral Committee:

Professor Warren E. Miller, Chairman
Associate Professor Philip E. Converse
Professor Samuel J. Eldersveld
Professor John B. Lansing

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	xi
Chapter	
I. METHODS OF STUDYING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND VOTING BEHAVIOR	1
Prior Research Using Aggregative Data	2
Purpose and Scope of This Study	10
Factors Affecting the Voter's Decision	14
Problems Involved in Measuring the Impact of Only One Short-Term Factor	17
Party Identification and the Normal Vote Construct	22
II. THEORETICAL ORIENTATION	28
Theoretical Construct	33
III. ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, PUBLIC POLICY AND THE PEOPLE	46
The 1958 Recession and the 1958 Election	46
Economic Decline and Party Realignment	49
Basic Public Attitudes toward Depression and Counter-Cyclical Policies	54
Recession and Inflation	61
Governmental Policy, 1957 to 1959	73
IV. MEASURING THE PERCEPTUAL AND ATTITUDINAL IMPACT OF THE RECESSION	80
Objective Measure of Change in Family Economic Circumstances, 1956-1960	82
Perceptions of Economic Events	85
Economic Fluctuations and Change in Economic Attitudes	88
Questions used to measure economic attitudes	89

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

	Page
Rapidity of change in economic attitudes	94
Patterns of economic attitude change	95
Subjective economic attitudes and objective change in financial circumstances	99
The Goodman-Kruskal Measure of Association (Gamma)	101
Frames of Reference in Regard to Personal Financial Situation	103
Personal concern about inflation	106
Awareness of the Recession's Impact on Personal Financial Situation (Internalization)	107
Local Economic Conditions and Personal Financial Attitudes	113
Attitudes toward Unemployment-Recession as a General Domestic Problem	117
Factors affecting the evaluation of economic problems in the country	122
Local labor market conditions	
Internalization	
Economic worries	
The mass media	
The Relative Importance of Domestic Economic Problems and International Affairs	131
The "life space" concept	133
Summary Measures of Cognitive and Affective Responses	136
Recession salience	136
Overall affect	138
V. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE FORMATION OF ATTITUDES TOWARD A RECESSION	142
Introduction	142
Principal hypotheses to be examined	143
Incidence of economic deprivation among party identifiers and occupational groups	144
The Effect of Party Identification and Occupational Status on Attitudes toward the Recession	148
The overall salience of the recession	148
Evaluation of domestic problems	151

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

		Page
	Attitudes toward the financial situation of self, friends and neighbors	155
	The effect of party identification and occupational status on overall affect	158
	Factors That Help Give the Recession Meaning	160
	Cognition of the recession	160
	Level of education and social environment	163
	Acquisition of recession's meaning differs by occupation	167
	Other Factors Influencing Recession Salience	169
	Personal experience with the 1930 Depression	169
	Political involvement and level of conceptualization	171
VI.	POLITICAL TRANSLATION OF ECONOMIC EVENTS	176
	Measuring Economic-Political Translation	177
	Stability and Change in Economic-Political Translation	179
	Patterns of attitude change	185
	Recession Salience and Economic-Political Translation	190
	The Role of News Media and Local Economic Conditions in the Formation of Economic-Political Attitudes	193
	Intervening Variables: Factors Which Help Establish Economic-Political Attitudes	195
	Political factors	198
	Political involvement and economic-political translation	199
	Level of conceptualization and economic-political translation	200
	Party identification and economic-political translation	207
VII.	THE 1958 RECESSION AND VOTING CHANGE	215
	The Normal Vote Construct Applied to the 1958 Election	216

TABLE OF CONTENTS--Continued

	Page
1958 Voting Change Caused by the Recession	219
The internalizers	225
The Importance of the Recession in the 1958 Election	228
The Party in Power	231
Concluding Remarks	237
APPENDIX A. DESCRIPTION OF PANEL SAMPLES, PANEL MORTALITY AND METHOD OF CORRECTION FOR BIAS	241
APPENDIX B. THE NORMAL VOTE CONSTRUCT DEVELOPED BY PHILIP CONVERSE	245
APPENDIX C. MEASURES OF UNEMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE, OCCUPATIONAL STATUS AND CHANGE IN FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES	250
APPENDIX D. LABOR MARKET AREAS: DESCRIPTION AND MEASURES	256
BIBLIOGRAPHY	267

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1-1.	Deviations from Average State Unemployment and Deviations from Average State Republican Vote, 41 States, Six Congressional Elections, 1948-58	8
1-2.	Distribution of Party Identification, 1952 to 1960	23
1-3.	Turnout and Partisanship of Congressional Vote among Those Who Mentioned Right-to-Work Issue	26
3-1.	People's Attitudes toward Various Anti-Recession Proposals	60
3-2.	Frame of Reference with Regard to General Domestic Problems in the United States, 1958 and 1960	70
3-3.	Attitudes toward the Republican and Democratic Parties: Responses Pertaining to Inflation, Recession and Prosperity--1956, 1958, and 1960 . . .	72
4-1.	Distribution of Family Economic Deprivation or Betterment: 1956-1958; 1958-1960	84
4-2.	Patterns of Attitudes toward Past and Future Financial Situation: 1956-1958-1960	98
4-3.	People's Attitude toward Past Financial Situation in 1958 Compared with Changes in Their Family Economic Circumstances	100
4-4.	Distribution of Respondents' Frame of Reference toward Past Financial Situation: 1956, 1958 and 1960	104

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

Table		Page
4-5.	Affective Component of Attitudes toward Past Situation with Frame of Reference Controlled: 1956 and 1958 Compared	105
4-6.	Relation of Unemployment Experience with Past Situation Frame of Reference, 1958 . .	110
4-7.	Association (Gamma) between Labor Market Area (LMA) Conditions and Affect toward Past Financial Situation, with Frame of Reference Controlled, 1958	115
4-8.	Awareness of Financial Worries of Friends and Neighbors in Relation with Average Labor Market Area Conditions, 1958	118
4-9.	Evaluation of General Domestic Problems in the U.S., 1958 and 1960, with Frame of Reference Controlled	121
4-10.	Association (Gamma) between Labor Market Area Trend Indicator and Evaluations of General Domestic Problems, 1958 and 1960 (Excluding those with unemployment experience)	123
4-11.	Relation of Past Financial Situation Frame of Reference to Type of General Domestic Problem Perceived, 1958	124
4-12.	Relation of Type of Economic Worries to Evaluation of Recession as a General Domestic Problem, 1958	127
4-13.	Relation of Labor Market Area Trends and Awareness of Unemployment-Recession as a General Domestic Problem with Media Usage Controlled, 1958 (Those with unemployment experience removed) . . .	129
4-14.	Relation of Most Important Problem and Local Economic Conditions, 1960	134
4-15.	Relation of Most Important Problem and Local Economic Conditions with Attentiveness to News Media Controlled, 1960	135

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

Table		Page
4-16.	Frequency Distribution of Recession Salience, 1958 and 1960	139
4-17.	Mean Overall Affect Score Controlling for Recession Salience, 1958 and 1960	140
4-18.	Mean Overall Affect Score Controlling for Recession Salience and Internalization, 1958	141
5-1.	Relation of Party Identification to Change in Family Economic Circumstances	145
5-2.	Relation of Family Head's Occupation to Change in Family Economic Circumstances	146
5-3.	Recession Salience by Party Identification and by Occupation, 1958 (Unemployment experience excluded)	149
5-4.	Evaluation of General Domestic Problems by Party Identification with Frame of Reference Controlled, 1958 (Unemployment experience excluded)	152
5-5.	Per Cent of Party Identifiers Who Internalized the Recession with Occupational Status Controlled (All cases, including unemployment experience)	156
5-6.	Awareness of Financial Worries of Friends and Neighbors by Party Identification with Occupational Status Controlled (Unemployment experience excluded)	157
5-7.	Co-Variance of Mean Overall Affect Score among Party Identifiers and Occupational Groups (Excluding unemployment experience)	159
5-8.	Relation (Gamma) of Education to Recession Salience with Labor Market Area Conditions Controlled (Unemployment experience excluded)	164

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

Table		Page
5-9.	The Effect of Personal and Social Factors in Creating Recession Salience among Occupational Groups	166
5-10.	Effect of Direct Experience with the Great Depression on 1958 Recession Salience (1957-58 unemployment experience excluded)	170
5-11.	Relation of Level of Conceptualization to Recession Salience (Unemployment experience excluded)	174
6-1.	Distribution of Responses to: "Do You Think It Will Make Any Difference in How You and Your Family Get Along Financially Whether the Republicans or Democrats Win the Election?" 1956, 1958 and 1960 Compared	182
6-2.	Frequency of Response Patterns to Political Translation Measures, 1956-1958-1960 . . .	186
6-3.	Econo-Political Translation as a Function of Recession Salience and Overall Affect, 1958	192
6-4.	Relation between Labor Market Area Trends and Total Political Translation, with Recession Salience Controlled	194
6-5.	Econo-Political Translation as a Function of Internalization and Union Membership . .	198
6-6.	Econo-Political Translation as a Function of Political Involvement and Recession Salience	200
6-7.	Type of Econo-Political Translation as a Function of Level of Conceptualization . .	202
6-8.	Congressional Voting Behavior of Panel in 1956, 1958 and 1960 by Level of Conceptualization: Actual Cases as a Percentage of Expected Cases	206
6-9.	Relation of Party Identification to Econo-Political Translation	208

LIST OF TABLES--Continued

Table		Page
6-10.	Econo-Political Translation of Occupational Groups	212
6-11.	Econo-Political Translation as a Function of Union Membership with Party Identification Controlled	214
7-1.	1958 Congressional Vote of Entire Sample: Actual Vote Compared with Vote Predicted by Normal Vote Construct	217
7-2.	Voting Change with Economic Attitudes and Econo-Political Translation Controlled . .	221
7-3.	Voting Change of Pro-Democratic Translators as a Function of Recession Salience	222
7-4.	Voting Change as a Function of Attitude toward U.S. Position in the World, 1958 . .	230
7-5.	Voting Change with Recession Salience and Econo-Political Translation Controlled: Includes Only Those Aware of Democratic Majority in 85th and 86th Congresses . . .	235

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Page

Chart

1. Trend of Unemployment Rates and Consumer Prices, 1956-1962 64

2. People's Perceptions of Economic Conditions Compared with Actual Conditions (Unemployment Rate), 1956-1962 87

3. Fluctuations in Various Economic Attitudes, 1956-1962 91

Figure

1. Theoretical Construct 34

CHAPTER I

METHODS OF STUDYING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECONOMIC CONDITIONS AND VOTING BEHAVIOR

The notion that economic conditions have a significant impact on voting behavior is widely held among social scientists and political leaders. Indeed, the connection between business cycles and fluctuations in vote is virtually an axiom in the folklore of American electoral politics. For example, a remark that was made recently at the Center for the Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences would probably meet ready acceptance among most sophisticated political observers: ". . . except for occasional crises in foreign affairs or the impact of dominant personalities, economic conditions in the period just preceding elections are alone sufficient to explain the outcomes."[1] Avery Leiserson cites these same three factors--economic conditions, political personalities, and foreign policy crises--as the major factors in short-run political opinion

---

[1]Albert Rees, Herbert Kaufman, Samuel J. Eldersveld, and Frank Freidel, "The Effect of Economic Conditions on Congressional Elections 1946-1958," The Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIV, No. 4 (November, 1962), p. 459.

change.[2] Historical commentaries on election results have often given depressions or "panics" a major, if not sole, causal role. V. O. Key, for example, states that "Cleveland had the misfortune to be President when the depression of 1893 came along" and that the panic enabled the Republicans, with McKinley as the "Advanced Agent of Prosperity" promising a full dinner pail, "to make the Democrats the party of depression, a label that stuck for a generation."[3] By substituting Hoover for Cleveland, and reversing the parties in office when a depression occurred, the same statement could be made about the 1929-32 period. However, the Great Depression was far more severe and undoubtedly had greater political impact than the 1893 panic.[4]

Prior Research Using Aggregative Data

One of the earliest studies which used aggregative data systematically to test the relationship between business cycles and voting behavior was completed just prior to the 1930 election by Clark Tibbitts. Although he selected the period from 1878 to 1888 as the focus of his research, he projected his findings to the impending elections and

---

[2]Avery Leiserson, Parties and Politics (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), p. 308.

[3]V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups (4th ed. rev.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1958), pp. 188-89.

[4]The political implications of the 1930's will be discussed later.

predicted a heavy Republican setback. By examining congressional election returns, district by district in nine Northeastern industrial states, and using a correction factor for presidential years, Tibbitts measured the deviations from the (least-squares) straight-line trend of vote given to the party (congressman)[5] in power in each district over the ten year period. Relating these deviations to the Harvard curve of business activity, he reached the following conclusion:

> The proportion of the vote given to the party in power was higher in the good business year of 1882 than at any other time during the period, and, further, that the popularity of the party in power reached its lowest ebb in 1884, the year of the most marked depression.[6]

Another study, published in 1948, was quite successful in using the general price level to predict electoral trends. An analysis of presidential elections from 1828 to 1944 showed that when prices were rising (or remained stable at a high level), the party in power was maintained in office in 16 out of 18 elections. Changes in administration

---

[5]It is interesting to note that Tibbitts used the party affiliation of the congressional incumbent in each district as his measure of party in power. This method, versus the more usual methods of using control of the House of Representatives and/or the White House as measures of party in power assumes rather high visibility of the individual congressman--an assumption which recent studies would tend to undermine. (See below, p. 18.)

[6]Clark Tibbitts, "Majority Votes and the Business Cycle," The American Journal of Sociology, XXXVI (January, 1931), p. 603.

occurred in 11 of the 13 elections when prices were declining or were stable at a low level.[7]

The best known exponent of the theory of business-political cycles is the economist, Louis H. Bean. After studying congressional elections for the period 1854 to 1946, he came to the conclusion that

> . . . the abrupt shifts that brought about the six periods of alternating Republican and Democratic control of Congress are traceable to one major cause--business depressions. This does not mean that other factors have not played their part, but the record certainly indicates that the business factor has been consistently dominant.[8]

In order to control for the possible effect of lower turnout in non-presidential election years--"mid-term political apathy"--Bean divides the elections from 1854 to 1946 into mid-term congressional elections and congressional elections in presidential years. By relating the Cleveland Trust Company Index of Business Activity (production)[9] to per cent change in major party House membership (seats) "with the aid of a bit of statistical correlation with which I do

---

[7]F. A. Pearson and W. I. Myers, "Prices and Presidents," Farm Economics (New York State College of Agriculture), No. 163 (September, 1948), quoted in V. O. Key, Jr., Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups (3rd ed. rev.; New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1953), p. 212 and ibid. (4th ed. rev.), p. 588.

[8]Louis H. Bean, How to Predict Elections (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948), p. 17.

[9]For an explanation of the Cleveland Trust Company Index of Business Activity, see Leonard P. Ayres, Turning Points in Business Cycles (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), pp. 204-205.

not need to bother the reader," the following generalization is made:

> If business activity remains unchanged between a presidential and an off-year election, normal political apathy causes the party in power to lose about 8 per cent of the two-party membership in the lower house, or 35 seats. (This is approximately comparable with the power credited to the president's coattail.) In a mid-term election, the losses of the dominant party might be checked and cut in half if business activity has advanced 20 points since the previous election, or the losses might be doubled if business has declined 20 points. If the business index remains unchanged between presidential elections, the party in power neither gains or loses, but an advance of 20 points tends to give the party 35 to 40 additional seats. A similar decline in business tends to shift that many seats to the opposition.[10]

One is bothered that Mr. Bean does not explain his statistical methods. Soon after Bean's book, How to Predict Elections, was published, however, two sociologists took the trouble to apply an obvious and appropriate statistical measure to Bean's data.[11] Their results are rather embarrassing to the business-political cycle thesis. Wilkinson and Hart found a .000 coefficient of correlation between the percentage change in major-party House membership and change in the Cleveland Trust Business Activity Index when all congressional elections for 1854 to 1948 were considered.[12] In making this correlation, Wilkinson and Hart

---

[10]Bean, pp. 54-55.

[11]Thomas Wilkinson and Hornell Hart, "Prosperity and Political Victory," Public Opinion Quarterly, XIV, No. 2 (Summer, 1950), pp. 331-335.

[12]The Cleveland Trust Business Activity Index was not used by Wilkinson and Hart in quite the same manner as

did not separate presidential and mid-term elections. When they did look at presidential years alone, however, the correlation was again .000.[13] By examining only the recession years in which a president was elected (and ignoring the supposed positive impact of increasing business activity), the sociologists did find a trace of a correlation (.223) between change in congressional vote received by the party in power and negative changes in business activity measured from the preceding year.[14] This means that only $(.223)^2$ or about 5 per cent of the variation in the total national vote in elections from 1854 to 1948 can be explained by this method of applying the Cleveland Trust Index. Finally, Wilkinson and Hart decided not to use direction of changes at all, but simply correlated the Index for the month of October prior to each presidential election with percentage of vote cast for the party in power. This effort netted a coefficient of correlation of .001.

The Wilkinson and Hart article has received scant attention by political scientists, or is readily dismissed

---

it was used by Bean. Wilkinson and Hart measured business activity change from the year preceding each election to the August-September-October average in the election year. Bean measured the difference in the Index between October of one election year and the October of the next election year--a two year interval. Much can happen to business activity (and people's perceptions of it) in two years, as we shall see. Thus, the Wilkinson and Hart measure of one year difference would seem to be more precise.

[13]Wilkinson and Hart, Public Opinion Quarterly, XIV, No. 2 (Summer, 1950), p. 332.

[14]Note that the authors used change in national congressional vote rather than change in House seats as Bean did.

by them. V. O. Key accused the two sociologists of "evincing no discerning sophistication about political behavior."[15] All they were doing was applying statistical analysis to the data which had been used by Louis Bean to support his notions concerning political behavior.

Most recently, a study was undertaken by two political scientists, a historian, and an economist to test the "common belief that Democrats do better in elections when economic conditions are poor and Republicans do better when economic conditions are good."[16] Seven congressional elections from 1946 to 1958 were examined on a state-by-state basis. The average proportion of vote for Republican congressmen (without correcting for presidential years) and the average rates of insured unemployment were computed for each of the 41 states outside of the one-party South. The deviations from these averages were then computed for each election year, but only the sign (direction) of the deviation was utilized; the magnitude of the deviation was ignored. It was hypothesized that "when unemployment in any state is above average at the time of election, the percentage of the total Congressional vote cast in that state for all Republican Congressional candidates will be below average [and vice versa]."[17] The researchers found

---

[15]Key (3rd ed. rev.), p. 212, n. 27.

[16]Rees et al., The Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIV, No. 4 (November, 1962), pp. 458-59.

[17]Ibid., p. 461.

ample support for their hypothesis, especially when the 1946 "exceptional" post-war congressional election was excluded. The following table is reproduced from their article:

TABLE 1-1

DEVIATIONS FROM AVERAGE STATE UNEMPLOYMENT AND DEVIATIONS FROM AVERAGE STATE REPUBLICAN VOTE, 41 STATES, SIX CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS, 1948-58[a]

		Republican Vote		
		Above (+) Average	Below (-) Average	Total
Unemployment Rate (deviation from state average)	Above (+) Average	22	74	96
	Below (-) Average	88	51	139
	Total	110	125	235

Number of observations supporting the hypothesis (that is, having opposite signs): 162

Number of observations contrary to the hypothesis (that is, having the same signs): 73

[a]Reproduced from Rees et al., "The Effect of Economic Conditions on Congressional Elections 1946-1958," The Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIV, No. 4 (November, 1962), p. 461.

The authors also tested a second hypothesis: "When net farm income per farm is above average in any state, the

Republican candidates for Congress will, collectively, receive a higher than average percentage of the total vote; when net farm income is below normal, the vote for Republican Congressional candidates will be below normal."[18] Using the same procedure as outlined above, they found no association between changes in net income per farm and fluctuation in Republican vote. (Rural and urban districts were not separated in this analysis; rather the Republican proportion of the total state vote was again used.)

It is not my purpose here to discuss the methodologies of these various studies which have empirically tested the belief that economic conditions are related to voting behavior. Rather, these studies have been described in order to indicate the nature of previous research on this topic, the type of economic and political data that has been available, and how these data have been analyzed. It is important to observe that all of these past studies have two things in common: they all correlate an aggregative voting statistic with an abstract measure of economic conditions, and they all lack a theoretical explanation as to why these two sets of data <u>should</u> be related. Presumably these analysts thought that any student of politics could easily supply a theory for this relationship between voting behavior and economic conditions. It might go something like this: "People are hurt by a recession; they become

---

[18] <u>Ibid</u>.

unemployed or suffer other economic deprivation. They blame the political party in power for their problems and vote against that party." The other side of the coin would read: "People are better off when there is prosperity. When economic conditions are favorable, the individual has a good chance of benefiting personally, and he thanks the party in power for these 'good times' by voting to maintain it in office."

Expressing the theory, even in this rudimentary way, makes obvious the fact that a connection between economic fluctuations and voting for a political party must take place in the minds of the voters. It assumes that a sufficient number of voters will perceive or feel the effects of economic changes and will translate these impressions into political attitudes in order to cause a voting change.[19] If it cannot be demonstrated that economic happenings are reflected in political attitudes, any correlation that might be found between aggregative election results and graphs representing economic fluctuations would appear to be spurious, no matter how impeccable the methodology relating the two sets of data.

Purpose and Scope of This Study

It will be the purpose of this study to investigate the psychological (perceptual and attitudinal) impact of

---

[19] A thorough exposition of this theory will appear in Chapter Two.

business conditions upon people's political attitudes and voting behavior and to determine whether or not economic happenings are as significant a factor in American elections as they have been assumed to be. The study will be confined to the period from 1956 to 1960 and thus the findings can only be suggestive, not conclusive, for other periods in history. This time interval was selected for two principle reasons. First, the most severe recession of the post-war era occurred in 1958--a mid-point in this period. Therefore this study will be primarily concerned with attitudes toward the 1958 recession, its effect on political attitudes, and whether or not it engendered a negative political response from the voters. The second reason this study focuses on the period from 1956 to 1960 is the availability of a unique series of interviews which was conducted by the Survey Research Center in 1956, 1958 and 1960. This panel of interviews offers the first opportunity to measure change in individual perceptions and attitudes from one election to the next, and especially, in this case, to investigate change caused by economic fluctuations.

A sample of over 1,900 respondents representing the voting-age population of the nation was interviewed just prior to the 1956 election (in September and October). These same respondents were then reinterviewed just after the 1956 election; they were interviewed again two years later (in November and December) following the 1958 congressional election; and in 1960 the same respondents were

asked once more to submit to a set of pre-election and post-election questions administered by trained interviewers around the country. In spite of relentless efforts by Survey Research Center staff to pursue those respondents who had moved, and to cajole those who did not wish to endure repeated interviews, less than 1,200 remained in the original panel by 1960. The biases in the sample introduced by this panel mortality were not large, however, and could be rectified.[20] Appendix A contains a more complete description of the Survey Research Center samples which are used in this study.

All respondents who were farmers (farm owners, managers or laborers) during most of the period from 1956 to 1960 were excluded from this study. One reason this was done was to confine this investigation to the impact of the industrial economy on those persons whose living was primarily dependent upon that part of the economy.[21] Another reason for removing the farm population lies in the fact that the farm economy does not parallel business conditions; i.e., farm price cycles do not coincide with industrial

---

[20]Mortality is a technical term used to connote attrition or drop-out. It refers to all reasons why reinterview was not possible, although in point of fact about 5 per cent of the original pool of respondents had literally died. See Appendix A for a fuller explanation of the panel mortality and the method of correcting the bias introduced by it.

[21]Rural dwellers who had occupations other than farming remain in the study and some of these may be very dependent on farmers for their livelihoods. However, it was not feasible to discover who these individuals were and to exclude them.

production cycles. (For example, in the recession year of 1958, farm income was at its highest point in a decade.)

In addition to these reasons, agrarian political behavior has already been studied in a chapter of The American Voter.[22] This chapter demonstrates that there was a very sharp relationship between the partisan direction of the presidential vote of farmers in 1956 and the upward or downward trend in prices that farmers said they had experienced between 1952 and 1956.[23] Those who felt that prices were lower voted much more heavily Democratic than those who felt they had faired better. If a Democrat had been in the White House, the opposite voting pattern would probably have been observed.[24] In sum, rapid partisan change in farm vote as a simple and direct reaction to the immediate economic situation seems to be reliably documented.

The reader is cautioned, however, not to extrapolate this finding to the urban setting. The differences between the underlying dimensions of voting behavior among farmers and urban workers is carefully explored by Campbell et al. in this incisive chapter on agrarian political behavior. In brief, the authors argue that the social environment of the American farmer differs greatly from that of the urban

---

[22]Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), chap. xv.

[23]Ibid., pp. 417-18.

[24]Ibid., p. 419.

dweller; the farmer is relatively uninvolved in the political process, and generally floats free of formal and informal group life. He lacks regular contact with friends, co-workers and groups such as farm organizations that might transmit political norms. The urban worker, on the other hand, is embedded in a social process that tends to establish attitudinal and behavioral norms. Long-standing political loyalties and attitudes are more likely to be developed where there is frequent contact with informal and formal groups which transmit at least some political cues. Thus, urban voting behavior is likely to be more constant both in turnout and in partisanship, while the farmer is psychologically free to vote now for one party and now for the other (or not to vote at all) as the economic winds indicate.

Factors Affecting the Voter's Decision

The social scientist has gained considerable insight into the many factors that influence the individual's behavior on election day. Although they are all interrelated, these factors can be divided for analytical purposes into two broad types: long-term predispositions and short-term forces. As the terminology implies, long-term factors are those which are stable over time and are unlikely to change from one election to the next. They include such sociological characteristics as religion, socio-economic status, ethnic identification, and union membership which,

as is now commonly known, are related to political behavior. More proximately connected with voting behavior are such stable political attitudes and orientations as involvement,[25] political efficacy, and party identification. The most important of these variables is party identification and it will be discussed more fully below.

Short-term forces are those objects of the political, economic or social world which occur between one election and the next and have the potential to deflect an individual's long-term political predispositions and thus result in voting change. "Voting change" as used here means not only a transfer of vote from one party to another, but also a change from a low involvement, non-voting predisposition to a motivation to vote, and vice versa. Short-term forces may, indeed are likely to, reinforce an existing partisan predisposition and therefore not cause voting change. The difference between "deflection" and "reinforcement" is important in interpreting the possible effect of short-term forces on election results. A short-term force could have high impact and yet not show up significantly as voting change if it principally served as a factor of reinforcement. The notion that economic conditions have an impact on election results usually has assumed that voting change, or deflection, has occurred.

---

[25]Involvement is less stable than the other two; for example, it decreases in off-year congressional elections, and increases in presidential years.

Short-term forces may be one or several of the following: events,[26] issues, candidates, and interpersonal relations. Events are actual happenings such as foreign wars, launching of satellites, or economic retardation (lower production, greater unemployment); issues are matters of principle or policy under discussion (talk, not happenings); the candidates' personalities and characteristics are a separate object of appraisal among the electorate; and interpersonal relations (person-to-person political influence) include a multitude of interactions which range from political party canvassing to sudden conversion due to marriage. Obviously, these are not mutually exclusive categories; for example, issues may arise directly from and be intrinsic in events (Suez crisis) or be inherent in a candidate (Catholic "issue"); candidates may influence directly through personal contact, and so forth.

---

[26]We might observe that "non-events" could also have the same impact on political attitudes as actual events. The absence of war, depression, or other events which might be credited to the party in power, or the lack of events which would confirm notions previously associated with one of the parties, can substantially alter attitudes which directly support voting behavior. From interviews conducted in 1952 and 1956, for example, it is known that the termination of the Korean war and the absence of hostilities involving the United States thereafter brought forth a large number of responses favorable to the Republicans in 1956--more responses indeed than the Korean war itself had evoked in 1952. See Campbell et al., The American Voter, p. 49. A similar finding is that the lack of any serious economic disturbance between 1952 and 1956 while a Republican administration held office dramatically lessened comments that the Republican party was the party of depression. See ibid., p. 46.

The important point is that there are a great variety of short-term forces all of which have a potential to influence voting change if they are perceived and become relevant objects to the political actor. Some objects will be more "salient" than others depending on the extent to which they are "central to the everyday concerns" of the individual.[27]

Problems Involved in Measuring the Impact of Only One Short-Term Factor

We will be dealing in this study with just one event out of a panorama of short-term forces that might have been experienced by various members of the electorate during the period under consideration (1956 to 1960). In attempting to isolate the influence of economic events alone, a major problem arises from the "noise" caused by the many other potential forces. The following section examines various short-term forces other than economic conditions which affected, or may have affected, the 1958 Congressional elections. In some cases, the impact of these other factors is found to be negligible--as is the case of the public's perception of congressional candidates. In other cases, more serious problems are raised--and the reader should be aware of them. These short-term forces are discussed in

---

[27]This use of the term salience is based on M. Brewster Smith, Jerome S. Bruner, and Robert W. White, Opinions and Personality (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956), p. 35.

terms of the categories I outlined on page 16. They are: (1) candidates, (2) issues, (3) interpersonal relations, and (4) events.

In this study, we will be dealing almost exclusively with congressional elections. Here the potential force of candidate personality is reduced to a minimum. Congressional candidates simply do not have the visibility that presidential aspirants do. For example, in 1958, the year of primary concern to us, 59 per cent of the people had neither read nor heard anything about either candidate for Congress in their district.[28] This figure is slightly improved if we look only at those who voted: here 54 per cent of those who went to the polls felt that they knew something about at least one congressional candidate, but less than one-quarter had read or heard something about both the incumbent and his adversary.[29] "Knowing something" about the candidate, however, consisted of simple impressions which were verbalized by such comments as "he's a good man," "he's experienced," "he knows the problems," "he's done a good job," and the like.

---

[28]Donald E. Stokes and Warren E. Miller, "Party Government and the Saliency of Congress," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXVI (Winter, 1962), p. 540. There is some evidence that people are considerably more aware of a congressional candidate if he lives in the same community as themselves. This "friends and neighbors" saliency, however, does not apply to large metropolitan districts and can be controlled by observing the behavior of metropolitan residents only. Ibid., p. 544.

[29]Warren E. Miller and Donald E. Stokes, "Constituency Influence in Congress," American Political Science Review, LVII, No. 1 (March, 1963), p. 54.

As far as issues are concerned, it has been found that the public pays little attention to detailed nuances of political discussion and possesses scant specific information concerning current policy questions. For instance, out of 6,000 positive and negative responses given by 1,700 respondents to a question invoking attitudes toward the parties in 1958, less than 12 per cent of the comments "by the most generous count"[30] had to do with contemporary legislative issues such as aid to the unemployed, medical care, civil rights, and aid to education.

The bulk of the evidence from previous studies points to the simple conclusion that "the primary basis of voting in congressional elections is identification with party."[31] Independents and those only weakly attached to a political party tend not to vote, especially in off-year congressional elections. A recent study found that

> In 1958 only one vote in twenty was cast by persons without any sort of party loyalty. And among those who did have a party identification, only one in ten voted against their party. As a result, something like 84 per cent of the vote that year was cast by party identifiers voting their usual party line.[32]

---

[30]Stokes and Miller, Public Opinion Quarterly, XXVI (Winter, 1962), p. 535.

[31]Miller and Stokes, American Political Science Review, LVII, No. 1 (March, 1963), p. 54. Also see Angus Campbell, "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIV, No. 3 (Fall, 1960), pp. 397-418.

[32]Miller and Stokes, American Political Science Review, LVII, No. 1, p. 54.

Thus, the short-term forces of issues and candidates can be considered to have minimal impact in congressional elections. The public is responding primarily to the party label, not the personality, of relatively unknown candidates, and mostly to the party images as they have come to know them over the years, not to specific issues of the day. Some caution should be exercised in applying this generalization to congressional voting in a presidential election year. With the greater publicity and excitement created by the contest for the presidency, a surge of "irregular" voters who lack the interest or partisan commitment to vote in off-year elections are stimulated enough to get to the polls to vote for a president.[33] In the process, these "irregulars" are likely to append their vote for president with a vote for the congressional candidate of the same party.[34] This coattail effect complicates the study of congressional party voting in presidential years. However, we will be concentrating primarily on an off-year election, 1958, where this problem is obviated.

---

[33]Campbell, Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIV, No. 3 (Fall, 1960), pp. 397-418.

[34]This coattail voting is more likely in those states where the ballot system facilitates straight ticket voting by allowing the whole party slate to be chosen with a pull of a single lever or a mark of one X on the ballot. See Angus Campbell and Warren E. Miller, "The Motivational Basis of Straight and Split Ticket Voting," American Political Science Review, LI, No. 2 (June, 1957), pp. 293-312.

It is also possible that particularly volatile state or local issues may have an effect on congressional elections by increasing voter turnout. Such an issue--the right-to-work proposition--was present in several states (California, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Ohio and Washington) in 1958, and apparently caused higher turnout, probably among workers. Since workers are often Democrats, we may hypothesize that a disproportionate number of Democrats were aroused to vote in these states in this off-year election. Hence this issue probably aided, albeit indirectly, Democratic congressional candidates. A brief analysis of this particular issue is presented at the end of this chapter.

Having discussed candidates and issues, interpersonal influences and events remain to be considered as possible deflecting forces in congressional elections. Interpersonal influences will probably tend to cancel each other out over the nation as a whole and thus introduce no directional bias. Thus we can assume that interpersonal influences will not be important factors in a nation-wide study such as this one.

Events pose a more difficult problem. A number of significant happenings occurred between 1956 and 1960 which may have been uniformly interpreted as "bad news" by large segments of the public and translated into negative attitudes toward the Republican administration, thereby causing a unidirectional shift in vote toward the Democrats. Such foreign events as the launching of the first sputnik by

Russia in October 1957, the landing of American troops in Lebanon in July 1958, the shelling of the Quemoy and Matsu islands beginning August 1958, and Castro's successful revolution in Cuba in January 1959 are some of the situations that readily come to mind. It will not be possible, given the scope and method of this study, to control for the possible deflection in voting that such events may have engendered. In a later section, our data will enable us to compare the relative impact of some foreign problems with that of domestic economic conditions. Indeed, it will be hypothesized that the economic events, which are closer to home and more likely to be seen or felt firsthand, will have much higher impact than news from afar.

Party Identification and the Normal Vote Construct

As mentioned earlier, one of the principal long-term factors that has been found to be associated with voting behavior is party identification. It has been learned over a series of national cross-sectional sample surveys that party identification is very stable over time.[35] (See Table 1-2.) This phenomenon is not surprising when we know that party loyalty is typically learned early in life with the family as the main socializing agency. Such deep-seated

---

[35]The panel data used in the present study further demonstrate the underlying stability of party identification. Relatively few individuals were found to have made significant changes in party allegiance from 1956 through 1960. See Appendix D.

TABLE 1-2

DISTRIBUTION OF PARTY IDENTIFICATION, 1952 TO 1960[a]

	Oct. 1952	Sept. 1953	Oct. 1954	April 1956	Oct. 1956	Nov. 1957	Oct. 1958	Oct. 1960
Strong Republican	13%	15%	13%	14%	15%	10%	13%	14%
Weak Republican	14	15	14	18	14	16	16	13
Independent Republican	7	6	6	6	8	6	4	7
Independent	5	4	7	3	9	8	8	8
Independent Democrat	10	8	9	6	7	7	7	8
Weak Democrat	25	23	25	24	23	26	24	25
Strong Democrat	22	22	22	19	21	21	23	21
Apolitical, Don't Know	4	7	4	10	3	6	5	4
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Cases	1,614	1,023	1,139	1,731	1,772	1,488	1,269	3,021

[a]Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan. (Mimeographed sheet.)

attitudes are rarely changed except under pressure of unusually insistent dissonant stimuli.

As we have noted, party identification is an extremely important determinant of voting choice, especially in congressional elections. Given a hypothetical election in which short-term forces were minimal or completely absent (an election in which there were lackluster candidates, no dramatic events, and few issues), we could expect most people simply to vote for the party they identified with. Independents would, in most cases, not be stimulated enough to vote under such circumstances, and those few independents who did get to the polls would probably divide their votes between the two parties. Voting behavior under such circumstances might be thought of as a "normal vote"--the vote that we would expect under conditions where no short-term forces had contravened normal political predispositions. This absence of short-term forces is, of course, hypothetical; it never occurs in reality, although these conditions are approximated in off-year congressional elections as we have seen. The concept of a "normal vote," however, enables us to establish a theoretical stable ground or baseline from which to measure voting deflection. This concept of a "normal vote" has been elaborated by Philip Converse[36] who developed a

---

[36]Philip E. Converse, "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping" (Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, June, 1962), 36 pp. (Mimeographed.)

mathematical construct which enables us to compute the "expected" or "normal" vote for any sample or subsample. An explanation of the method he used to develop the normal vote construct is contained in Appendix B. Using this construct, we can compute the "expected" vote for a set of respondents if we know the distribution of party identification in the group. We can then observe the actual vote of these same respondents and thus determine whether or not short-term forces have either (1) stimulated their interest in the election (as measured by higher than expected turnout) and/or (2) deflected some voters from their partisan predispositions.

Using this method, Converse found the "normal vote" for the American electorate as a whole from 1952 to 1960 to have centered closely around 54 per cent Democratic. In other words, if short-term forces of stimulation and deflection in an election are negligible, or in balance, we could expect a Democratic majority of around 54 per cent.

The effectiveness of this normal vote construct in analyzing short-term forces can be demonstrated by the example of the right-to-work issue which, as mentioned earlier, apparently increased voter turnout in some states in 1958. Respondents interviewed by the Survey Research Center in 1958 were queried about a series of specific issues and were then asked if there were any other issues that were important in the election in their congressional district. Although only one in five could think of any

(additional) issues even of the most general nature, the most frequently mentioned item was the right-to-work proposition. Applying the normal vote construct to this group that mentioned right-to-work, we find that about 68 per cent could be expected to vote under "normal" conditions. (See Table 1-3.) Actually 84 per cent of this group voted--a

TABLE 1-3

TURNOUT AND PARTISANSHIP OF CONGRESSIONAL VOTE AMONG THOSE WHO MENTIONED RIGHT-TO-WORK ISSUE

	Expected Vote			Actual Vote		
	Per Cent of Turnout	Per Cent of Total (N)	Number of Cases	Per Cent of Turnout	Per Cent of Total (N)	Number of Cases
Dem. Vote	59%	40%	36	61%	52%	46
Rep. Vote	41	28	25	39	32	29
	100%			100%		
Turnout		68%			84%	
Group Total		N = 89			N = 89	

16 per cent increase in turnout over the expected value, probably due to the stimulating effect of this issue. Since this was a state, not a national, issue, we would not expect it to affect normal partisan vote for congressmen and indeed it did not. This subsample of those concerned with the right-to-work issue was composed of 23 Strong Democrats,

22 Weak Democrats, 22 Independents, 12 Weak Republicans and 10 Strong Republicans. In any cohort so composed, we could expect 60 per cent of those who voted to cast Democratic ballots under "normal" conditions. And indeed about 60 per cent of the "right-to-workers" actually did vote for Democratic congressmen--indicating that no deflection from normal partisan vote was caused by this issue. However, the Democratic congressmen did gain indirectly from the issue since the increased turnout gave them a net gain of 6 votes from this group of 89.

The normal-vote construct was utilized by Converse in his study of the impact of President Kennedy's Catholicism in the 1960 election. It enabled him to make an impressive demonstration of the stimulation and pronounced deflection effects of this religious issue.[37] There can be little doubt that the normal vote construct is a powerful tool for measuring the effect of short-term forces on voting behavior. It may not be a micrometer, but it is a yardstick.

---

[37]Philip E. Converse, Angus Campbell, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, "Stability and Change in 1960: A Reinstating Election," American Political Science Review, LV, No. 2 (June, 1961), pp. 269-280.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

The major hypothesis to be tested in this study is:

> A. The party in power will receive an electoral setback if a recession occurs near election time.

Its corollary is:

> B. The party in power will gain electoral support if the economy is prosperous near election time.

An alternative hypothesis would be the one stated in the Rees, Kaufman, Eldersveld, and Freidel article mentioned earlier: "Democrats do better in elections when economic conditions are poor, and Republicans do better when economic conditions are good."[1] There are interesting implications in this alternative hypothesis. It was apparently written with the post 1930's period in mind, and obviously was not intended to reach back into the latter part of the nineteenth century or first quarter of the twentieth. It assumes that the Great Depression and the New Deal have made a lasting impression. The hypothesis further assumes (1) that a large segment of the public feels that the Democratic party is the champion of economic

---

[1]Rees et al., The Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIV, No. 4 (November, 1962), pp. 458-59.

policies which will relieve economic distress, or at least that they feel the Democrats are more likely than the Republicans to "do something" about adverse economic conditions; and (2) that these people will therefore vote Democratic in the event of a recession even if the Democrats are in office.[2]

There is some evidence already at hand which tends to support the assumptions which underlie the alternative hypothesis. For a great many Americans, the Great Depression was undoubtedly a profound learning experience. The impact of the Great Depression on current attitudes toward the economic and political world has been demonstrated in recent survey research studies. One finding (which will be discussed more fully in Chapter Three) is that most people feel that ways have been discovered to avoid another depression--principally, they say, through governmental action. Data described in The American Voter also tends to support the alternative hypothesis. As late as 1952, the Democratic party was widely perceived as the party of prosperity while the Republican party was tagged as the party of depression.[3]

---

[2]We should point out that economic conditions deteriorated in 1938 and the Democrats lost 70 seats in the congressional election that year. Apparently a substantial number of the electorate felt that the Republicans could handle the economy better. However, we should also point out that other high impact events such as the sit-down strikes in the auto and steel industries, and Roosevelt's attempt to "pack" the Supreme Court had intervened between 1936 and 1938. Turnout was unusually high in 1938 for an off-year election.

[3]Campbell et al., The American Voter, p. 45.

However, after four years of relatively good times under a Republican administration, these references to prosperity and depression declined markedly in 1956. "After haunting every Republican candidate for President since 1932, memories of the Hoover Depression had receded at least temporarily as a direct force in American politics."[4] Were these attitudes reawakened in 1958, and did they cause a swing toward the Democrats? We shall see.

There is other evidence in The American Voter, however, which would tend to undermine the alternative hypothesis and support the major hypothesis (A). In 1956, Survey Research Center respondents were asked a series of open-ended questions which elicited attitudes toward the parties and the candidates. These responses were carefully inspected and the respondents classified on the basis of the general way in which they were able to conceptualize these political objects.[5] Four categories or "levels of conceptualization" were discovered: (A) Ideologues, (B) Group interest and benefit, (C) Nature of the times, and (D) No issue content. Almost a quarter of the sample fell into category C which was composed of people who perceived something about the "goodness" or "badness" of the times (war or peace, recession or prosperity) and who were inclined to leap to the conclusion that the party in office was responsible for the situation. If they thought times

---

[4] Ibid., p. 46.

[5] Ibid., chap. x.

were bad, they wanted to "throw the rascals out" whether the rascals were Republicans or Democrats. No historical or ideological knowledge of the parties was apparent among this group, nor any sense of what the administration might have done differently to avoid the economic or foreign difficulties. These people in Level C simply felt that the party in power had failed. This quarter of the electorate, plus the approximately 15 to 20 per cent who exist in a virtual political void at Level D, were found to be the persons most likely to have defected from their party identifications in voting in 1956. In other words, those people who had the greatest propensity for voting change were the ones least likely to have a firm conceptualization of the economic policies of either party. Based on this analysis of levels of conceptualization, The American Voter concludes that if a major depression were to occur during a Democratic administration, there is little doubt that this large group of voters in levels C and D would cast their votes against the Democrats and vote in the Republicans (who might have campaigned for such policies as balancing the budget and retrenchment of spending).[6]

The divergent points of view reflected in the major hypothesis and in the alternative hypothesis will be examined in the course of this study.

---

[6]Ibid., p. 260.

A consideration of the corollary hypothesis stated above (that the party in power will gain if economic conditions are good) will be limited by the fact that economic conditions were not very good during most of the period under study. Perhaps this is not a very serious limitation, however. Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes have concluded from their studies that "a party already in power is rewarded much less for good times than it is punished for bad times." With the slight political involvement and generally low levels of conceptualization of the electorate,

> very little crosses the threshold of public awareness and becomes associated with the image of the party holding office. (Of course, even less becomes associated with the image of the minority party when it is out of office.) As long as public affairs go well, there is little to motivate the electorate to connect events of the wider environment with the actors of politics, and the successes of an administration are likely to go virtually unnoticed by the mass public. But when events of the wider environment arouse strong public concern the electorate is motivated to connect them with the actors of politics, typically, with the incumbent party. An economic or military or other form of calamity can force events across the threshold of political awareness, to the detriment of the administration party.[7]

Special attention must be drawn to the fact that the period 1956 to 1960 poses a difficult problem in operationalizing the major hypothesis. With a Republican President and a Democratic Congress during all of this period, which party was in power? Do people look to the White House or to Congress to maintain good times? Fortunately, there

---

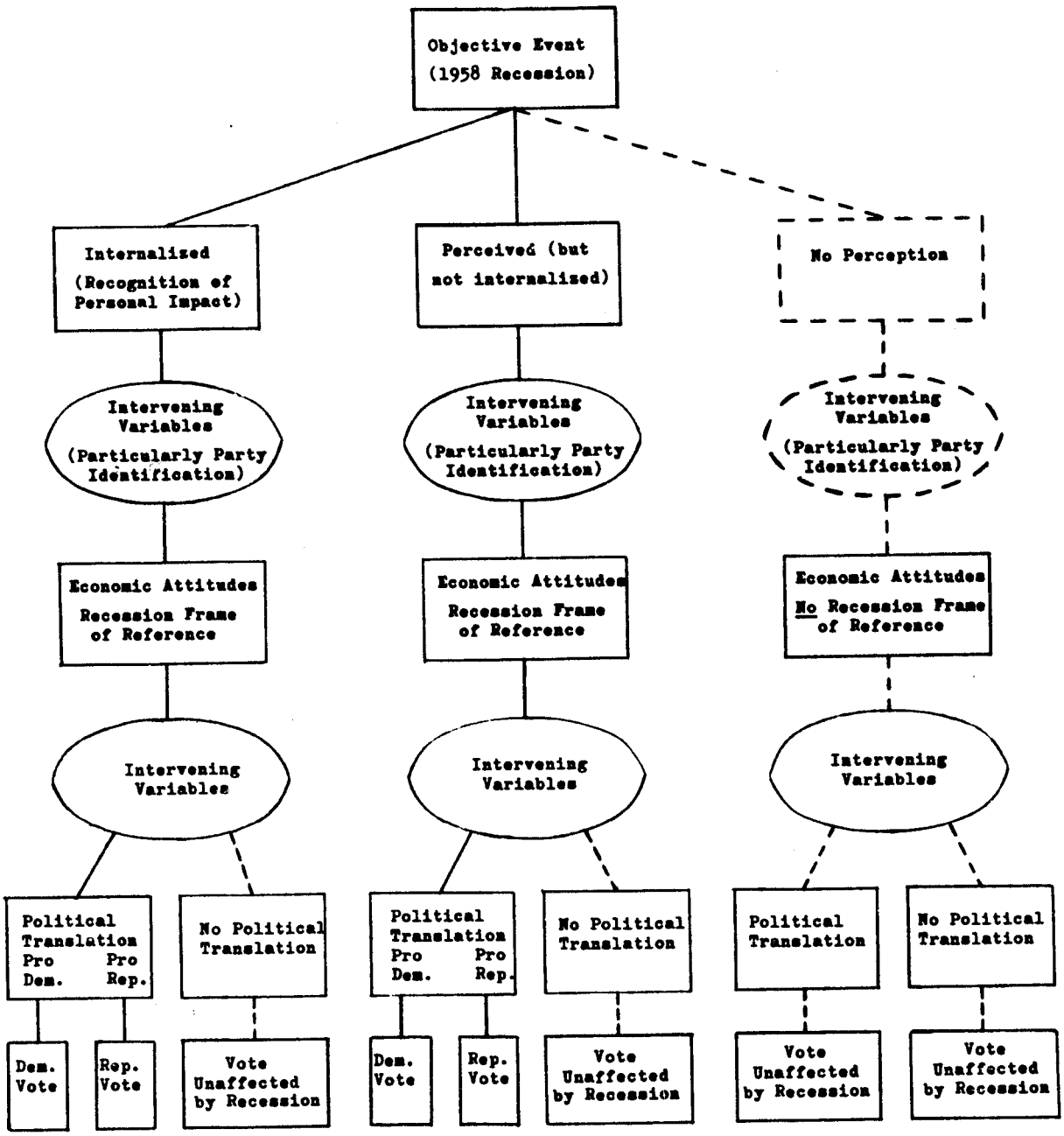
[7] Ibid., p. 556.

is some information in the interviews about peoples' perceptions of these matters; however, this problem of divided party responsibility will be a source of analytical perplexity.

Theoretical Construct

The following discussion is presented in order to orient the reader to the concepts and theoretical approach of this study. Some suggestive hypotheses will be presented in the course of the discussion. Figure 1 is a schematic representation of the theoretical construct we will be using. Starting at the top we find the objective (or external) event with which we are principally concerned--the recession of 1957-58; or more precisely, the fluctuations in economic conditions from 1956 through 1960. This is called the "objective" event since it refers to what actually happened to the economy--at least to the extent that production indices, unemployment rates and similar measures can represent the nature of economic conditions in the real world. To individual citizens throughout the country, these objective events of the economic world, if perceived, take on a subjective meaning depending upon the observing individual's background of experience, attitudes, and personality characteristics. In other words, when the event becomes known to an individual, it is then, for that individual, a subjective event. The implications of this will become clearer as we discuss the theoretical construct.

Fig. 1.--Theoretical Construct



The objective economic events of the period 1956 to 1960 were only potential stimuli for the individual citizen--potential in the sense that even though the events existed in the real world ready to be perceived, they may not have been communicated to some individuals. Indeed, it is quite conceivable that a great many people lived through this period without becoming aware that the nation was experiencing economic difficulties. In particular, we should note that some areas of the country were harder hit than other areas. People living in places that were relatively unaffected, and who thus received less negative economic stimuli, may easily have been ignorant of the suffering of those in more depressed areas of the country. The same might be said of people who were engaged in an occupation that was relatively unaffected by the 1958 recession. This gives rise to our first two minor hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Individuals living in areas where little or no economic decline occurred will be least likely to be aware of negative economic conditions [and vice versa].

Hypothesis 2: Individuals at occupational levels generally unaffected by the recession will be less aware of negative economic events [and vice versa].

Individual perceptions of the economic events could have occurred in a variety of ways such as attentive scrutiny of economic reports; acquisition of fragmentary bits of information from the news media; observing that friends or neighbors were unemployed; or actually experiencing

unemployment. To generalize, there are four ways a person can "pay attention" to events:[8]

1) He may learn of the event through direct experience.

2) He may actively seek out news of the event.

3) He may be passively receptive to news when it is presented to him.

4) He can ignore, reject or distort news of an event.

This fourth point is perhaps not as obvious, prima facie, as the others and therefore will be discussed more fully. Here, the individual's background of experiences, attitudes and personality characteristics causes him to react to the incoming stimuli by ignoring, rejecting or distorting it. For example, a person with no past experience with adverse economic conditions may feel no threat from news of economic decline and thus pay no attention to it.[9] We would surmise, then, that those people who lived through the Great Depression will be more likely to be alert to news of economic decline and attach more meaning to it than those born in a later period.

---

[8]This summary is partly based on William A. Scott and Stephen B. Withey, The United States and the United Nations (New York: Manhattan Publishing Company, 1958), p. 212.

[9]The assumption underlying Hypothesis 2 is that the individual receives little or no stimuli arising from the event, while this statement assumes that he receives news but ignores it. The difference is very difficult to measure and has no real importance in our theoretical construct--cognition about this object has not been formed in either case.

Hypothesis 3: Individuals who experienced the Great Depression will be more attentive to economic news and attach more personal and political meaning to economic events.

The kinds of attitudes an individual holds can have an important bearing on perception and the concommitant cognition of news or events. Attitudes are typically defined as "predispositions to respond in a particular way toward a specified class of objects."[10] They have three major components: affect, cognition, and behavior. Affect is the positive or negative feeling that a person has for an object ("like" or "dislike," being "for" or "against"); cognition consists of the beliefs, knowledge and concepts that a person possesses in regard to an object; and behavior is the overt action or verbal expression of opinion (based on the cognitive and affective components of the attitude) which may be evoked when the individual is confronted with the object. Thus, for example, saying that a man has an unfavorable attitude toward foreigners leads us to expect that he will perceive their actions with distrust, have strong negative feelings toward them, and will tend to avoid them socially.

The attitudes an individual holds may result in distortion or outright rejection of certain communications. If a person receives news that is inconsistent or dissonant with a prevailing attitude or set of attitudes, he will feel

---

[10]This discussion of attitudes rests heavily on the concepts presented by Milton J. Rosenberg and Carl I. Hovland in Rosenberg et al., Attitude Organization and Change (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), chap. i, pp. 1-14.

psychologically uncomfortable and will try to reduce this discrepancy between attitude and perception. For example, people with strong Republican predispositions, not wanting to think that their party might have been culpable for economic difficulties in 1958, might refuse to believe news of economic downturn, or they might see economic conditions as more favorable than they "really" are. Or Democrats, having learned that there is a recession, might adduce that Republicans must be in control of Congress as well as the White House. This tendency to reduce dissonance through rejection or avoidance of certain information, or by adding new elements of "knowledge" to bring all elements of one's attitudes into harmony, has been elaborated and tested as the "theory of cognitive dissonance."[11] We will have Festinger's theory in mind when we test the hypothesis:

> Hypothesis 4: Partisan attitudes, especially party identification, will have a decided effect on perceptions of economic events and their connection with government. For example, Republican identifiers will be likely to have rejected news of economic decline (have no perception of it) or to see economic conditions more positively than others.

---

[11]See Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962), especially pp. 9-12. The use of the term "cognitive" in this theory is perhaps misleading in light of its use in the preceding definition of "attitude." Festinger's definition of "cognitive" really encompasses all three of the components which we have defined as "attitude."

The attitudes, experiences, and other elements that may intensify, screen out, or distort perceptions of the objective event are labeled intervening variables in the schematic presentation of Figure 1.[12]

All pertinent comments made by respondents in their own words will be used to analyze their attitudes toward economic conditions. In essence, we will be using the whole interview to indicate the cognitive and affective maps of the respondents--"maps" that represent not only what the individual has perceived, but also what meaning and feeling he has attached to that perception. We will be especially interested in the respondent's frame of reference when questioned about his economic attitudes. A frame of reference is all the conscious psychological elements--attitudes, values, concern, experience--that a person mentally refers to when he responds to an object. It is all of the notions and feelings that, taken together, make up one's picture of the outside world.[13] We will make particular use of the respondent's cognitive frame of reference--what an individual "knows" about the object he is being asked about. Hopefully, it tells us what the observer has perceived, what he has added to the objective event, and what he has subtracted

---

[12]Besides party identification, these intervening variables include such long-term factors as involvement, education and union membership.

[13]This definition of frame of reference is based largely on the chapter entitled "Social Psychology of Public Reaction" in Scott and Withey, The United States and the United Nations, chap. x.

from it. It will tell us if the individual sees the event as falling into a structure of relationships; for example, does he have a sense of an economic system in the country, or are his reactions simply fragmentary--indicating an inability to link the event to an overall economic order?

We are particularly interested in those who internalized the economic event--that is, those who felt that their personal financial situation had been adversely affected and attributed this deprivation to unemployment or recession. Some people who have financial difficulties during a period of recession are hurt not as a result of the general economic downturn but because of illness, retirement, or a variety of other personal circumstances. Even those who do suffer as a result of a recession may not recognize or feel that their economic deprivation is connected with economic conditions. It is conceivable, for example, that a person could suddenly be laid off his job during a recession and yet not attribute this experience to something as abstract as "economic conditions" in the nation. In order to have internalized the recession, a person must have known that he had been personally hurt by unemployment or recession. Evidence of internalization can be adduced from frame of reference material from questions about respondents' personal financial situation. We will hypothesize that:

Hypothesis 5: Those who were personally affected by the recession will be more likely to have more pronounced attitudinal reactions than those less directly affected.

In addition, the recession was probably also of concern to some people who felt no direct personal impact from it. These people, whose responses to the economic questions in the interview indicated that the recession was part of their frame of reference, were considered to have recession salience. Since we are using frame of reference material and have no direct measures of perceptions of economic events, we will be unable to identify a segment of the population who may have been aware of the change in economic conditions but who apparently did not consider these economic events salient enough to mention in responding to rather indirect questions at the time of the interview. Therefore, the "No Perception" category in Figure 1 will be over-represented.

We will also consider the idea that:

Hypothesis 6: When the U.S. is not at war, domestic economic events are more likely to be of concern than foreign events in which the United States is directly involved.

The assumption behind this sixth hypothesis can be based on the notion of "life space," which is defined by Kurt Lewin to be "the person and the psychological environment as it exists for him."[14] Lewin goes on to say that there are a multitude of processes in the physical or social world

---

[14]Kurt Lewin, Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers, edited by Dorwin Cartwright (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951), p. 57. The psychological concepts used throughout this study owe much to Kurt Lewin.

which do not affect the life space of the individual at a given time. There is a "boundary zone" of the life space, and "the process of perception, for instance, is intimately linked with this boundary zone because what is perceived is partly determined by the physical stimuli; i.e., that part of the physical world which affects the sensory organs at [a given] time."[15] This boundary zone is not to be confused with geographic environment, but we are hypothesizing that stimuli from domestic economic events are more likely to be part of the physical world (and thus the life space) of individual citizens than foreign events; and that news of economic decline is more likely to be salient inasmuch as it probably would be perceived as a greater direct threat to well-being than news about foreign affairs, especially during a time when the United States was not at war.

A phenomenon that is assumed throughout this discussion is that an individual's attitudes change through the learning experience of newly perceived events. In particular, we have been assuming that the cognition of economic decline will result in changes in attitudes toward the economic world. However, in order for these changes in economic attitudes to have any effect in the political world, the individual must have some sense of a relationship between economic conditions and governmental policy. To

---

[15] Ibid.

social scientists whose thinking has been influenced by a Keynsian era, it may be inconceivable that people may not automatically link economic cycles with public policy; yet it cannot be assumed that such a connection is part of the American voter's conceptual equipment. (We need only remind the reader that those social scientists and commentators who have become used to interpreting elections as shifts along a liberal-conservative continuum have assumed that the electorate has had a concept of such a continuum. The vast majority of voters do not so conceptualize.)[16] It is perhaps wisest not to assume too much about the electorate's conceptual abilities. We must therefore try to establish from interview data whether or not the individual made the connection between economics and politics. Such a cognized relationship will be called political translation.[17]

We will hypothesize that factors such as political involvement, amount of education, and cues gained from union membership will be strongly associated with ability to make this political translation. We can also expect that this translation, if made, will take on a partisan coloration; that is, some people may think of the Democrats as best able to handle economic problems; others might view the Republicans as the party most likely to maintain

---

[16]See Campbell et al., The American Voter, chap. x.

[17]See chapter II in Campbell et al., The American Voter for a full discussion of the concept of political translation.

prosperity. Again, party identification is a likely intervening variable, leading the individual to make a political assessment of economic conditions in conformance with his partisan predispositions.

In this theoretical construct we can assume no time sequence moving from event to perception to economic attitude change to political translation to vote. Lack of an experimental design under controlled conditions makes a time sequential test impossible. Such a time sequential test might cast more light on the process of the psychological impact of the event, but the fact that we lack the experimental design to demonstrate time-causal sequences will not present a major handicap in studying the major hypothesis (A).

The most important point to be made in this exposition of the theoretical construct is that all conditions--perception, economic attitude and political translation--must be present in the phenomenology[18] of the political actor in order to demonstrate that the objective event (recession) resulted in voting change. If the voter did not perceive the recession of 1958, for whatever reason, the event could not affect his political behavior; if he

---

[18]Phenomenology, roughly defined, means "conscious mental processes."

did perceive it, but did not link it with a political party, or with public policy, it could not affect his vote.[19]

The use of this theoretical construct in the present study assumes an ability to reliably measure economic attitudes and political translation--an assumption which is difficult to fulfill in any cross-sectional survey at present levels of methodological precision and knowledge. Indeed, problems of measurement methodology will be of major concern to us throughout this study.

---

[19]In the case of those who indicated political translation, but who were in the "No Perception" category, we must assume that they were not reacting to current economic events, but were acting upon longer-term attitudes.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, PUBLIC POLICY AND THE PEOPLE

The 1958 Recession and the 1958 Election

The American economy took a decided dip starting in September 1957 and did not begin a slow and only partial recovery until late spring 1958. The Federal Reserve Board's Index of Industrial Production fell from 145 (1947-49 = 100) in August 1957 to a low of 126 in April 1958.[1] Unemployment data indicate that the recession was still pressing hard on the population as late as July 1958. Monthly surveys conducted by the Bureau of Census indicate that in each month from February 1958 to July 1958, over 5 million persons were unemployed.[2] This figure only begins to tell the story of the recession, however, for it represents just those who were unemployed at the point in time when the Bureau of Census surveys were taken. Between one month and the next,

---

[1]U. S., Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Federal Reserve Bulletin, XLIII, No. 10 (October, 1957), p. 1175. Ibid., XLIV, No. 6 (June, 1958), p. 695. The Federal Reserve Board's Index is seasonally adjusted.

[2]U. S., Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment, Employment and Labor Force: 1947-61, February 13, 1962, p. S-3.

some people had gone back to work and others had been laid off. Thus, the monthly measures of unemployment do not give an indication of the total number of people who experienced unemployment sometime during the course of the recession. It has been estimated that 14 per cent of all family heads suffered unemployment during the twelve month period from October 1957 to October 1958.[3] (The average unemployment rate for this same period was 6.4 per cent.[4]) If we include working wives, sons and daughters, about 17 per cent of all families, or one out of every six, experienced unemployment. An additional 7 per cent suffered economic deprivation due to shorter work time.[5]

Thus, in the year just preceding the November 1958 congressional election, the nation experienced a serious recession--more serious than the two previous post-World War II recessions of 1949-50 and 1954.[6] The Democrats gained 50 seats in the 1958 election to boost their House membership to 283--the greatest number of Democratic seats held since 1936. Democratic congressional candidates received

---

[3]Wilbur J. Cohen, William Haber, and Eva Mueller, The Impact of Unemployment in the 1958 Recession, printed for the use of U. S. Senate, 86th Cong., 2d Sess., Special Committee on Unemployment Problems (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1960), p. 7.

[4]U. S., Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment, Employment and Labor Force, 1947-61, February 13, 1962, p. S-4.

[5]Cohen et al., The Impact of Unemployment in the 1958 Recession, pp. 7-8.

[6]Ibid., pp. 4-6.

56.1 per cent of the national vote--an all-time Democratic high. This benchmark is all the more impressive when we consider that it was a gain of 5 percentage points over the average Democratic vote in the five previous (post-World War II) congressional elections. If we look only at off-year

	Democratic Percentage of Total Congressional Vote[7]
1948	51.9%
1950	49.0
1952	49.7
1954	52.5
1956	51.1
1948-56 average	50.8

elections since 1946 in order to exclude short-term factors present in presidential years, we find that the average Democratic percentage of the vote in 1950, 1954 and 1962 (excluding 1958) was 51.2 per cent.[8]

This strong surge of Democratic vote in an election which occurred shortly after a serious recession would seem to lend considerable credence to the notion that economic conditions have a decided effect on election results. Louis Bean's theory was undoubtedly buttressed by the outcome of

---

[7]U. S., Bureau of the Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1963 (84th ed.; Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 369.

[8]We should hasten to remind the reader of the "normal vote" concept described earlier (pp. 22-27). It indicated that under "normal" conditions the Democrats should have been getting about 54 per cent of the vote during these years. This suggests that the 1958 election was closer to "normal" than the above interpretation would lead one to believe; and that fairly strong pro-Republican short-term forces were operating in the congressional elections from 1948 to 1956 and again in 1962.

the 1958 election. Indeed, Bean had predicted the large Democratic victory (almost to the number of seats) in an article which appeared in March 1958.[9] In any case, the conjunction of the 1958 recession and the 1958 congressional election offers an excellent opportunity to examine the relationship between economic conditions and electoral behavior.

Economic Decline and Party Realignment

We should, of course, not expect the 1957-58 recession to have an impact on people's attitudes that in any way approaches that of the Great Depression. The Depression of the 1930's was a catastrophe compared to the economic dip of 1957-58. At the height of the Depression, in 1933, the unemployment rate was close to 25 per cent and it remained at a level of over 20 per cent for four years--from 1932 through 1935. Furthermore, the unemployment rate never fell below 14 per cent during the whole decade of the 1930's.[10] Considering the fact that a 6.4 per cent unemployment rate in 1958 meant that about 17 per cent of the labor force had experienced unemployment sometime during that year, we can

---

[9]Louis H. Bean, "Happy, Hopeful Democrats," The New Republic, March 24, 1958, pp. 8-9. Bean used the Federal Reserve Board Production Index as his main predictor.

[10]U. S., Bureau of Labor Statistics, Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Statistics: 1947-61 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, October, 1962), p. 3. Unemployment data from the 1930's is not directly comparable to that of the 1950's due to changes in the method of measurement.

only begin to imagine the total number of families that suffered directly from the hardship of unemployment and other economic deprivation during the 10 years from 1930 to 1940.

The political impact of the Great Depression remains to this day. There is strong evidence that people not only changed their voting habits during the 1930's, but that there was a considerable shift in party identification as well.[11] The American Voter concludes:

> Judging from what we know about party identification in the 1950's and from such insights as we can derive from the election returns of the earlier period, we can hardly doubt that the decade of the Great Depression saw a profound reorientation of political partisanship. . . . By the conversion of erstwhile Republicans, the activation of previously inert people and the capture of the young voters, the Democratic Party emerged from this period as the majority party.[12]

The authors of The American Voter state, furthermore, that "our surveys force us to the conclusion that only an event of extraordinary intensity can arouse any significant part of the electorate to the point that its established political loyalties are shaken."[13] Did the deterioration of economic conditions in the late 1950's create a force of sufficient strength to cause change in party attachments? A careful inspection of our 1956-58-60 panel data reveals perhaps two cases where party realignment occurred which

---

[11]Campbell et al., The American Voter, pp. 153-60.

[12]Ibid., p. 160.

[13]Ibid., p. 151.

can be attributed directly to the recession. A 27 year old munitions handler from Pueblo, Colorado, said that he was a Democrat in 1958; he claimed weak Republican allegiance in 1956. Although he remained employed, he was well aware that Pueblo was hard hit by the recession and said: "So many are out of jobs, but I think the Democratic Congress will help us to get more jobs." At several points in the interview, he made similar comments about economic conditions and the Democrats' ability to bring about better times. Another young man, an unemployed logger in Riggins, Idaho, where many were out of work, made several references to the Democrats as the party that would help with economic problems and mentioned the "Hoover Depression." He had said that he was an Independent in 1956 and then moved to a Democratic affiliation in 1958 and remained a Democrat in 1960. (However, both of his parents had been Democrats, so perhaps this movement toward the Democratic party would have occurred anyway.)

In all, some 31 cases of apparent Democratic realignment were observed in the panel; that is, 31 cases where respondents were Republicans or Independents in 1956, changed to a Democratic identification in 1958 and remained Democrats in 1960. There were 15 cases of similar "realignment" toward Republican identification. Given the fact that the Democrats enjoy an almost 2 to 1 advantage in overall party allegiance throughout the country (see Table 1-2 on page 23), the larger proportion changing to the Democratic party is

not surprising. One item that was somewhat unusual, and which paralleled a finding in The American Voter concerning the realignment in the 1930's,[14] was the fact that an unusually high proportion (almost half) of those who shifted to a Democratic affiliation in 1958 were under 30 years of age (twice the number that would be expected by chance). Those who became Republicans came proportionately from all age cohorts. However, as we have just noted, only two of these cases of realignment toward the Democratic standard are directly traceable to economic conditions. Some of the respondents in this group that apparently moved toward the Democrats had very little interest in or knowledge about politics (especially those respondents in their twenties) and were thus unsure of their political orientation from one interview to the next. Another factor which may explain part of this apparent movement toward the Democratic Party is the presence of a number of people who were lured by short-term Republican forces in 1956, particularly Eisenhower's candidacy. They called themselves Republicans in 1956 although they were normally Democrats.

Thus far we have used changes in the respondents' party identification, as observed in the panel data, to measure possible realignment in the late 1950's. In 1958 and 1960, the interview added a question which asked the respondent if there ever was a time when he had thought of

---

[14] Ibid., pp. 153-56.

himself as belonging to a different party. Responses to this question help us to determine what forces were important enough to cause awareness of change in partisan predispositions. Of those respondents who were aware of changing their party identification between 1957 and 1960, or who had at least toyed with the idea of changing, only one mentioned that the 1958 recession had influenced her political reorientation. A young coed from Louisville, Kentucky, said that she was an Independent Republicar in 1956. By 1960, she was still an Independent, but was now leaning toward the Democrats. The fact that her father had been out of work from the fall of 1957 to the spring of 1958 had made a strong impression. In 1960 she still remembered her father's unemployment experience and was aware that this "employment situation" had caused her to move toward a more Democratic party identification. This same question revealed two or three cases of momentary wavering in party identification in 1958 that was ascribed to the recession.[15] These

---

[15]One case was a 62 year old Negro janitor who ordinarily was an Independent Republican. In 1958, when asked if there was anything in particular he didn't like about the Republican party, he said:

> "I don't know for sure whether they're the cause or not, but it seems like they don't keep the working up so good--I work in a watch factory and they were all saying we'd be out--the Republicans would shut it down--but we're still working--they had me worried, though."

Later in the interview, when asked if he had ever thought of himself as belonging to a different party, he admitted leaning toward the Democrats in early summer when "they laid-off hundreds of hands."

Another case was a stock worker in a shoe company in St. Louis, Missouri. Ordinarily an Independent, he

were people who moved toward a Democratic identification, or thought about doing so in 1958; but the 1960 interview indicated that this wavering had not caused a permanent change in partisan orientation.

We must conclude that the 1957-58 recession was not a force of sufficient intensity or duration to create a significant realignment in party identification. An economic decline that lasts a few months cannot be compared with a severe depression that endures for years. It probably takes many years to bring about a fundamental change in party identification such as that which took place in the 1930's.[16]

Basic Public Attitudes toward Depression and Counter-Cyclical Policies

The following section will utilize findings of the Economic Behavior Program of the Survey Research Center to describe general attitudes held by the American public toward economic conditions and counter-cyclical policies, and to indicate the public's general level of conceptualization concerning these topics.[17]

---

thought of himself as a Weak Democrat in 1958 due to the "labor situation and the people out of work in the first part of 1958." He was a member of the Teamster's union and at one point in the interview said that "Big Business planned to lay off people--they wrote a book to that effect--unions showed the book around."

[16]Campbell et al., The American Voter, p. 535.

[17]The same basic sample design is used by both the Economic Behavior Program and the Political Behavior Program of the Survey Research Center. Thus, the data from the

Certain basic attitudes that are widely held among the public today indicate that a recession is not viewed as a prelude to depression, and is therefore not interpreted as a cause for great concern. This may be surprising in light of the 1930's experience, but rather than fearing a recurrence of a depression, the public has a general feeling that something has been learned since the thirties which makes it possible to avoid severe depression.

At various times during the past fifteen years, the Economic Behavior Program has asked the following question to nationwide samples of American families: "Do you think that something like the depression of the thirties is likely to happen again during the next five years or so?" Consistently, close to 60 per cent of the respondents have said flatly that a depression will not or cannot happen again, while less than 15 per cent think it might recur. (The remainder of the respondents were uncertain or said that a depression probably would not happen again.)[18] This belief was not affected by the nature of economic conditions at the time of the survey--for example, the response in May-June 1958, at the height of the recession, was essentially

---

Economic studies of the Survey Research Center come from the same sampling points throughout the country as the political surveys do.

[18]George Katona, The Powerful Consumer: Psychological Studies of the American Economy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960), pp. 174-75. It should be mentioned that lower income people were somewhat more pessimistic about prospects of another depression than upper income groups.

the same as that in interviews taken during more prosperous times.

When asked to explain why they believed that a depression was not inevitable, some people could not verbalize more than to say "we have learned many things since the thirties," but most of the respondents made some mention of government policy, saying, in effect, "the government can avert a depression and would do so if need be."[19]

Although the public believes that another depression can be avoided, they are far less sanguine about recessions, especially after experiencing one in 1957-58 and another in 1960-61. At various times in the 1960's the Economic Behavior surveys have asked: "How about a recession and unemployment like we had in 1958 and in winter 1960-61; do you think this might happen again?" Although responses vary somewhat with current economic conditions, generally over 60 per cent have agreed that another recession is likely,

---

[19] It is interesting to note that a Fortune poll of 165 business and banking leaders in February and March 1958 brought forth a similar type of response. The "nearly universal" sentiment among the men that Fortune interviewed was expressed by the remark: "Of course, I don't see anything in the cards like 1930." These businessmen seemed confident that "Washington" would not fail to take the necessary actions if "anything really serious" developed. Fortune concluded that

> "A generation after Franklin Roosevelt's bitterly criticized New Deal, U.S. business found considerable comfort in all the stabilizers built into the economy since that era. Executives were convinced that this Republican administration would use credit, taxes, spending--whatever is necessary--to fight any threat of real depression."

George B. Bookman, "How Top Businessmen View the Recession," Fortune, April, 1958, pp. 110-113; 250-256.

while less than one in four have thought it unlikely.[20] However, the public overwhelmingly believes that the government can "do something" about recessions. Close to 70 per cent answered affirmatively when asked: "Do you think the government can do anything to keep unemployment low and maintain prosperous times?"

The fact that they feel that the government can take action to deal with depressions and recessions does not imply, however, that the people have any sophisticated or systematic notions about Keynsian economic theory, nor that they necessarily agree with specific policies suggested by that theory. Simplistically stated, Keynsian anti-recession fiscal policy would call for tax reduction and increased government spending (with a concommitant budgetary deficit); anti-inflation policy would prescribe the opposite. The Economic Behavior Program has, from time to time, made studies of the public's attitudes toward these fiscal policies. In June 1961, for example, at the time of a recession, people were asked the following question: "There has been discussion about reducing taxes at the present time. Do you think this would be a good idea or a bad idea?" Less than half thought that it would be a good idea, and more than 40 per

---

[20]George Katona, Charles A. Lininger, and Richard F. Kosobud, 1962 Survey of Consumer Finances (Monograph No. 32; Ann Arbor, Michigan: Survey Research Center, 1963), p. 238. This attitude has become more optimistic as the 1960's have gone along without economic setback. By 1963, 50 per cent thought that there might be another recession while 30 per cent now thought it unlikely.

cent stated flatly that a tax cut would be a bad thing.[21] The respondents were then asked to give reasons why they felt this way about a tax cut. The bulk of those who opposed cutting taxes felt that the money was needed for national defense or other governmental services. On the other hand, many of those who favored a tax cut thought simply that "taxes are too high." It appears that the connection between tax reduction and an increase in purchasing power was far from being understood by most people.[22] Only 14 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had some notion of the impact of lower taxes on the general economy. This small group said something to the effect that a tax cut would increase purchasing power and stimulate recovery. An almost equal number (10 per cent) were <u>against</u> tax cuts because they feared deficits or felt the budget should be balanced.

When the question of government deficits was studied directly, it was found that there is a widespread feeling

---

[21]Eva Mueller, "Public Attitudes toward Fiscal Programs" (Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, 1962), pp. 17-18. (Mimeographed.)

[22]In the August and November 1963 Economic Behavior surveys, respondents were asked a question which directly linked a tax cut with business conditions: "In your opinion will a cut in income taxes have any effect on business conditions? What kind of effect?" Over half of the people in both surveys felt a tax cut would have no effect or were unable to explain the effect. Most of the rest (almost 40 per cent) were now aware, after the considerable publicity given to President Kennedy's tax cut proposal of a year earlier, that such a tax reduction would increase consumer demand and/or purchasing power; reduce unemployment; or increase investments.

among the public that government deficits should be avoided regardless of national economic conditions. "The tradition that the government budget should be balanced may have some relation to the maxim that one's private budget should be balanced."[23]

Since many people find it hard to express themselves about such difficult matters as fiscal policy, in the June 1958 survey conducted by the Economic Behavior Program, respondents were presented with a number of "things people have mentioned that might stimulate business and reduce unemployment." Respondents were then asked whether each proposal would help a great deal in bringing about good times, help only a little, or not help at all. Table 3-1 provides a list of five of the proposals with scores representing the popularity of each.

By far the most popular remedy to recession is to build public works. "Public works" is also the method most frequently suggested by respondents when asked open-ended questions about "what might be done to reduce unemployment and bring about prosperous times."[24] Whether this idea of using public works as an anti-recession measure stems from the learning experience of the New Deal when such job-creating projects were highly visible, or is part of a generally

---

[23]Eva Mueller, "Public Attitudes toward Fiscal Programs," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXVII (May, 1963), p. 217.

[24]Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 175.

TABLE 3-1

PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TOWARD VARIOUS ANTI-RECESSION PROPOSALS[a]

Proposal	Score[b]
"Start public works, like building roads and schools"	30
"Reduce taxes"	16
"For the government to economize and balance the budget"	11
"Increase defense spending"	5
"Lower interest rates"	2

[a]Data in this table are based on Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 227.

[b]The score is derived by subtracting the per cent of all respondents who said the proposal would not help at all from the per cent of those who said the proposal would help a great deal.

favorable attitude toward school and highway expenditures,[25] cannot be ascertained from the data. However, it is fairly clear that the concept of government spending, per se, is not consistently viewed by the public as a good anti-recession policy. Spending for public works is fine; but spending for defense draws mixed reactions.[26]

[25]See Mueller, The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXVII (May, 1963), p. 220 where it is shown in another context that school and highway construction is a popular form of government expenditure.

[26]Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 176.

Implementation of the most popular anti-recession measures listed in Table 3-1 (spending for public works; reducing taxes; and balancing the budget) obviously call for inconsistent policies. There is apparently quite a bit of confusion in the public mind concerning counter-cyclical programs. In general, the Economic Behavior studies indicate that the people are quite uncertain and ambivalent when confronted with the complexities of specific fiscal programs.[27]

In sum, a great majority of the American people feel that the government can do something to keep unemployment low and avoid recession and depression, but they make incongruent and often negative assessments of the specific policies which go together to form the Keynsian anti-recession program. Extending these findings, we might surmise that the public is not conceptually equipped to appraise the actual programs undertaken (or not undertaken) by the President and Congress in the event of economic deterioration. However, should an economic decline continue unabated, there is every reason to believe that the public would feel that the government was somehow at fault.

Recession and Inflation

In the following section we will summarize the actual economic conditions in the United States from 1956

---

[27]Mueller, The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXVII (May, 1963), pp. 223-228.

to 1962,[28] and briefly discuss the governmental policy undertaken to deal with these conditions.

Chart 1 shows the unemployment rate as measured by monthly sample surveys conducted for the Department of Labor by the Bureau of Census. The unemployment data is not seasonally adjusted--it represents the actual proportion of the labor force which is unemployed at the time of the Bureau of Census survey. Seasonally adjusted data would not be useful for our purposes since it modifies the actual number of people out of work and would not be comparable with Survey Research Center data on the unemployed. There are, of course, other measures of economic conditions, such as the Federal Reserve Board's Index of Industrial Production. However, the unemployment rate will be used in this study as the major indicator of economic cycles for several reasons: (1) one of our primary concerns is the impact of adverse economic conditions on individuals and their families, and the unemployment rate best reflects the relative degree of potential impact at a given time; (2) the unemployment rate is a widely publicized measure of economic conditions--more likely to be prominently noted in the mass media and thus more widely perceived by the public than other measures of economic conditions; and (3) for economists and political

---

[28]The period of study is extended in this section and the next in order to include the occurrence of another business cycle--the recession of 1960-61.

Chart 1

TREND OF UNEMPLOYMENT RATES AND CONSUMER PRICES, 1956-1962

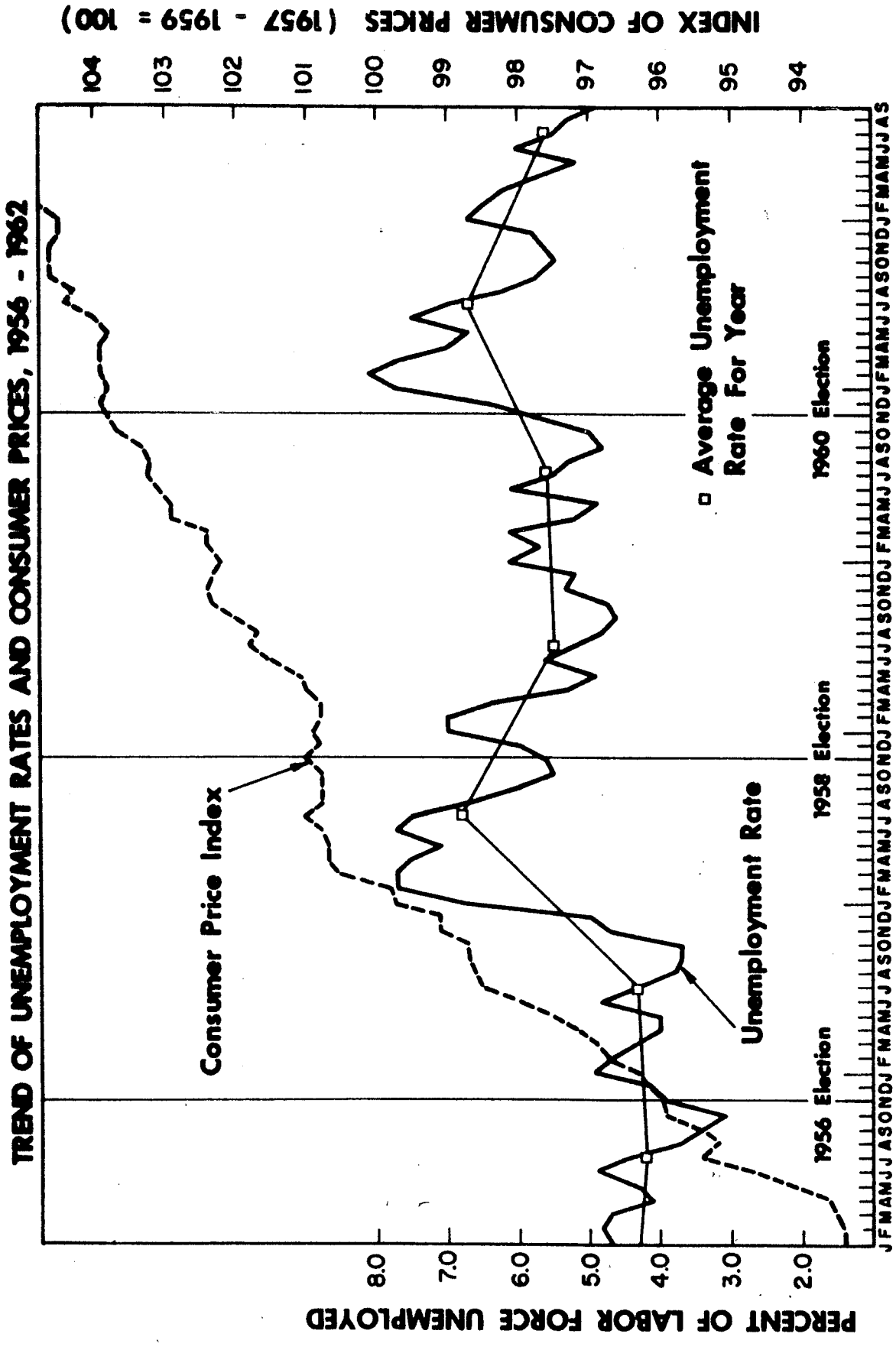
Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted)

Source: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Consumer Price Index (All Items)

Source: U. S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Chart 1


TREND OF UNEMPLOYMENT RATES AND CONSUMER PRICES, 1956 - 1962
PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE UNEMPLOYED
INDEX OF CONSUMER PRICES (1957 - 1959 = 100)
Consumer Price Index
Unemployment Rate
Average Unemployment Rate For Year
1956 Election
1958 Election
1960 Election
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962

leaders, unemployment statistics are probably the best single indicator of economic cycles.[29]

It should be particularly noted in Chart 1 that the 1957-58 recession was definitely on the wane by the time of the 1958 congressional election, but that the economy did not return to the pre-recession level of prosperity in 1959. The unemployment rate remained fairly high in 1959 and 1960, meaning that many were experiencing unemployment between the 1958 and 1960 elections; and another recession was developing just prior to the 1960 election.[30] The 1957-58

---

[29]See Stanley Lebergott, Research Study 6 in Inflation, Growth, and Employment, a series of studies prepared for the Commission on Money and Credit (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 345-366. Lebergott concludes that unemployment statistics are (1) the most sensitive business cycle indicator, (2) the best available measure of resource use, and (3) a good barometer of probable political pressure. Under this latter point, he makes the following observation:

> "In our day, the changing level of unemployment is as lucid an indicator of forthcoming pressures on the monetary authorities as any we possess. Successive one point rises in consumer prices may or may not produce hoarse demands for action--and some political pressure. But such one point rises in the unemployment rate (seasonally adjusted) will almost certainly do so. It is quite irrelevant whether the authorities consider the Employment Act of 1946 to be a piece of compelling wisdom or not. Charged as they are with implementing policies on behalf of the nation, they must reckon with these pressures and consider their justification. The unemployment labor force measures help them do so."

Ibid., p. 347.

[30]Following the 1960 election, Nixon expressed the belief that a softening of the economy in October had contributed in a major way to his defeat.

> "He said the fact that unemployment rose 400,000 during the month indicated that about 1,200,000 persons [in immediate families?] were pinched economically in that period. He said even if

recession was a rather sudden and very definite event, as shown by the peak of unemployment rising sharply out of the prosperous "valley" of 1956 and early 1957. The sluggish economic conditions in 1959 and 1960 would not lead us to expect any marked improvement in people's economic attitudes or concern about governmental policy in 1960, however. Indeed, we will be using data from the 1960 interviews more to replicate than to contrast 1958 findings.

In order to indicate the nature of economic conditions more completely, Chart 1 also shows the trend in the Consumer Price Index for the period under consideration. Prices were rising rapidly from April 1956 to April 1958--at an average rate of .25 per month.[31] After leveling off for about a year, prices began a slow and steady climb of about .1 per month--a trend that has continued well into 1964 (except for a pause during the 1960-61 recession). This 1956 to 1958 inflation was the first case of marked price increase during a period unrelated to war since before

---

only one out of five of these had intended to vote Republican and had not because of joblessness this might have cost him the election."
"Nixon Keeps Door Open for '64 Race," New York Times, January 20, 1961, p. 16.

[31]Besides the cost of medical care, which has risen rapidly during the whole period of the 1950's and 1960's, food prices and transportation costs (which include automobiles) were the major contributors to the 1956 to 1958 inflation.

the First World War,[32] and undoubtedly was one of the causes of the 1957-58 recession.[33] Even more remarkable is the fact that this inflation did not terminate (and prices decline) with the onset of the recession; rather this inflation accompanied the recession. Since we are interested in noting the objective economic conditions which formed the objects for public perceptions and attitudes, the fact that both inflation and recession occurred simultaneously presents an interesting analytical problem.

In the period under study, especially that from late 1957 to 1958, the public could have reacted to the inflation, to the recession, or to both. Studies made by the Economic Behavior Program during this period indicate that poople had quite accurate perceptions of price changes and were well aware of the inflation.[34] Furthermore, inflation is generally regarded as a bad thing; it is "resented by the majority of the American people who feel that rising prices retard their financial progress or tend to lower

---

[32]For an excellent study of the economic conditions in the 1950's, see Joseph W. Conard, Study 1 in Inflation, Growth, and Employment (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964), pp. 1-144.

[33]Surveys of consumer attitudes in 1957 found that there was considerable concern with rising prices which created dissatisfaction and less willingness to buy. People were especially dissatisfied with the automobile price increases and a majority thought the succeeding twelve months would be a bad time to buy cars. Katona, The Powerful Consumer, pp. 47-50.

[34]Ibid., p. 197.

their standard of living."[35] The economic fact that a moderate degree of inflation often accompanies prosperity--that production and profits usually increase in times of rising prices--is "not in the forefront" of most people's thinking (not even of businessmen and their wives).[36] People, then, tend to think of inflation not in terms of its effect on the whole economy, but from their viewpoint as an individual consumer. In sum, most Americans hold the conviction that inflation is bad--they resent it because it "makes it harder to make ends meet."

With two adverse economic conditions--inflation and recession--occurring in 1957 and 1958, might some people have blamed the government for the recession and others voted against the administration for failing to halt the inflation? Can we deal with just the recession and not the inflation in analyzing the impact of economic conditions on political behavior during this period? There seems to be a good deal of evidence that inflation does not have enough impact on economic and especially on political attitudes to warrant special study. We noted earlier that most Americans think the government can do something to avoid depression and alleviate recession. Although a cross-section of

---

[35]Eva Mueller, "Consumer Reactions to Inflation," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXIII (May, 1959), p. 256. Mueller goes on to point out that this resentment depends primarily on the extent and persistence of the price advances, and on the income increases which accompany them.

[36]Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 195.

people have never been asked whether or not government can do anything to stem inflation, there is evidence from Economic Behavior studies which indicates that the public sees little connection between inflation and government, or, indeed, between inflation and business corporations. During the late 1950's "relatively few people thought that either government, or trade unions, or business had caused prices to go up,"[37] and presumably they did not see how any of these institutions could help bring prices down. The causes of price increases most frequently mentioned were rising labor costs and high demand. (The connection between labor costs and trade union activity was apparently not made by most people.) People thought that business corporations were interested in stable prices or even in lowering prices, not in raising them.[38] In short, the public's knowledge of inflation consists fundamentally of two notions: "that inflation is bad and that they do not have it in their power to do anything about it."[39]

Furthermore, evidence in the data used in this present study indicate that people found inflation to be a relatively unimportant object of either the economic or political world. In 1958, for example, when asked how "things in general" have been going "inside the United States

---

[37] Ibid., p. 197.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., pp. 240-41.

in the past year or so," very few people mentioned inflation, prices or the cost-of-living; and compared with references to recession and unemployment, inflation paled into insignificance. (See Table 3-2.)

TABLE 3-2

FRAME OF REFERENCE WITH REGARD TO GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEMS IN THE UNITED STATES, 1958 AND 1960[a]

Responses referring to:	1958	1960
Recession, unemployment	38%	35%
Inflation, prices, cost-of-living	6	7
Both recession and inflation[b]	5	8
Things other than economic conditions	19	18
No frame of reference, don't know	32	32
	100%	100%
Total number of respondents	1,218	1,758

[a]The question was: "Now, how about problems here at home inside the United States. In the past year or so would you say that things in general have been going along better than they were before, not as well as before, or have they stayed about the same? How is that?"

[b]In future tables using these data, people who mentioned both inflation and recession are included in the "Recession, unemployment" category.

It is most interesting that both in 1958 and in 1960 economic conditions were the object most frequently evoked by this rather vague, open-ended question about how "things" had been going in the United States. One can imagine many

other "things" people might have had in mind without ever thinking about economic conditions at all; for example, school integration and the race problem.

Even more important is the evidence in our panel data that people do not link inflation with political party or governmental policies. For example, in 1960, when asked if they thought it would make any difference to them financially whether the Republicans or the Democrats won the election, less than 10 per cent of those who thought it would make a difference had inflation, prices, or the cost-of-living as their frame of reference. Most people who had a clear frame of reference in responding to this question were thinking in terms of prosperity and depression, job security, or income.

Further evidence of the relatively low political impact of inflation is found in Table 3-3. When asked what they liked or disliked about the Democratic party and the Republican party, respectively, very few people responded in terms of inflation, high prices, or the cost-of-living. Far more prevalent was the idea that one or the other of the parties (usually the Democratic) is the party of prosperity or "good times," that it can bring more jobs and "take care" of recession or depression; or, on the other hand, that one or the other of the parties (usually the Republican) is the party of depression, that it brings "bad times" or that it "hasn't helped us out of recession." It is interesting to note in Table 3-3 that the total

TABLE 3-3

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC PARTIES: RESPONSES PERTAINING TO INFLATION, RECESSION AND PROSPERITY, 1956, 1958, AND 1960

Attitudes toward Political Parties	Per Cent of All Respondents Mentioning:					
	Recession or Prosperity			Inflation		
	1956	1958	1960	1956	1958	1960
Pro-Dem., Anti-Rep.	10.9%	16.5%	13.5%	2.1%	2.7%	1.9%
Pro-Rep., Anti-Dem.	6.9	2.2	4.0	.8	.8	1.6
Total	17.8%	18.7%	17.5%	2.9%	3.5%	3.5%
Number of Respondents	1,214	1,218	1,756*	1,214	1,218	1,756*

*Weighted.

proportion of people who mentioned recession or prosperity in 1958 increased insignificantly from 1956, but a breakdown of this group shows that attitudes did become slightly more anti-Republican or pro-Democratic in 1958. (This variable will be examined more fully in Chapter Six.) Also worthy of note is the fact that in spite of the rapidly rising prices between 1956 and 1958, there was little increase in the proportion of people who saw the Republicans as culpable. By 1960, however, the Republican image in regard to inflation seemed to improve. Perhaps the anti-inflation programs of the Eisenhower administration,

which we will discuss in the next section, were perceived by some in this small group of people.

We can conclude that the inflation was not seen as an important economic event by most people, and it certainly was not politically significant in the minds of the public. The recession, not the inflation, was the economic factor that received the most attention and concern. People knew that prices were rising and that this hurt their personal financial situation, but they did not connect this fact with economic conditions in the country as a whole. Rather, they viewed price increases almost solely from the standpoint of individual consumers. Recession and the unemployment situation was a different matter. Most people thought of recession and unemployment as a general problem, and quite a few made the connection between this economic condition and political party policy.

Governmental Policy, 1957 to 1959

A brief exposition should be made of the economic policies pursued by the Eisenhower administration during the period under study--policies which could have affected people's attitudes toward the Republicans. Faced (as the Republicans were in 1957) with an unusually sharp inflation and also increasing unemployment, any Council of Economic Advisors would be hard pressed for a solution. Anti-recession policies would probably exacerbate the inflation, and anti-inflationary policies would probably precipitate a

business decline. Some observers have propounded the thesis that liberals are more concerned with recession and unemployment than with inflation, and that conservatives have the opposite viewpoint.[40] At any rate, President Eisenhower and the Chairman of his Council of Economic Advisors, Raymond J. Saulnier, decided that inflation was the greatest threat to the economy, and, therefore, restrictive monetary policies were introduced early in 1957. The Federal Reserve operations were altered to limit expansion of credit and to hold down the money supply. Since there was a heavy demand for capital and credit early in 1957, interest rates went up sharply. However, when consumer demand did not live up to business expectations, and production slackened toward the end of 1957, this monetary

---

[40]See Robert Lekachman, "The Politics of Recession," Commentary, June, 1958. Lekachman discusses the liberal and conservative approaches to recession.

Another interesting observation was made recently by M. J. Rossant of the New York Times. Walter W. Heller, the present Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors held a meeting with the former chairmen of that body. Reporting the outcome of their discussion, Rossant concluded:

> "In general, the more conservative economists are concerned about the threat of inflation . . . . Liberal economists are much more worried about the possibility of recession. They would like to see spending increased in order to make sure that it can be avoided, and they belittle the notion that inflation is a threat."

New York Times, August 30, 1964, Section 3, p. F1. Raymond Saulnier, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors under Eisenhower, is probably the most conservative of the group of former chairmen. He is still especially concerned, as he was in the late 1950's, with inflationary pressures created by a growth of money and credit.

restraint was relaxed. As the recession grew worse, "monetary and credit policies were employed vigorously to assure ample supplies of credit."[41]

Aside from the use of monetary controls, however, Eisenhower felt that the Federal Government should take a limited role in the economy. He believed that the American economy could take care of itself, and at many times during the recession he declared his confidence that the economy would recover, and encouraged optimism.[42]

Many economists, including the former Chairman of his Council of Economic Advisors, Arthur F. Burns, strongly recommended a tax cut to stimulate recovery. Although Eisenhower mentioned the possibility of a tax cut at various times throughout the recession, it is clear that he and his administration would consider cutting taxes only as a last resort should the recession deepen and become prolonged.

However, the Administration did take several steps to moderate the recession. These programs included an extension of unemployment benefits, a stepping up of defense spending, and the implementation of a moderate program of public works (primarily highway construction and housing). One of the major techniques used in these programs was to

---

[41]U. S., Council of Economic Advisors, Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress January 20, 1959 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1959), p. iii.

[42]His comments found in the New York Times on January 10, 1958, p. 12, and March 6, 1958, p. 1, are typical.

advance the timing of Federal expenditures, but not to increase expenditures.

Eisenhower continually stressed the danger of inflation and warned against the use of large-scale Federal spending to combat the recession. He vehemently criticized the "liberals" and "radicals" in Congress who espoused "pump-priming schemes."[43] The policies undertaken by the Republican administration, Eisenhower summarized, "were not massive and heavy-handed. They did not founder the economy. Huge programs would have only enfeebled the economy."[44] In campaign speeches just before the 1958 congressional elections, Eisenhower called his administration's recession policies "a very impressive record," and claimed that aggressive Republican action had saved the country from reckless spending.[45]

In his January 1959 Economic Report to the Congress concerning the economic activities of 1958, Eisenhower attributed the recovery from the recession principally to "the industry and resourcefulness of our people, the strength

---

[43]Eisenhower specifically referred to the "spender-wing" of the Democrat party, and to the spector of "huge Federal bureaucracies like the P.W.A. or W.P.A." which were employed in the thirties. He stressed that economic progress is generated by citizens wisely managing their own resources, not by the wholesale distribution of the people's money in dubious activities under Federal direction. New York Times, March 9, 1958, p. 1; October 23, 1958, p. 20; November 6, 1958, p. 18.

[44]New York Times, October 23, 1958, p. 20.

[45]New York Times, October 23, 1958, p. 20; November 1, 1958, p. 1.

and resiliency of our free competitive institutions, and the continuing operation in the American economy of powerful forces making for long term growth."[46] The major concern of this Economic Report was inflation, not recession. Stressing that an "indispensible condition for achieving vigorous and continuing economic growth is firm confidence that the value of the dollar will be reasonably stable in the years ahead," the President suggested that Congress amend the Employment Act of 1946 "to make reasonable price stability an explicit goal of Federal economic policy."[47]

Thus, the Eisenhower administration placed heavy emphasis on anti-inflationary policies during the period under study, mainly by relying on monetary and credit controls and refusing to increase government spending. As we have seen, the American people were far more concerned with unemployment and recession than with inflation; and they have little understanding of the subtleties of monetary controls and interest rate adjustments. (See ranking of the proposal to "lower interest rates" in Table 3-1 above.)

---

[46] U. S., Council of Economic Advisors, Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress January 20, 1959, p. iii.

[47] Ibid., p. v. As we have seen, the economy did not return to pre-recession levels of unemployment. Professor Katona, after studying people's attitudes toward both recession and inflation, concludes:

> ". . . it is hardly correct, as we so often hear, that 'the most important single issue confronting us is inflation.' It may well be that a business recession causes more human suffering than creeping inflation."

Katona, The Powerful Consumer, p. 211.

However, the stepped-up highway construction may have been quite visible, and the extension of unemployment compensation was highly publicized.

What was the public appraisal of the Eisenhower administration's performance in handling the recession? In October, 1958, the Economic Behavior survey asked: "Would you say that in the past year or so the Federal Government has done a good job or a poor job in dealing with the problem of recession and unemployment?" A majority (51 per cent) felt that it had done a good job and only 23 per cent said that the government had done a poor job. (Twenty-two per cent did not know what kind of job the government had done.) When asked what they had in mind in giving this opinion, 2 per cent of the population praised the government for what they saw as a laissez-faire policy. Only a little over 2 per cent remarked about the two principle activities of the administration: keeping check on the inflation and establishing public confidence. The bulk of those who thought favorably of the governmental policies said something to the effect that the government had extended help where needed (unemployment compensation) and had increased spending (road building). Also, many people felt that since the recession was over (the question was asked in October 1958), the government policies must have been correct. Most of those who thought that the administration had done a poor job said that the government had done too little, that it should have created more jobs, or simply argued

that the recession had lasted too long. Only .3 per cent of the population criticized the administration for tightening money and credit too soon.

Had the recession lasted longer, or had this question been asked at the low point of the recession in June, the Eisenhower administration might not have received such a favorable appraisal. As it was, scarcely anyone in the country was aware of the monetary and anti-inflationary policies which were the heart of the administration's program.

CHAPTER IV

MEASURING THE PERCEPTUAL AND ATTITUDINAL IMPACT OF THE RECESSION

It will be the purpose of this chapter to establish whether or not there was widespread awareness of the recession in 1958 and, if so, to determine the degree to which this perception affected people's attitudes toward their personal financial situation and toward general domestic problems in the country.

We will be particularly interested in learning what we can about the formation of these attitudes toward personal finances and economic conditions. For example, how important are the mass media in creating awareness of recession as a national problem? Is the degree of economic deterioration in one's local area influential in stimulating cognition of economic events? Does a personal experience with recession (becoming unemployed or suffering other economic deprivation) affect one's perceptions and attitudes toward the economy as a whole? These questions, as well as others pertaining to the formation and structure of economic attitudes, will be answered as the discussion in this chapter proceeds.

Much of the chapter will be devoted to a rather detailed methodological examination of the various questions used to measure these economic attitudes. It is always important to test the validity and reliability of survey data, and such testing is all the more necessary in this study for the following reasons. This is the first time that several of these attitudinal questions, particularly the "frame of reference" materials which form an essential part of them, have been systematically examined. Furthermore, unless we establish confidence that these attitudinal questions are measuring what we think they are measuring, the reader might be skeptical about some of the findings. For example, we will need to explain why, in the recession year of 1958 when at least 25 per cent of the population experienced unemployment or suffered other financial loss, only 10 per cent of the respondents reported that their personal financial situation was either the same or worse due to unemployment or recession. And, finally, it is important to discuss the measures of economic attitudes upon which this present study is based because certain of my findings are at variance with those of a previous analysis which made use of differently worded questions to test some similar hypotheses.[1]

This chapter will also examine the sensitivity of economic attitudes to changes in objective economic

---

[1]See Chapter 14 of Campbell et al., The American Voter.

conditions. In particular, we will want to show how rapidly these attitudes can change in the two year interval between one election and the next. Also, determining what kinds of questions tap attitudes that are most sensitive to changing economic conditions will be valuable in conducting future research in which public reaction to economic events is an important variable. Indeed, many of the findings of this study are presented in detail, perhaps overly so, in order to aid future research.[2]

Objective Measure of Change in Family Economic Circumstances, 1956-1960

Using the Political Panel data, it was possible to establish an objective measure of economic deprivation or betterment experienced by the panel members between 1956 and 1958. This measure of change in family economic circumstances was constructed by observing the family income reported in the 1956 interview and noting any change in that income as reported in the 1958 interview. Change in

---

[2]Along these lines, we might point out that it was not without considerable experimentation with various measures of Labor Market Area Conditions that the measures used in this chapter (and explained in Appendix D) were settled upon. For example, we had assumed that people living in areas where economic conditions were good before the onset of the recession would feel the impact of the recession more than those people living in only average or below average areas before the recession. A measure based upon this premise did not yield regular or consistent results. In other words, it matters little what level of economic activity an area is experiencing before a recession. It is the average conditions and especially the degree or trend of decline, from whatever starting point, which are related to economic attitudes.

occupational status was also considered. The same measure was repeated for the 1958 to 1960 interval. (See Appendix C for a full description of this measure.) Any family that had experienced unemployment was placed in a separate category and was assumed to be at the lower extreme of the economic deprivation classifications.

In Table 4-1 we see a remarkable similarity in the amount of financial gain or economic deprivation experienced by families in the period from 1956 to 1958 and in the period from 1958 to 1960. In all, about 25 per cent of the American families suffered economic deprivation (income loss or unemployment) between 1956 and 1958,[3] and a similar per cent incurred such deprivation between 1958 and 1960, while at the same time about 27 per cent were enjoying economic gain in each of these time periods. It would seem that the 1958 recession did not have the definite impact on family economic circumstances that one might have expected. It should be recalled, however, that the economy was quite sluggish between 1958 and 1960, and that the unemployment rate remained at a rather high level during that period. If we had similar data for a more prosperous period, the

---

[3]We have already stated in Chapter Three that about 17 per cent of American families experienced unemployment during the one year prior to the 1958 election. Since Table 4-1 indicates that only 13 per cent of the Political Panel respondents reported unemployment experience for the two years prior to the 1958 interview, there is an obvious underestimate of unemployment in our data. See Appendix C for an explanation of this underestimation.

TABLE 4-1

DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILY ECONOMIC DEPRIVATION OR BETTERMENT: 1956-1958; 1958-1960

Change in Family Economic Circumstances[a]	1956 to 1958	1958 to 1960
+3	6%	9%
+2	8	8
+1	13	11
No Change	30	30
-1	6	5
-2	3	3
-3	3	3
Experienced unemployment (less intense)[b]	6	4
Experienced unemployment (more intense)[b]	7	7
Unclassifiable or not ascertained	18	20
	100%	100%
Number of cases	1,218	1,798*

*Weighted.

[a]See Appendix C for a description of the measure of change in family economic circumstances which is based upon change in income and occupational status.

[b]See Appendix C for a description of the measure of intensity.

contrast between it and the 1956-58 data might have been more evident. However, it should be pointed out that much of the change in a family's financial situation comes about as a result of personal circumstances that are not related

to economic fluctuations--illness, increased family size, promotion, etc.

Perceptions of Economic Events

It is important to demonstrate that economic dips such as the 1957-58 and the 1960-61 recessions, which are relatively mild compared with a major depression, are nevertheless widely perceived. It might be argued that such recessions pass largely unnoticed by a substantial portion of the public. After all, some might say, these recessions were rather short-lived and would be felt only by those who were unlucky enough to become unemployed or suffer financial loss.

In its surveys taken at periodic intervals throughout the 1950's and 1960's, the Economic Behavior Program of the Survey Research Center has asked a question that directly measures perceptions of economic events: "Would you say that at present business conditions are better or worse than they were a year ago?"[4] The public's evaluation of economic conditions, measured by this question at various points in time, is shown in Chart 2 and is compared with the actual conditions (as measured by the unemployment rate). Here we have a graphic demonstration that by and large the public

---

[4]The test-retest reliability of this type of question concerning general business conditions has been demonstrated in panel surveys. George Katona, "Attitude Change: Instability of Response and Acquisition of Experience," Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, LXXII, No. 10 (No. 463, 1958), p. 11, 16.

Chart 2

PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS COMPARED WITH ACTUAL CONDITIONS (UNEMPLOYMENT RATE), 1956-1962

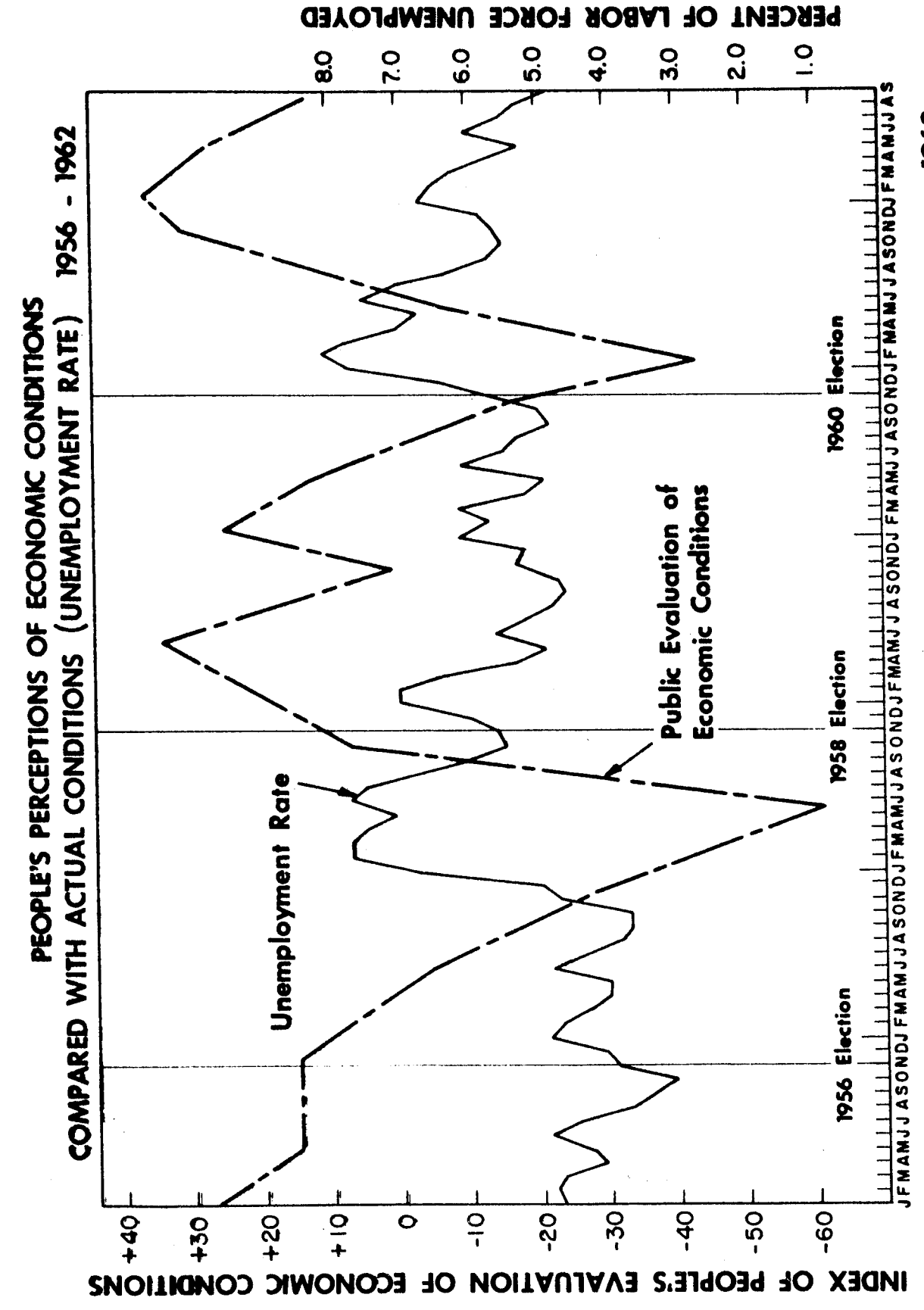
Public Evaluation of Economic Conditions: Based on the question, "Would you say that at present business conditions are better or worse than they were a year ago?"

Index = per cent "better" minus per cent "worse" responses.

Source: Periodic Surveys of the Economic Behavior Program, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

Unemployment Rate: Same as Chart 1.

Chart 2


PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
COMPARED WITH ACTUAL CONDITIONS (UNEMPLOYMENT RATE) 1956 - 1962
INDEX OF PEOPLE'S EVALUATION OF ECONOMIC CONDITIONS
PERCENT OF LABOR FORCE UNEMPLOYED
+40
+30
+20
+10
0
-10
-20
-30
-40
-50
-60
8.0
7.0
6.0
5.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
Unemployment Rate
Public Evaluation of Economic Conditions
1956 Election
1958 Election
1960 Election
J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962

was quite acutely and accurately aware of changes in business conditions during the period under study.

The magnitude of the fluctuation in the public's evaluations of economic conditions (shown in Chart 2) indicates that a great many people, and not just those who suffered personal economic deprivation, knew about the recession. Previous research has come to the conclusion that perceptions of general economic conditions are based largely upon social learning (news, talking with others) and are not dependent upon people's personal financial experiences. For example, an Economic survey which was conducted during a time when general business conditions were good, found that a great majority of those people who held pessimistic attitudes toward their own financial situation still viewed general economic developments with optimism. "A pessimistic turn in opinion about personal finances lost in competition with good business news."[5]

Economic Fluctuations and Change in Economic Attitudes

We have seen (in Chart 2) that fluctuations in business conditions are widely and quite accurately perceived by the public. Simple perception of business conditions is one thing, however, and may not necessarily lead to change in economic attitudes. What was the effect

---

[5]Katona, Psychological Monographs, LXXII, No. 10 (No. 463, 1958), p. 20.

of these business fluctuations on subjective economic attitudes?

The Economic Behavior studies have asked several questions which are similar to those asked of our Political Panel. Since the Economic interviews were repeated at frequent intervals, it is possible to plot their data over time and to present a graphic demonstration of fluctuations in these economic attitudes. In Chart 3 it can be observed that certain economic attitudes did indeed change in response to economic conditions. However, comparing the amplitude of the fluctuations in Chart 3 with those in Chart 2, we can see that the effect of changing business conditions upon economic attitudes was not as great as they were upon simple perception of change. In mid-1958, in particular, a large number of people evaluated economic conditions as worse, but many fewer felt that their own financial situation or that of their friends and neighbors had been adversely affected.

Questions used to measure economic attitudes

Unfortunately, all of the questions upon which Charts 2 and 3 are based were not included in the Political Panel surveys which provide the basic data for this study. In particular, the question depicted in Chart 2 which measures simple awareness or perception of economic conditions was never asked in the Political Panel interviews.

Chart 3

FLUCTUATIONS IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC ATTITUDES, 1956-1962

Economic Worries: Based on the question, "Do you think people around here have any worries about how they'll get along in the next year or so? I'm speaking of people like yourself and your friends."

Index = per cent with "no worries" minus per cent with worries.

Past Personal Financial Situation: Based on the question, "We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you and your family are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?"

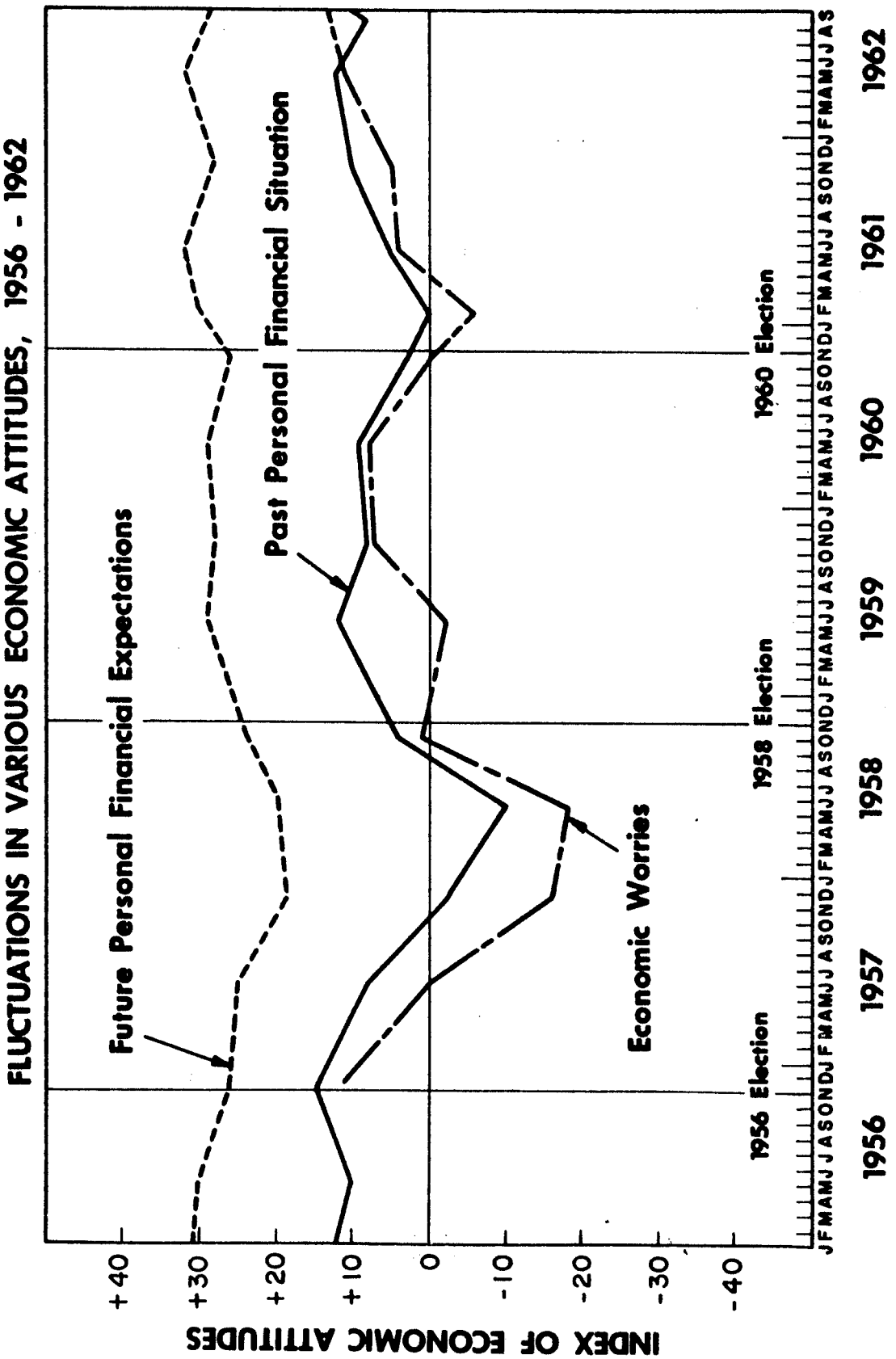
Index = per cent "better off" minus per cent "worse off."

Future Personal Financial Expectations: Based on the question, "Now looking ahead--do you think that a year from now you people will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same as now?"

Index = per cent "better off" minus per cent "worse off."

Source: Periodic Surveys of the Economic Behavior Program, Survey Research Center, University of Michigan.

Chart 3


FLUCTUATIONS IN VARIOUS ECONOMIC ATTITUDES, 1956 - 1962
Future Personal Financial Expectations
Past Personal Financial Situation
Economic Worries
1956 Election
1958 Election
1960 Election
INDEX OF ECONOMIC ATTITUDES
+40
+30
+20
+10
0
-10
-20
-30
-40
1956
1957
1958
1959
1960
1961
1962
J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S O N D J F M A M J J A S

However, the fact that there is no measure of perception of economic conditions in our data should not be a serious handicap. As we have already discussed in Chapter Two, this study is primarily concerned with the attitudinal impact of the recession; according to our theory, if the recession did not affect a person's economic and political attitudes, it could not influence his political behavior.

The "economic worries" question shown in Chart 3 (i.e., "Do you think people around here have any worries about how they'll get along financially in the next year or so? I'm speaking of people like yourself and your friends.") was asked in the Political Panel survey in 1958 only. It can be seen in Chart 3 that this question, when asked at periodic intervals in the Economic Behavior surveys, registered a considerable amount of change in response to economic fluctuations. Almost all of this change can be attributed to increases or decreases in the proportions of people who were concerned about employment (keeping or finding a job); whereas worries about debts, bills, cost-of-living, health, etc. remained quite constant over the years. The sensitivity of the "economic worries" question in measuring recession attitudes will make it a useful adjunct in studying the impact of the 1957-58 recession on the 1958 election.

Questions concerning the past and future financial situation of people and their families were asked in the Political Panel interviews in all three years (1956, 1958

and 1960); however, the wording of the questions in the Political Panel interviews differed slightly from the studies of the Economic Behavior Program.[6]

We can see in Chart 3 that attitudes toward one's present financial situation as compared with the past year show a decided recession impact, but attitudes toward how one's financial situation will be in the future are decidedly optimistic and are hardly deflected at all by recessions. It has been demonstrated in another study using panel data that attitudes toward one's future financial situation are extremely stable over time; they are probably "personality determined," or else based on permanent, deep-seated notions.[7]

Thus, we will not expect the question concerning future financial expectations to be suitable for determining

---

[6]The Economic Behavior surveys asked the questions: "We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that you and your family are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?" and "Now looking ahead--do you think that a year from now you people will be better off financially, or worse off, or just about the same as now?"

The Political Behavior panel surveys asked: "We are also interested in how people are getting along financially these days . . . During the last few years, has your financial situation been getting better, getting worse, or has it stayed the same? How is that? Now looking ahead and thinking about the next few years, do you expect your financial situation will stay about the way it is now, get better, or get worse? How is that?"

[7]The Economic Behavior Program conducted interviews with the same respondents in June 1954, December 1954, June 1955, December 1955, and February 1957. This panel allowed extensive analysis of the amount of turnover found in various attitudinal measures when tested and retested on the same individuals. Katona, Psychological Monographs, LXXII, No. 10 (No. 463, 1958), pp. 11-12.

attitudes toward current economic conditions. On the other hand, the question which measures people's current financial attitudes relative to the immediate past, which we will refer to as "past situation," appears to be an excellent means of eliciting subjective attitudes which are dependent on changing economic circumstances.

Rapidity of change in economic attitudes

It is particularly important to note in Chart 3 that although economic attitudes became decidedly negative as a result of the 1958 recession, they had improved considerably by the time of the 1958 election. Chart 3 illustrates that as soon as economic conditions begin to improve after a recession, economic attitudes spring back as well. There seems to be little carry-over of pessimism, at least in people's attitudes toward their past financial situation and worries about how they and their friends will get along financially.

The attitudes of our Political Panel respondents toward their past financial situation are available only at three points in time--when they were interviewed near election time in 1956, 1958, and 1960.[8] (These points in time are shown on Chart 3 by the vertical lines.) As Chart 3 indicates, attitudes toward past financial situation

[8]The reader is reminded that Chart 3 is based on Economic Behavior surveys conducted at frequent time intervals.

were at a similar level at these particular times. Thus, we would expect people's attitudes concerning their past financial situation to be fairly much the same if measured only at these times, and indeed nearly three-quarters of the Political Panel respondents expressed essentially the same attitude in all three interviews. Had the 1958 election taken place five or six months sooner, and, concomitantly, had the Panel of respondents been interviewed that much earlier, we probably would have detected a much greater change in these attitudes in our panel data. Indeed, had the 1958 election taken place at the low point in the recession, and thus at a time when people's attitudes were most negative, some of the findings of this study might have been different. However, our major hypothesis, and the hypotheses of the previous studies cited in Chapter One, do not stipulate that a recession must occur exactly at the time of an election in order for it to be of political significance. Rather, it is usually postulated that if a recession has taken place any time within a year or even two years of an election, it will have an effect on voting behavior.

Patterns of economic attitude change

Although nearly three-fourths of the Panel did not register any significant change in attitudes concerning their past financial situation in 1956-1958-1960, there were a considerable number (26 per cent) who did change

attitudes. Let us examine the pattern of attitudes of these Panel respondents who did change to see if the 1958 recession might have had an impact on their view of their personal financial situation. Among the 26 per cent who did change attitudes, we would expect two general types of change patterns, given the economic conditions during the period under consideration. One expected pattern would be the 1958 "recession impact" pattern in which people would consider their financial situation to have been worse in 1958 and relatively better in 1956 and 1960. Since economic conditions did not improve a great deal between 1958 and 1960, the other pattern of change we might expect is one in which this attitude deteriorates between 1956 and 1958 and remains negative in 1960. We see in Table 4-2 that 56 per cent of those whose attitudes toward their past financial situation changed between 1956 and 1960, followed one or the other of these two expected patterns, mostly the "recession impact" pattern. The unexpected patterns, ones in which people's attitudes were better in 1958 than the other two years, or in which this attitude became more optimistic in 1958 and 1960, occurred in only about one-third of the cases of change. Since the expected pattern of change responses far outweighs the unexpected, our confidence in this measure is maintained. However, it should be borne in mind that Table 4-2 is based only on those who changed attitudes. In all, only 160 respondents, or 14 per cent of the total Panel, followed the expected response patterns.

TABLE 4-2

Descriptive Footnotes

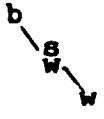
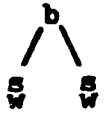
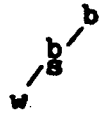
[a]In the change patterns b = better, s = same, and w = worse. The first letter(s) of the pattern chain stands for the 1956 attitude, the second letter(s) indicates the 1958 response and the third represents the 1960 attitude. Thus, for example, b-sw-w represents the attitude change pattern in which respondents felt their financial situation to be "better" in 1956, "same" or "worse" in 1958 and "worse" in 1960. The "expected" patterns are those which would be predicted given the objective economic conditions during the period; the "unexpected" patterns probably arise from economic circumstances unconnected with general economic conditions.

[b]The definition of change is any significant alteration in attitude from one interview to the next in which a definite "better" or "worse" response was given, provided that that response had not previously been expressed. Thus, a pattern such as b-s-b would not be considered as a change since the movement to the rather neutral "same" response in 1958 is not definitive (significant), and the change to a definite "better" response again in 1960 does not meet the test of change since a "better" response had previously been given. (It might be argued that this pattern might have reflected a deterioration in attitude in 1958 due to the recession. However, this pattern, along with others where such modest changes might be considered significant, was tested empirically against such objective measures as change in income and status. It was discovered that changes to a "same" response were not significant and thus we are empirically justified in considering b-s-b a "no change" pattern.)

There were four exceptions to this definition of significant change. The patterns s-s-w, s-s-b, s-w-w, and s-b-b were considered to be "no change" patterns. The people who followed the first two of these patterns, when empirically observed, behaved much like those with a s-s-s pattern. As we might expect, the s-w-w people looked very much like those who considered that they were worse off every year (w-w-w) and the s-b-b's were much like the b-b-b's.

TABLE 4-2

PATTERNS OF ATTITUDES TOWARD PAST AND FUTURE FINANCIAL SITUATION: 1956-1958-1960

Attitude Toward:	Change Pattern					Total	N	Per Cent of Total Panel Who Changed[b]
	Expected[a]		Unexpected[a]		Other			
								
Past Financial Situation	22%	34	25	9	10	100%	286*	26%
Future Financial Situation	10%	33	39	10	8	100%	182*	16%

*Weighted.

Patterns of attitudes toward future financial situation are shown in the lower half of Table 4-2. Having discussed previous findings concerning the general stability of people's attitudes toward their future financial situation, it is not surprising to find that only about one in six of the panel registered a significant change in this attitude in the three interviews. The response patterns of those few panel members who did change their future financial expectations were about equally divided between expected and unexpected--indicating once more that this attitude does not seem to be affected by change in general economic conditions.

Subjective economic attitudes and objective change in financial circumstances

Table 4-3 provides more definite evidence that the question concerning people's past financial situation does reflect reality rather closely. Here we find a strong relation between an objective measure of the economic deprivation or betterment experienced by panel members between 1956 and 1958 and their subjective attitude toward their past financial situation. Although this correlation is strong, it should be observed that objective financial circumstances and one's subjective evaluation of these circumstances are not identical. (Table 4-3 was replicated comparing 1960 attitudes toward past financial situation with a 1958 to 1960 objective measure of change in family

TABLE 4-3

PEOPLE'S ATTITUDE TOWARD PAST FINANCIAL SITUATION IN 1958 COMPARED WITH CHANGES IN THEIR FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Change in Family Economic Circumstances, 1956 to 1958[a]	Attitude Toward Past Financial Situation in 1958			Total	N
	Better	Same	Worse		
+3	65%	31	4	100%	74
+2	40%	46	14	100%	93
+1	39%	45	16	100%	156
No change	37%	48	15	100%	358
-1	23%	49	28	100%	75
-2	31%	48	21	100%	42
-3	29%	37	34	100%	38
Experienced unemployment (less intense)[b]	25%	42	33	100%	69
Experienced unemployment (more intense)[b]	16%	32	52	100%	88

[a]See Appendix C for a description of this measure which is based upon family income change and occupational status change as determined by responses to the 1956 and 1958 interviews.

[b]See Appendix C for a description of the unemployment measure. Degree of intensity is based on both recentness and length of unemployment.

economic circumstances. The correlation in 1960 was almost identical to that found in 1958.)

We should add that there was no association between the objective measure of family economic deprivation or betterment and attitudes toward future financial expectations. We have already seen that this attitude toward the future is largely independent of external economic conditions, and here we note that this attitude is independent of family financial experiences as well. People's attitudes toward their future financial situation apparently float free of any reality base.

The Goodman-Kruskal Measure of Association (Gamma)

Let us pause here to introduce a measure of association which we will be using in this study: Goodman-Kruskal's gamma.[9] This single measure allows us to summarize the overall relationship between two variables and to indicate the magnitude of that relationship. The Goodman-Kruskal measure is designed for use with polytomies (variables with more than two classification categories), and assumes, indeed requires, that the classifications be ordered (i.e., from high to low, better to worse, +3 to -3, etc.).[10] Most

---

[9]Leo A. Goodman and William H. Kruskal, "Measures of Association for Cross Classifications," Journal of the American Statistical Association, LXIX, No. 268 (December, 1954), pp. 748-754.

[10]The model upon which this measure is based supposes that two individuals are taken independently and at random

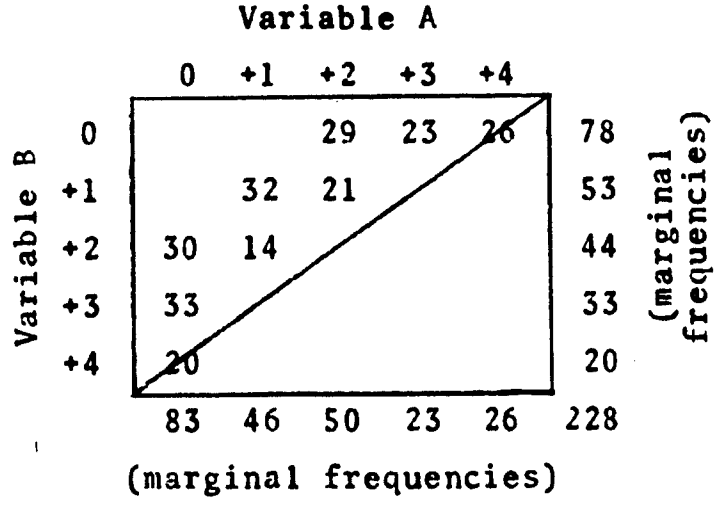
variables used in this study meet these specifications. If all of the cases are concentrated along the upper-left to lower-right diagonal of a cross-classification table, there is a perfect correlation and gamma is +1. If all of the population falls along the lower-left to upper-right diagonal of the table (that is, if the high order of one variable is associated perfectly with the low order of the other), gamma will be -1.[11] If there is no association between the

---

from the population. Each falls into some cell in the contingency table. Gamma tells us how much more probable it is to get like than unlike order in the two classifications. In a crude sense this means that if the variables are positively associated, we would expect that people who are at the high end of one polytomy would be at the high end of the other as well; and, similarly, probabilities should be good that those at the low end of one polytomy would be at the low end of the other.

[11]The Goodman-Kruskal measure has the advantage of indicating perfect or near perfect correlation without being constrained by marginal frequency distributions. Thus, the following example would produce a gamma of -1:

(All values shown are frequencies)



Given the marginal frequencies, it is not possible for cases to fall exactly along the lower-left to upper-right diagonal, yet this table would produce a gamma of -1.

variables, gamma will be 0. Most correlations fall somewhere between the values of 0 and ±1. For example, gamma for Table 4-3 is .31, about a third of the way between 0 and 1. One can see that it takes an even stronger relationship than that shown in Table 4-3 to achieve high values of gamma.

Frames of Reference in Regard to Personal Financial Situation

Thus far, when we have examined people's attitudes toward their personal financial situation, we have primarily considered their positive or negative feelings (the affective component). We will now add another dimension and examine the various frames of reference people had in mind when expressing this affect. It is especially important for our purposes to distinguish between those who attributed their past financial experience to the recession, unemployment, or shorter hours from those who had other frames of reference when responding to the question about their past financial situation.

Table 4-4 shows that even in the recession year of 1958 relatively few people had unemployment or recession as their frame of reference. Moreover, the proportion of respondents with these concerns was not a great deal higher in 1958 than it was in 1956--13 per cent compared to 9 per cent. However, Table 4-5 shows that in 1956 those respondents who had this employment, prosperity-depression

TABLE 4-4

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS' FRAME OF REFERENCE TOWARD PAST FINANCIAL SITUATION, 1956, 1958 AND 1960

Frame of Reference	1956	1958	1960
Unemployment; prosperity-depression	9%	13%	4%
Personal situation[a]	14	11	15
Cost-of-living; prices, inflation	21	21	21
General family finances[b]	47	49	53
Political[c]	2	1	1
Other, don't know	7	5	6
Total	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	1,218	1,218	1,758*

*Weighted.

[a]Personal situation includes such factors as age, health, retirement, change in family composition (i.e., more children, older child leaving home, etc.), and change in family obligations (need to help retired parents, etc.).

[b]General family financial concerns such as bills, debts, savings, level of income, promotions, etc.

[c]Political matters that people felt had influenced their financial situation such as taxes, outcome of the election, or international situation.

TABLE 4-5

AFFECTIVE COMPONENT OF ATTITUDE TOWARD PAST SITUATION WITH FRAME OF REFERENCE CONTROLLED: 1956 AND 1958 COMPARED[a]

Affect toward Past Situation	Unemployment; Prosperity-depression		Personal Situation		Cost-of-living; Inflation		General Family Finances	
	1956	1958	1956	1958	1956	1958	1956	1958
Better	45%	26%	27%	27%	13%	13%	61%	49%
Same	35	33	44	34	59	58	32	42
Worse	20	41	29	39	28	29	7	9
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	109	166	168	125	252	261	577	590

[a]Distributions in 1960 in all categories were very similar to those of 1958.

frame of reference viewed their financial situation with much more positive affect.[12]

Returning to Table 4-4 we see that most people were simply concerned with the usual family financial matters such as bills, debts, level of income, promotions, and so forth. Interestingly, this large group which was thinking in terms of family finances accounted for a great deal of the optimistic response in 1958 (shown in Table 4-5)--almost half of this group said that their financial situation was "better" and very few thought it was "worse."

Personal concern about inflation

In Table 4-4 we see that the proportion of those who had cost-of-living, prices, or inflation in mind remained constant (at 21 per cent) in 1956, 1958 and 1960 in spite of the changes in inflationary trends noted earlier and in spite of other changes in economic conditions. Having discussed the perceptual and attitudinal impact of inflation in Chapter Three, it is not surprising to find rather frequent references to rising prices when people are queried about their personal financial situation. We noted in that earlier discussion that people were aware of rising prices during this period and that they resented inflation because they felt it retarded their financial progress. (Note the

[12]Code categories were drawn in such a way that it was not possible to distinguish "prosperity" responses from "recession" responses.

frequency of "same" responses in Table 4-5 among those who had inflation as a frame of reference--indicating, perhaps, that these people felt that they were just able to "keep up" with price rises.)[13] It should be remembered, however, that people tended to view inflation from the standpoint of individual consumers, and that they failed to connect rising prices with objects in the economic or political world.

Awareness of the Recession's Impact on Personal Financial Situation (Internalization)

In this study, we are particularly interested in those people who felt personally hurt by the recession. Placed in the context of the theoretical discussion in Chapter Two, these are the people who may be considered to have "internalized" the economic event. Internalization will be measured by observing whether or not people felt that their past financial situation was the same or worse due to unemployment or recession. In other words, was unemployment experience readily brought to mind when people were asked about their past financial situation, or were general economic conditions (prosperity or recession) part of their frame of reference when they thought about their personal financial situation? Using this measure, it was

---

[13]This "same" response was especially frequent among those who showed a rather large income gain (using the measure of change in family economic circumstances).

found that about 10 per cent of the 1958 sample internalized.[14]

When the data indicate that only about 10 per cent of the population felt that their financial situation was either the same or worse due to employment or business conditions in a recession year, it is surprising. It is possible that more respondents who thought that their financial situation was linked with general economic factors would have been revealed in our data if the code used in recording responses to this question on past situation had been more thorough and precise. For example, businessmen who had declining profits, or workmen who had to take a lower paying job and who may have felt that this deprivation was due to general business conditions, were probably coded in the catch-all category of "general family finances."[15]

However, we can be reasonably confident that if a Political Panel respondent or someone in his or her family had experienced unemployment sometime between 1956 and 1958, and if the experience was salient at the time of the 1958

---

[14]In Table 4-4 we see that "unemployment, or prosperity-recession" was the frame of reference of about 13 per cent of the respondents in 1958. In Table 4-5 we note that about three-fourths of this 13 per cent felt that their financial situation was the same or worse.

[15]An Economic Behavior Program survey conducted in October 1958 revealed that about 18 per cent of the population felt that their family income was lower because of unemployment or general business conditions. Code categories in that study were more specific and included such items as decrease in profits or lower sales (for businessmen), decrease in wage rates or shift to a lower paying job (for workers)--categories not distinguishable in the Political Panel surveys.

interview, the respondent's reference to it in the past situation question would have been coded and such respondents properly located in the "unemployment" classification.[16] All the respondent had to do was to mention something about unemployment, being laid off, or need for employment, to be placed in that category. Even so, Table 4-6 indicates that only 54 per cent of those who had actually experienced unemployment recently or for a long duration (or both) had unemployment or recession as their frame of reference in responding to the question concerning their past financial situation. It would seem that many people who have experienced unemployment do not think of mentioning it when referring to their financial situation. This phenomenon has been discussed in a recent study of the impact of unemployment in the 1958 recession.[17] There it was found that even when people were reminded of the recession and asked if they had been affected by it, only about 60 per cent of the respondents in families that had suffered unemployment or had fewer hours of work during the previous year said that their financial situation had been unfavorably

---

[16]The proportion of those mentioning unemployment in the 1958 Political Panel survey was similar to the proportion mentioning layoffs and fewer hours of work per week in the October 1958 Economic Behavior survey mentioned in the previous footnote.

[17]Wilbur J. Cohen, William Haber, and Eva Mueller, "The Impact of Unemployment in the 1958 Recession," printed for the use of the Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, U. S. Senate, 86th Cong., 2d Sess. (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, June, 1960), pp. vi + 73.

TABLE 4-6

RELATION OF UNEMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE WITH PAST SITUATION FRAME OF REFERENCE, 1958

Past Situation Frame of Reference	Experienced Unemployment	
	More Intense[a]	Less Intense[a]
Unemployment; prosperity-depression	54%	21%
Personal situation	9	11
Cost-of-living	7	24
General family finances	23	37
Political	2	3
Don't know, not ascertained	5	4
	100%	100%
Number of cases	89	72

[a]See Appendix C for a definition of the measure of intensity of unemployment experience.

affected by the recession. (The question, asked in October 1958, was: "As you know we've had a recession in the past year. Would you say that this has affected your personal financial situation in any way?")[18] About half of the 40 per cent who had experienced unemployment, but who had stated that they had not been affected by the recession, were found to have jobs in which seasonal unemployment is likely (construction workers, food processors, etc.). These people expected some unemployment at the same time each year and apparently did not feel that their unemployment experience was unusual enough to mention.[19] Others with unemployment experience who felt that their financial situation was unaffected by the recession had lost their jobs due to

---

[18] Ibid., p. 11. At a much later point in the interview, respondents were asked if they had experienced unemployment or shorter hours.

[19] In 1959, the Economic Behavior surveys studied the concept of "usual" unemployment in greater depth. They asked this question regarding all Heads of families: "Some people are out of work for a time every year, others are unemployed every few years, and for still others unemployment is quite unusual. How has it been in your (your husband's) case?" After analyzing the data elicited by this question, the authors concluded that

> ". . . under present economic conditions in the United States, much of the unemployment that occurs affects the same workers repeatedly, while many other people seem to be wholly immune. Unusual unemployment must necessarily be higher during a recession than in a good year. Yet even during 1958-59 only about 30 to 40 percent of the unemployed were people who are out of work seldom or only every few years. A majority of the unemployed were workers for whom unemployment is a recurrent problem, although durations of unemployment undoubtedly were longer for many of these people during the recession than at other times."

Ibid., p. 13.

sickness or injury; others had decided to change jobs or were unemployed for a variety of reasons peculiar to their personal situation.

Going back to Table 4-6, we see that our data also show that if the unemployment experience is less intense (i.e., of shorter duration, or if it did not occur very recently) it is often overlooked in responding to the question on past financial situation.

Thus, some types of unemployment experience will not have an effect on a person's economic attitudes. If it is seasonal, personal or less intense, it will probably not be an important factor in one's current financial attitudes. However, if unemployment is a result of a recession--that is, if it is unexpected and/or of longer duration--it is very likely to become part of one's frame of reference in regard to his financial situation.

To repeat, those people who were aware that their personal finances were affected by unemployment or recession are of primary interest in this study, and the frame of reference material from the past situation question seems to be an adequate measure of whether the 1958 recession was internalized or not. Interestingly, less than half (46 per cent) of the Internalizers had either experienced unemployment themselves or had been in families in which the Head was unemployed. Thus, it was not just those who experienced unemployment, but many others, who internalized economic conditions in 1958.

Local Economic Conditions and Personal Financial Attitudes

In the discussion in Chapter Two, it was mentioned that some areas of the country were harder hit by the recession than other areas. U. S. Bureau of Employment Security data collected from 149 major labor market areas throughout the country show a considerable variation in recession impact among these many localities. We would expect that respondents living in areas more affected by the recession would be more likely to have felt the impact of this economic decline in their personal financial situations than those living in areas which escaped serious economic retardation. In a sense, we can use the labor market areas as a reality base against which to check our measure of internalization.

Thirty-two of the 149 major labor market areas happen to contain Survey Research Center sampling units. Thus, many panel respondents were found to live in the 32 areas listed in Appendix D--areas which represent a wide range of intensity of recession impact. (Appendix D should be consulted for a full description of the Bureau of Employment Security's labor market area data and the measures I have built to use this information.)

If our measure of internalization is valid, we would expect the proportion of people who felt worse off financially and who attributed it to unemployment or recession to increase in direct relation with the severity of the recession in their local area. On the other hand, local economic

conditions should have little or no effect on those who were concerned with a personal situation, the cost-of-living, or with family financial problems when describing their attitudes toward their past personal financial situation. Table 4-7 bears out this expectation quite nicely: there is an association between local economic conditions and affect toward personal financial attitudes of those who internalized the recession, but there is no association, or a negative association, between local economic conditions and the financial attitudes of those who were concerned about matters other than unemployment or recession. Furthermore, the proportion of respondents who had unemployment or recession as their frame of reference in regard to their past financial situation increased from less than 10 per cent in the least affected areas to 20 per cent in the areas hardest hit by the recession.

Interestingly, the relation between local economic conditions and financial attitudes having to do with unemployment and recession becomes sharper if those with unemployment experience are removed (as was done in the right hand portion of Table 4-7). By removing respondents with unemployment experience, we can see the effect of local economic conditions acting as a more direct stimuli upon financial attitudes--without the intervention of a personal or family experience with unemployment.[20]

---

[20]If we control further, and consider only those who neither gained nor lost in income or status (objective family

TABLE 4-7

ASSOCIATION (GAMMA) BETWEEN LABOR MARKET AREA (LMA) CONDITIONS AND AFFECT TOWARD PAST FINANCIAL SITUATION WITH FRAME OF REFERENCE CONTROLLED, 1958

Past Financial Situation Frame of Reference	All Cases (Including Those with Unemployment Experience)		Excluding Those with Unemployment Experience	
	LMA Conditions		LMA Conditions	
	One Year Average[a]	Trend Indicator[a]	One Year Average[a]	Trend Indicator[a]
Unemployment-Recession	.16[b]	.37	.40[b]	.50
Personal situation	-.35	-.16	-.46	-.25
Cost-of-living	.09	.07	.08	.04
General family finances	-.01	-.10	-.02	-.12

[a]See Appendix D for a description of measures devised to summarize conditions in Labor Market Areas (LMA's).

[b]Each cell entry is the degree of association (measured by Goodman-Kruskal's gamma) between the indicated Labor Market Area measure and the affective component of attitude toward past financial situation with the cognitive component of this attitude (frame of reference) controlled. For example, the entry .16 represents the correlation between the Average Labor Market Area conditions (C, D, E, F) in the respondents' locality and these respondents' affect (better, same, worse) toward their past financial situation when their frame of reference on the past financial situation attitude was unemployment-recession.

Returning once more to attitudes toward one's future financial expectations, we have noted several times that generally they were not connected with any reality base. This was demonstrated once again when we examined the correlation between this attitude and labor market area conditions. When we analyzed those with an unemployment, prosperity-recession frame of reference in 1958, the correlation between their expected future financial situation and the labor market area Trend Indicator was -.004 (gamma).[21] However, quite a few respondents--17 per cent in 1958--did mention unemployment, prosperity-recession as a frame of reference in regard to their future financial situation.[22] Thus, although this attitude changes very little in response to economic fluctuations or local economic conditions, we cannot ignore the fact that quite a few people do think of unemployment, prosperity or

---

economic circumstances remained constant) the relation between the LMA Trend Indicator and the financial attitudes of those with an unemployment-recession frame of reference becomes even stronger--gamma now becomes .70.

[21]There was some correlation (gamma = .16) between LMA One Year Average conditions and the attitudes toward their future situation of those with unemployment, prosperity-recession frame of reference.

[22]About 40 per cent of this group that had unemployment, prosperity-recession as a frame of reference in regard to their future financial situation also had this same frame of reference in regard to their past financial situation. The affective components of these attitudes were negatively associated; that is, if we consider only those people who had an unemployment, prosperity-recession frame of reference in regard to both their past and future financial situation, there was a tendency for those who felt that their past situation was worse to feel that their future would be better.

recession as being important to their future financial well-being. This factor will be taken into consideration at a later point when we build a summary measure of recession frame of reference using all of the interview questions we have been discussing.

We would expect an awareness of the financial problems of friends and neighbors to be associated with local economic conditions, and we see in Table 4-8 that this is indeed the case. The Political Panel respondents were asked in 1958 if they thought that "people around here" had worries about how they would get along financially. (This "economic worries" question was mentioned before when Chart 3 was discussed.) The proportion who reported worries about unemployment increased markedly in areas where economic conditions were worse. Interestingly, this awareness of unemployment in the local area was quite independent of one's personal or family experience with unemployment--in the right half of Table 4-8 we have removed any possible effect from unemployment experience; yet the relationship between worries and labor market conditions remains strong.[23]

Attitudes Toward Unemployment-Recession As a General Domestic Problem

Let us now look beyond the personal and neighborhood impact of the recession and examine people's attitudes

---

[23]It was discovered that the general level of conditions (LMA one year average), rather than the trend of economic developments in an area was more closely associated with this awareness of recession-related economic difficulties.

TABLE 4-8

AWARENESS OF FINANCIAL WORRIES OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS IN RELATION TO AVERAGE LABOR MARKET AREA CONDITIONS, 1958

Average Conditions in LMA, 1958	All Cases (Including Unemployment Experience)							
	Score[a]	Frame of Reference			No Worries	Don't Know		N
		Unemployment	Inflation	Other[b]				
C	+37	16%	9	15	53	8	100%	114
D	+31	23%	6	8	54	9	100%	434
E-F	+5	38%	4	8	43	7	100%	127
Not living in a LMA	+22	21%	10	16	43	10	100%	383

[a]Per cent of those reporting "no worries" minus per cent reporting worries due to unemployment.

[b]Other worries include such concerns as debts, bills, level of income; also personal problems such as health, retirement and family obligations.

The question was: Do you think people around here have any worries about how they'll get along financially in the next year or so? I'm speaking of people like yourself and your friends. (If "yes") What kinds of things do you or they worry about?

TABLE 4-8--Continued

Excluding Unemployment Experience							
Score[a]	Frame of Reference			No Worries	Don't Know		N
	Unemployment	Inflation	Other[b]				
+39	16%	10	11	55	8	100%	103
+38	19%	6	8	57	10	100%	380
+12	34%	5	7	46	8	100%	106
+28	18%	10	16	46	10	100%	335

toward conditions in the country as a whole during the period under study. We observed in Table 3-2 (p. 70) that in both 1958 and 1960, about 43 per cent of the population referred to unemployment or recession when queried about how "things in general had been going inside the United States."[24] But while unemployment-recession was mentioned with equal frequency in these two years, we see in Table 4-9 that these economic conditions were not evaluated in the same way in 1958 as in 1960. People with an unemployment-recession frame of reference generally felt that things were worse in 1958, while their net evaluation of economic conditions in 1960 was that they were about the same--a fairly accurate appraisal. In neither year did more than one in five think that the economy was better.[25] It should be noted in Table 4-9 that those people who had problems other than the economy in mind when responding to this

---

[24]By looking at the attitudes of Political Panel respondents in both 1958 and 1960, it was learned that unemployment-recession was not a constant object of reference. While about 25 per cent of the Panel respondents did refer to unemployment or recession as a national problem in both 1958 and 1960, the rest of the 43 per cent only mentioned it one year or the other. The "things in general inside the U.S." question was not included in the 1956 interview.

[25]It may seem unusual that as many as 17 per cent thought that economic conditions were better in the recession year of 1958. It should be remembered that these interviews were taken in November and December of that year. Many of these people were probably aware that the recession was over and that things were indeed better than they had been a few months previously.

Perceptual distortion among Republican party identifiers also contributed to this positive evaluation of conditions in the country. See Chapter Five, pp. 151-53.

TABLE 4-9

EVALUATION OF GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEMS IN THE U.S., 1958 AND 1960
WITH FRAME OF REFERENCE CONTROLLED

Domestic Situation is:	Unemployment or Recession Frame of Reference		Inflation Frame of Reference		Other[a] Frame of Reference	
	1958	1960	1958	1960	1958	1960
Better	17%	21%	21%	11%	13%	21%
Same	24	40	40	51	27	44
Worse	59	39	39	38	60	35
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	528	757*	72	126*	230	304*

*Weighted.

[a]Other problems that respondents had in mind included school integration and other racial questions; strikes and labor troubles; and a variety of other problems such as education, farm trouble, corruption in government, and so forth.

The question was: "Now, how about problems here at home inside the United States. In the past year or so would you say that things in general have been going along better than they were before, not as well as before, or have they stayed about the same? How is that?"

question also had a more negative evaluation of how things were going in 1958 than in 1960. We shall see later how these people who were concerned with other domestic problems might have contributed to the Democratic surge in 1960.

Factors affecting the evaluation of economic problems in the country

What factors contributed to people's awareness of unemployment and recession as a general domestic problem? Four factors that would seem to be most important will be examined. They are: (1) degree of recession impact in local area, (2) personal deprivation that was attributed to unemployment or recession (internalization), (3) awareness of unemployment problems of friends and neighbors, and (4) news acquired from attentiveness to the mass media.

Local labor market conditions

We would expect, first of all, that people who lived in areas where economic conditions were declining would be more likely not only to be aware that unemployment or recession was a general domestic problem, but also to evaluate this condition more negatively in direct relation to the degree of decline in their area. Table 4-10 shows that such a relationship, though not an extremely strong one, does exist.[26] It should be noted that there was no association

[26]Note that here we are using the Trend Indicator rather than the One Year Average measure of local economic conditions. The "things in general" question did not correlate well with the Average measure. The fact that it

TABLE 4-10

ASSOCIATION (GAMMA) BETWEEN LABOR MARKET AREA TREND INDICATOR AND EVALUATIONS OF GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEMS, 1958 AND 1960 (Excluding Those With Unemployment Experience)

General Domestic Problem Frame of Reference	1958 LMA Trend Indicator	1960 LMA Trend Indicator
Unemployment-Recession	.26[a]	.15
Other[b]	.00	-.30
No Frame of Reference or Don't Know	-.14	-.09

[a]Values shown in the table are Goodman-Kruskal's measure of association (gamma).

[b]All other types of problems mentioned except inflation.

between local economic conditions and the evaluations of those who had non-economic problems or no problems in mind when responding to this question.

Internalization

In previous sections of this chapter we have studied the effect that changing business conditions (objectively measured) had upon personal economic attitudes. Now we are

---

did correlate with the Trends measure indicates that people were indeed responding quite accurately to how things "had been going" (trends).

The fact that this relationship is so low (only .15) in 1960 stems largely from the fact that labor market area trends were all very similar that year; most respondents were in "no change" or "+1" areas and this permits little "leverage" on the data.

examining the effect of these personal economic attitudes upon subjective awareness of, and evaluation of, the recession as a national problem.

In Table 4-11 we can see that there was a slight tendency for those who thought that unemployment or recession had affected their past financial situation (internalizers) to also be aware of unemployment or recession as a general domestic problem--55 per cent of the internalizers mentioned it. Yet, over 40 per cent of those with other

TABLE 4-11

RELATION OF PAST FINANCIAL SITUATION FRAME OF REFERENCE TO TYPE OF GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEM PERCEIVED, 1958

Past Situation Frame of Reference	General Domestic Problem Frame of Reference				Total	N
	Recession	Inflation	Other	No Frame of Reference		
Unemployment-recession	55%	2	15	28	100%	165
Personal situation	46%	6	14	34	100%	123
Cost-of-living	41%	6	22	31	100%	261
General family finances	43%	7	20	30	100%	589

frames of reference--those who had not felt that their personal financial situation had been affected by unemployment or recession--also referred to unemployment or recession

when asked about "how things had been going in the United States." Obviously, those who subjectively felt the personal impact of the recession did not account for the widespread reference to this domestic problem in 1958.

However, it was found that those who felt personally hurt by the recession (the internalizers) were far more likely than others to evaluate national economic conditions as being worse. That is, if a person viewed his own financial situation as worse due to recession or unemployment, and if he also saw recession or unemployment as a national domestic problem, nine times out of ten he would evaluate national conditions as "worse." Among those whose attitudes toward their personal financial situation were based on frames of reference <u>other</u> than unemployment or recession, yet who viewed unemployment or recession as a general domestic problem, there was no relation between whether they felt better or worse off financially and whether or not they evaluated national economic conditions as better or worse.[27] Thus, although not all who internalized the recession mentioned it as a national problem, those who did were likely to evaluate it in light of their own financial situation.

---

[27]When we examined the affective component of people's attitudes toward their past financial situation, and compared it with their evaluation of how things were going in the U.S. (disregarding frames of reference), the correlation was only .14 (gamma). When we looked only at those who had unemployment or recession as a frame of reference on both questions, and compared the affective components of these attitudes, there was a strong relationship (gamma = .61).

Since attitudes toward one's past financial situation and attitudes toward general domestic problems among those with an unemployment-recession frame of reference are both associated with local economic conditions, the reader may wonder if the relationship just presented may not be an artifact of this common third variable--local economic conditions. A test of this hypothesis revealed that the association between internalization and evaluation of general domestic problems is quite independent of local economic conditions, although there seems to be some reinforcement effect (the relationship is stronger) in the areas that were hardest hit by the recession.

Economic worries

"Economic worries" about unemployment of friends and neighbors (or oneself) was found to be associated with attitudes toward general domestic problems in much the same way as feelings toward one's past financial situation were associated with general domestic problems. Concern about unemployment locally has only a slight effect on creating awareness of unemployment-recession as a national problem. In Table 4-12 we observe that a little over half (52 per cent) of those who were aware of unemployment as a local worry also mentioned it as a general problem in the U.S.; yet almost half (44 per cent) of those who said that there were no local financial worries were also aware of unemployment or recession as a general domestic problem. However,

TABLE 4-12

RELATION OF TYPE OF ECONOMIC WORRIES TO EVALUATION OF RECESSION AS A GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEM, 1958

Type of Economic Worries of Self and Friends	Evaluation of Recession[a]	Per Cent Who Considered Unemployment or Recession in Evaluating General Domestic Situation	N
Unemployment	-35	52%	298
Inflation	-10	37%	88
Other	-15	37%	142
No Worries	-12	44%	570
Don't Know	-18	34%	113

[a]Per cent of total group (N) who thought that the general domestic situation was worse because of recession or unemployment minus the per cent of total group who thought that things were better now that recession was over.

we again see the effect of more personal or direct concern with unemployment on the evaluation given to national economic conditions--those who were worried about unemployment locally were far more likely to make a negative assessment of general economic conditions than those who had no such worries. It was discovered, however, that this relationship disappears in areas hardest hit by the recession (E-F average or -3 trend). In these areas, over fifty per cent of the respondents mentioned unemployment or recession as a general domestic problem whether they had said they were worried personally about unemployment or not--and the

evaluations of this domestic problem by both groups was about equally negative (around -30).

The mass media

Finally, let us consider the importance of the mass media in bringing about awareness of the recession. In 1956 and 1960, Political Panel respondents were asked how much attention they had paid to the election campaign by reading newspapers and magazines, listening to the radio, or watching television. By totaling the number of different media used, it is possible to derive a crude measure of attentiveness to news. If a respondent claimed to have used all four of the media (newspapers, magazines, radio and television) he was considered to be highly attentive, while someone who used none or only one medium probably would have gained little information from this source. By averaging the reported media usage in 1956 and 1960, it was possible to obtain a measure of probable attentiveness in 1958 (since the question was not asked in the 1958 interview).

In Table 4-13, the importance of the news media in creating awareness of the recession as a general domestic problem is readily apparent. Whereas only a third of those who ordinarily use no news media, or use only one medium, mentioned unemployment or recession as a general domestic problem in 1958, half of those who attended two or more media were aware of this economic problem. It can be seen

TABLE 4-13

RELATION OF LABOR MARKET AREA TRENDS AND AWARENESS OF UNEMPLOYMENT-RECESSION AS A GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEM WITH MEDIA USAGE CONTROLLED, 1958
(Those with unemployment experience removed)

Labor Market Area	Attentiveness to News Media					
	All Cases (Except those with Unemployment Experience)			Excluding Internalizers and Those Who Were Worried about Unemployment of Self or Neighbors		
	Number of Media Used			Number of Media Used		
	0 or 1 Source	2 Sources	3 or 4 Sources	0 or 1 Source	2 Sources	3 or 4 Sources
Not living in a LMA	25%[a]	41%	40%	28%	39%	38%
LMA Trend Indicator						
0	17%	20%	45%	17%	25%	39%
-1	46%	53%	62%	33%	48%	61%
-2	38%	66%	54%	32%	69%	51%
-3	39%	59%	56%	24%	68%	56%
Percentage of all cases	32%	53%	49%	26%	52%	48%
Association (gamma) between Trend Indicator and Evaluation of Unemployment-Recession as a General Domestic Problem	.43	.34	.24	.43	.43	.05

[a]Each cell entry is the per cent of respondents in each contingency group who mentioned unemployment or recession when asked how things had been going inside the U.S.

in Table 4-13 that in local areas where the economy was declining, stimuli from local conditions made up, in part, for the lack of information from news media among low media users. The independent effect of local labor market conditions in stimulating recession awareness is also apparent among those who used the media more regularly.

In the right-hand portion of Table 4-13, respondents whose awareness of the recession might stem from personal economic attitudes are removed. Again we see that attitudes toward one's personal financial situation and concern about local unemployment play a relatively small role in creating awareness of recession as a general problem in the U.S. The importance of news gained from the media and stimuli from local economic conditions far transcends the influence of personal concerns with unemployment or recession. This is highlighted by the fact that there was no change in awareness of recession as a general problem among moderate and heavy media users when internalizers and "worriers" were removed. Attention to news was alone sufficient to maintain recession awareness.

Turning now to the lower portion of Table 4-13, we note once again the importance of attitudes toward past personal financial situation and local worries in determining the positive or negative evaluation placed upon recession as a general domestic problem. When people with these more immediate personal attitudes were removed (right lower portion of Table 4-13), we see that among those most

attentive to the news media, the correlation between labor market area trends and the evaluation of recession as a general domestic problem drops nearly to zero. This lack of correlation is due to the fact that these high media users generally evaluated conditions as worse regardless of area of residence. They were apparently influenced primarily by news, and not by attitudes stemming from local economic concerns. But even when people with more personal economic attitudes were included (lower left portion of Table 4-13) we see that the greater the media usage, the less the effect of local economic conditions on the evaluation of general economic conditions.

The Relative Importance of Domestic Economic Problems and International Affairs

In Chapter Two, we hypothesized (page 41) that when the U.S. is not at war, domestic economic events are likely to be of more concern to the people than foreign events. Unfortunately, it is difficult to test this hypothesis with 1958 data, but a question was asked in 1960 which allows direct comparison of the relative importance of economic problems and international affairs as matters of personal concern to the people. In the 1960 interview, respondents were asked: "What would <u>you personally</u> feel are the most important problems the government should try to take care of when the new President and Congress take office in January?" If they suggested more than one

problem, they were then asked: "Which of these problems do you feel is most important to you personally?" Considerably over half (58 per cent) felt that problems of national defense and foreign affairs were most important to themselves. Only 8 per cent mentioned unemployment as a primary problem in spite of sluggish economic conditions and an increasing unemployment rate.[28] We have already pointed out that 43 per cent of the respondents referred to unemployment or recession in 1960 when asked "how things had been going inside the U.S." When their frame of reference was not limited to domestic conditions, however, most respondents spontaneously thought about international problems in 1960. Apparently problems of national defense and foreign affairs were of greater concern to people in 1960 than unemployment and other domestic issues.[29]

---

[28]As we saw in Table 4-1, 11 per cent of the respondents reported that either they or the Head of the household had experienced unemployment sometime between 1958 and 1960.

[29]It should be pointed out that the "most important problem personally" question was asked during a presidential election campaign in which military preparedness and U.S. prestige were major campaign themes. There is evidence that these issues, especially the prestige angle, had made an impact on voters' attitudes. For example, in 1958 when asked "Would you say that in the past year or so the United States has done pretty well in dealing with foreign countries, or would you say that we haven't been doing as well as we should?", 42 per cent said that we had been doing pretty well as opposed to 28 per cent who thought we had not done too well; in 1960, these figures were almost reversed with 40 per cent now saying we were not doing well and only 36 per cent thinking we had done pretty well. Even without this issue, a presidential campaign would probably draw more attention to international affairs than an off-year congressional campaign. As one indication of this relative

We see in Table 4-14, however, that this concern with international problems decreases dramatically with increasing local economic distress.[30] We may surmise that if a person's immediate environment contains problems such as unemployment which threatens his well-being, his concerns become more parochial. Extrapolating from the data presented in Table 4-14, we might deduce that in a recession year people's concern with international affairs would probably decline in direct relation to the severity of recession in their area of residence.

The "life space" concept

In Chapter Two (pages 41-42), the concept of "life space" was introduced and it was suggested that the "boundary zone" of this life space was partly determined by the stimuli from the physical world immediate to the individual. It

---

decline in saliency of international affairs in congressional elections, we find that only 15 per cent of the respondents in 1958 mentioned foreign policy issues when asked for their attitudes toward the Republican and Democratic parties (open-ended questions), whereas 21 per cent and 25 per cent spontaneously mentioned party management of foreign policy problems in 1956 and 1960, respectively. (We noted earlier in Table 3-3 that the proportion of respondents mentioning party conduct in regard to prosperity or recession was constant--about 18 per cent--in all three elections.)

[30] If we consider the first and the second most important problems suggested by respondents, the relationship between labor market area conditions and mention of unemployment as a problem becomes even stronger. While only 11 per cent of those living in B areas mentioned unemployment either as the first or the second most important problem, 16 per cent in C areas, 26 per cent in D areas and 44 per cent in E-F areas expressed a primary or secondary concern with unemployment.

TABLE 4-14

RELATION OF MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM AND LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, 1960

Most Important Problem[a]	Labor Market Area Average Conditions, 1960				Not Living in a LMA	Total (all cases)
	B	C	D	E-F		
Unemployment	3%	7%	17%	27%	6%	8%
Other Domestic Problems	14	26	26	32	29	26
Foreign Affairs and National Defense	77	62	53	38	55	58
None	5	5	4	3	10	8
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	62*	791*	125*	34*	549*	1,758*

*Weighted.

[a]Based on the question: "What would you personally feel are the most important problems the government should try to take care of when the new President and Congress take office in January? (Which of these problems do you feel is most important to you personally?)"

was further stated that the meaning of this boundary zone was not to be necessarily restricted to one's geographical environment (the news media are, for example, part of one's physical world), but that stimuli from domestic economic events were more likely to be part of the immediate physical world of many individuals than foreign events would be. Table 4-15 presents an interesting insight into this

TABLE 4-15

RELATION OF MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM AND LOCAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS WITH ATTENTIVENESS TO NEWS MEDIA CONTROLLED, 1960

Most Important Problem	Number of Media Used								
	0 or 1 Source			2 Sources			3 or 4 Sources		
	LMA Conditions			LMA Conditions			LMA Conditions		
	B	C	D,E,F	B	C	D,E,F	B	C	D,E,F
Unemployment	(0%)	11%	40%	9%	10%	22%	0%	3%	5%
Other Domestic Problems	(30)	31	17	10	25	31	13	22	30
Foreign Affairs and National Defense	(70)	44	29	67	63	47	87	74	65
None	(0)	14	14	14	2	0	0	1	0
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	10*	187*	35*	21*	251*	58*	31*	328*	60*

*Weighted.

hypothesis. For those people who receive little stimuli from the mass media, concern about international affairs is much less than among high media users (presumably because there is less perception of foreign events among those who pay little attention to the news media). In other words, the geographical environment, especially if local economic conditions are bad, seems to play a much more important part in determining attitudes toward governmental problems for those whose physical world is limited by a lack of stimuli from news media. However, it should be noted in Table 4-15 that, in spite of the fact that the media apparently heightens awareness and concern about international affairs, the effect of local economic stimuli still remains, even among the high media users.

Summary Measures of Cognitive and Affective Responses

Recession salience

In order to examine the degree of individual concern about unemployment or recession in 1958, the frame of reference responses to the past financial situation and future financial situation questions, the "worries" question and the "things in general inside the U.S." question were summarized to form a general measure of recession salience.[31]

[31] In a strict sense, this summary of frame of reference responses may or may not be measuring recession salience as we have defined it ("central to one's everyday concerns"). It may be measuring a simple awareness of recession, or some

If recession or unemployment was part of a respondent's cognitive frame of reference for two, three, or even all four of these questions, the recession was considered to be highly salient for that individual. If a person only referred to unemployment or recession once, the economic event was considered to be slightly salient. However, if a respondent did not mention either unemployment or recession (or anything similarly connected with economic conditions) in spite of four opportunities in these four questions to do so, we may suppose that the recession was not part of his cognitive field near election time. As was discussed in Chapter Two, it is entirely possible that many people were aware of the recession, but that this perception did not affect their attitudes (cognition and affect) toward their personal financial situation or general domestic problems in the United States. Indeed, this is probably the case. As we noted at the beginning of this chapter,

---

readily verbalized phrases that were "on the top" of the respondent's mind but perhaps of no particular concern or importance to him.

Krech and Crutchfield have defined saliency as "those attitudes and opinions which appear readily and frequently"--the spontaneous answers to open-ended questions which indicate that they are prominent in the cognitive field of the respondent. This definition is closer to the kind of measure we are able to derive from this data. Krech and Crutchfield go on to say that

> ". . . Under many circumstances it is probable that the more important the beliefs and attitudes, the more salient [spontaneous] they are. In these circumstances, therefore, saliency can be taken as a measure of importance."

David Krech and Richard S. Crutchfield, Theory and Problems of Social Psychology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1948), p. 254.

change in perceptions of economic conditions was far greater than change in economic attitudes in 1958. It probably bears repeating once more that if the recession did not affect attitudes--if it was not part of one's cognitive field at election time--it could not affect political behavior.

In 1960, the "economic worries" question was not asked, but the question about the "most important problem personally" was, and therefore any unemployment or recession reference made in response to this question in 1960 was used in constructing the 1960 recession salience measure. Thus, 1958 and 1960 recession salience data are not strictly comparable because one of the four questions was different each year. In spite of this shortcoming, we can make a rough comparison, and we see in Table 4-16 that concerns about unemployment or recession were quite a bit greater in 1958 than in 1960.

Overall affect

The affective or evaluative components of these same four attitudes were also summarized to produce a measure of "overall affect" toward personal finances, economic worries of friends and neighbors, and how things were going in the country. Those who gave negative ("worse," "not as well") responses on all four questions were given the highest score (7) and those who were positive or optimistic ("better") in all these attitudes were given the lowest score (1).

TABLE 4-16

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF RECESSION SALIENCE 1958 AND 1960[a]

Recession Salience	1958	1960
None (0)	36%	47%
Slight (1)	38	38
High (2)	18	13
Very High (3-4)	8	2
	100%	100%
Number of cases	1,218	1,758*

*Weighted.

[a]Data are not strictly comparable--see text.

Of course, most cases gave a mix of "same," "better," or "worse" responses, and they were scored at the appropriate point between 1 and 7. Table 4-17 gives the mean scores of all respondents with recession salience controlled. It is not surprising that the overall affect among those who were most concerned about the recession or unemployment in 1958 was much more negative than those who had little or no concern.

In building these summary measures, we have in essence used the whole interview (all pertinent questions) to establish a cognitive and affective map of individuals in regard to economic conditions. It is quite apparent from these summary measures, as well as from the study of the

TABLE 4-17

MEAN OVERALL AFFECT SCORE CONTROLLING FOR RECESSION SALIENCE, 1958 AND 1960

Recession Salience	Overall Affect[a]	
	1958	1960
None (0)	3.4	3.6
Slight (1)	3.6	3.5
High (2-4)	4.6	4.1

[a]Cell entries are the mean of the overall affect score. Scores range from 1 (most positive or optimistic) to 7 (most negative or pessimistic). Based on affective responses to questions on past situation, future situation, economic worries, and general domestic problems.

separate questions that make up these measures (which were discussed individually in pages 89 to 122), that the 1958 recession had a very definite impact on the economic attitudes of a part of the public. We should add that those people who felt that their personal finances were adversely affected by the recession (the internalizers) were far more likely not only to have mentioned unemployment or recession repeatedly in the interview,[32] but also to have a more negative or pessimistic overall affect. (See Table 4-18.) However, the internalizers accounted for only about a third

[32]Note in Table 4-18 that only 16 of the internalizers failed to mention unemployment or recession again after they had referred to it in the past financial situation question. Two-thirds of those who mentioned unemployment or recession 3 or 4 times were internalizers.

TABLE 4-18

MEAN OVERALL AFFECT SCORE CONTROLLING FOR RECESSION SALIENCE AND INTERNALIZATION, 1958

Recession Salience	Internalizers		Non-Internalizers	
	Overall Affect Score	N	Overall Affect Score	N
0	*	*	3.4	439
1	4.4	16	3.6	452
2	4.7	42	4.2	173
3	5.5	38	4.4	29
4	6.2	25	(5.3)	4

*No cases, by definition.

of all those with high recession salience. Through a process of social learning--from the mass media and stimuli from local environment--many people who did not feel that they were personally hurt by the recession were nonetheless concerned about it.

CHAPTER V

FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE FORMATION OF ATTITUDES TOWARD A RECESSION

Introduction

In this chapter we will examine some of the political predispositions and the personal experiences that may have served either to increase awareness of the 1958 recession, or to screen out or distort perceptions of the event. These attitudes and experiences are the intervening variables depicted in Figure 1 and were discussed on pages 33 through 40 (Chapter Two). The long-term political predisposition which will be of most interest to us is party identification. However, we shall also study the effect of political involvement and level of conceptualization in influencing recession-related attitudes. As for personal experiences, the principle one which may have intensified recession awareness is that of having been in the labor force at the time of the Great Depression. Such factors as level of education and membership in a union might also be expected to aid individuals in making the recession a more meaningful or salient event. By studying these intervening variables, we will gain further insight into the development

of economic attitudes, and be able to distinguish those groups upon which the recession made the most psychological impact.

Principal hypotheses to be examined

In Chapter Two it was hypothesized that party identification would have a decided effect on perceptions of economic events. In particular, we conjectured that Republicans, not wanting to think that their party's president might have been culpable for economic difficulties, would be likely to reject news of economic decline, or, if aware of the news, to feel that economic conditions were better than they "really" were. We might even suppose that Republicans who were strongly attached to their party would tend to avoid remembering the recession-related worries of their friends and neighbors, or even avoid mentioning their own economic deprivation if recession caused.[1]

It was also hypothesized in Chapter Two that people who were engaged in occupations that are relatively unaffected by business fluctuations--professional people and white collar workers, for example--would be less aware of, or concerned about, the recession since they would be relatively isolated from negative economic stimuli.

---

[1]See Campbell et al., The American Voter, pp. 389-90 for evidence supporting this hypothesis. There it was surmised that "Republicans, possibly sensing the likely assignment of political blame, less often admitted that the recession was important to their own financial situation."

These hypotheses suggest two quite different types of influence on perceptions of and attitudes toward the recession. One involves the psychological distortion caused by party identification, and the other the degree to which economic stimuli eminating from the recession were part of the individual's life space as measured by his occupational setting. These two distinct factors will be studied simultaneously, however, since these two variables are not independent; that is, there is an association between occupational status and party identification. In other words, we must be careful not to attribute to party identification something that is really an artifact of occupational status, and vice versa. The fact, for example, that almost two-thirds of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers are Democrats, while close to half of the business executives and professional people are Republicans, should be borne in mind in evaluating the data in this section.

Incidence of economic deprivation among party identifiers and occupational groups

Let us look first at the incidence of economic deprivation, objectively measured, among party identifiers in 1958. Table 5-1 shows that the blessings of financial gain and the hardships of economic loss occurred proportionately among Republicans and Democrats, with one important exception: unemployment struck in Democratic families far more often than in Republican. A glance at Table 5-2

TABLE 5-1

RELATION OF PARTY IDENTIFICATION TO CHANGE IN FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Change in Family Economic Circumstances, 1956 to 1958[a]	1958 Party Identification			Total	N
	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.		
+3	51%	19	30	100%	74
+2	47%	23	30	100%	92
+1	53%	17	30	100%	148
No change	51%	20	29	100%	346
-1	53%	20	27	100%	71
-2	40%	30	30	100%	40
-3	46%	18	36	100%	39
Experienced Unemployment (less intense)	53%	28	19	100%	68
Experienced Unemployment (more intense)	63%	19	18	100%	83

gamma = -.07

[a]See Appendix C for a description of this measure.

explains this apparent immunity of Republicans from unemployment. There we see that the incidence of unemployment is highest among semi-skilled and unskilled workers--people who seldom happen to be Republicans.

Judging from the objective measure of family economic circumstances, then, we would expect little difference between Republicans and Democrats in their attitudes

TABLE 5-2

RELATION OF FAMILY HEAD'S OCCUPATION TO CHANGE IN FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Change in Family Economic Circumstances, 1956 to 1958[a]	1958 Occupation of Family Head[b]							Total	N
	Businessman (High Level)	Professional	Small Businessman	White Collar Worker	Skilled Workman	Semi-Skilled Workman	Unskilled Workman		
+3	16%	26	26	13	10	10	0	100%	70
+2	5%	14	26	12	24	15	4	100%	84
+1	0%	5	16	14	29	26	10	100%	126
No change	12%	16	19	9	19	16	9	100%	292
-1	0%	4	8	16	18	40	14	100%	50
-2	2%	5	32	8	16	16	21	100%	38
-3	0%	14	36	17	11	5	17	100%	36
Experienced unemployment (less intense)	0%	0	6	5	39	31	19	100%	67
Experienced unemployment (more intense)	0%	0	4	2	21	43	30	100%	84

gamma = .31

[a]See Appendix C for a description of this measure.

[b]See Appendix C for types of jobs included in the various categories. Protective service workers and heads who were housewives or were retired are not included in this table.

toward their past financial situation. And, in fact, very little association (gamma = .11)[2] was found to exist between party identification and attitude toward past financial situation (disregarding frame of reference).

In Table 5-2, we observe quite a strong relationship (gamma = .31) between occupational status and financial gain or loss. While workers tended to suffer economic deprivation, business executive and professional men generally enjoyed financial gains during the period from 1956 to 1958. It should be remembered, however, that all of this objectively measured change in family economic circumstances, even the unemployment experience, cannot be attributed to national economic conditions. (See Chapter Four, pages 107-112.) There is no way to determine objectively which people were hurt by the recession and which were hurt by other factors. However, Tables 5-1 and 5-2 do provide interesting background information on the incidence of economic deprivation, for whatever cause, among party identifiers and occupational groups.

It should be noted in Table 5-2 that almost 90 per cent of the unemployment was experienced in families headed by a blue collar worker--skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled. In order to avoid possible bias caused by this concentration of unemployment experience among these

---

[2]Unemployment experience was excluded in this correlation. Republicans tended to view their past financial situation slightly more favorably than Democrats.

particular occupational groups, all respondents in families where unemployment occurred are excluded from much of the analysis in this chapter.[3]

The Effect of Party Identification and Occupational Status on Attitudes toward the Recession

The overall salience of the recession

Let us now turn to an examination of subjective attitudes toward the recession and the possible effect of party identification and occupational status as intervening variables. First, let us consider possible cognitive dissonance caused by party identification. If Republicans had tended to avoid cognition of the recession in order to save themselves psycho-political embarrassment, we would expect them to have unemployment or recession as a cognitive frame of reference less frequently than Democrats. Table 5-3 indicates that there is really no evidence to support this hypothesis. Although the recession was somewhat less likely to be of high salience for Republicans,[4] the overall

---

[3]Actually, further analysis indicated that most tables shown in this chapter would not have been perceptably different if those with unemployment experience had been included. However, the data are presented without the unemployed to free the reader from any doubts that the relationships might somehow be due to unemployment experience.

[4]This lack of high recession salience among Republicans can be attributed in large measure to the fact that there were fewer internalizers among Republicans. This, as we shall see, was not due to a Republican bias, but rather stems from the fact that most internalizers were at occupational levels that are heavily Democratic.

TABLE 5-3

RECESSION SALIENCE BY PARTY IDENTIFICATION AND BY OCCUPATION, 1958
(Unemployment experience excluded)

1958 Respondents	Score[a]	Recession Salience			Total	N
		None	Slight	High		
Party Identification						
Republicans	-20	38%	44	18	100%	306
Independents	- 6	34%	38	28	100%	199
Democrats	-14	37%	40	23	100%	507
Head's Occupation						
Professional	-32	44%	44	12	100%	101
Businessmen (high level)	-10	34%	42	24	100%	55
Small businessmen	- 7	33%	41	26	100%	183
White collar	-17	38%	41	21	100%	103
Skilled workers	- 4	31%	41	28	100%	154
Semi-skilled workers	- 6	34%	38	28	100%	154
Unskilled workers	-18	38%	42	20	100%	84
Retired	-34	47%	40	13	100%	118
Protective Service[b]	-34	52%	30	18	100%	27

[a]Score equals the per cent with high recession salience minus the per cent with no recession salience. The more negative the score, the less salient the recession.

[b]Policemen, firemen, guards, members of the armed forces.

differences in recession salience among party identifiers was not significant.

Curiously, the recession was most salient among Independents--people who generally are at the periphery of political involvement. Without party attachment, perhaps the Independents were more psychologically free to cognize the recession--it would matter little to them who was in the White House or who had a majority in Congress. This interpretation is a bit strained, however, and no evidence could be mustered to support it. The relatively high recession salience among Independents will have to remain a mystery.

There is evidence in Table 5-3 which does support the hypothesis that people in occupations least affected by business fluctuations would be less aware of, or concerned about, the recession. Professional men and their families stand out as being relatively unconcerned about the recession; 44 per cent of them never mentioned unemployment or recession during the course of the interview and only 12 per cent found it highly salient. Furthermore, there was not a single internalizer among professional men or their families. People in protective service work (police, firemen, guards, soldiers, etc.) are quite unaffected by business conditions, and respondents in families headed by a protective service worker were unlikely to have mentioned unemployment or recession. And finally, although the retired have many financial worries, these problems are not generally affected

by fluctuations in the business cycle; their economic difficulties remain in good times as well as bad.[5] Thus, it is not surprising that the recession was of relatively little concern to these older people. (Their overall economic affect score was, of course, quite pessimistic.) It was the businessmen and the blue collar workers,[6] then, who were most aware of and/or concerned about the recession. However, the factors that made the recession salient for businessmen are often quite different from those which created recession salience among workers. We will examine these factors later in the chapter.

Evaluation of domestic problems

First, let us continue our exploration into possible attitudinal bias among party identifiers. We have just observed that Republicans apparently did not avoid cognition of the recession. However, we have yet to look at the affective component of their economic attitudes. Might Republicans have avoided dissonance by seeing things in a more favorable light? Table 5-4 indicates that this was indeed the case. Although about equal proportions of

---

[5]See, for example, James N. Morgan, Martin H. David, Wilbur J. Cohen, and Harvey E. Brazer, Income and Welfare in the United States (a study of the Survey Research Center, University of Michigan; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962), Chapters 16 and 31.

[6]In Table 5-3, unskilled workers are seen to have less recession salience than other blue collar workers. One explanation for this is discussed later--see pp. 161-163.

TABLE 5-4

EVALUATION OF GENERAL DOMESTIC PROBLEMS BY PARTY IDENTIFICATION
WITH FRAME OF REFERENCE CONTROLLED, 1958
(Unemployment experience excluded)

Party Identification	Evaluation of General Domestic Problems					N
	Unemployment or Recession Frame of Reference		Other[c] Frame of Reference		No Frame of Reference or Don't Know	
	Score[a]	Per Cent[b] of Group	Score[a]	Per Cent[b] of Group	Per Cent[b] of Group	
Republicans	-16	45%	-32	18%	28%	306
Independents	-35	47%	-41	16%	32%	199
Democrats	-53	43%	-57	21%	30%	507
(Gamma)	(.29)		(.20)			

[a]The score is the per cent of those with the indicated frame of reference who evaluated things as better minus the per cent who evaluated things as worse.

[b]Per cent of all people in the party identification group who had the frame of reference indicated.

[c]Not including cost-of-living, inflation (8 per cent of the Republicans as opposed to 5 per cent of Democrats and Independents mentioned inflation).

Republicans, Democrats, and Independents recognized unemployment or recession as a national domestic problem, Republicans evaluated economic conditions far more favorably than did Democrats. This phenomenon was not present, however, just among those who had the recession as a frame of reference. Republicans, no matter what domestic problem they had in mind, saw "things around the country" as better than Democrats did. This relationship between party identification and positive or negative evaluation of general domestic problems remained when occupational status was controlled.

Apparently, then, party identification is a strong factor in coloring one's evaluation of domestic problems. One possible explanation of this phenomenon is that people tend to see things as better than perhaps they "really" are when their party is in office, and problems around the country are perhaps perceived more pessimistically when the opposition is in office.

This raises an interesting question: with a Republican President and a Democratic Congress in 1958, which party did people perceive as being in office? Although firm evidence is lacking, most people probably were looking to the Presidency to determine which party was in office. When asked in 1958, "Do you happen to know which party had the most Congressmen in Washington before the election last month?", only about 50 per cent said (knew or guessed) that the Democrats had a majority in the 85th Congress, 17 per cent thought that the Republicans had control, while the

rest (33 per cent) admitted that they did not know. (Presumably, if the respondents had been asked to name the President's party affiliation, most would have been able to do so.) At any rate, this lack of knowledge about who controlled the 85th Congress is one indicator that party-in-Congress was not highly salient for most people.

This study will operate, then, on the assumption that it was party-in-White House that people primarily referred to when evaluating domestic problems around the country (that is, if they made any mental reference at all to party-in-power when making this evaluation). If this assumption is correct, it should make little or no difference whether people "knew" the Democrats held a majority in Congress or not--the Republican President would be more salient. We receive support for this assumption when we observe that the correlation between party identification and evaluation of domestic problems (disregarding frame of reference) was the same--.25 (gamma)--whether we examined all cases or only the 50 per cent who said that the Democrats held a majority in Congress.[7]

---

[7] Interestingly, among the 17 per cent who thought that the Republicans held a majority in the 85th Congress, the correlation between party identification and evaluation of domestic problems jumped to .39. We might conjecture that without the psychological constraint of thinking their own party might have been in part responsible for national conditions, Democrats were even more likely to feel that things were worse, and Republicans, thinking their party was in complete control of the government, avoided dissonance by evaluating domestic problems even more favorably.

Attitudes toward the financial situation of self, friends and neighbors

Although party identification apparently is influential in distorting attitudes toward general domestic problems, there is no evidence that this psychological phenomenon is present when an individual forms his attitudes toward his own personal financial situation. It was found, first of all, that there was no tendency for Republicans to shy away from mentioning unemployment or recession as a reason for their personal economic situation. Furthermore, when all respondents with this unemployment-recession frame of reference were examined, the correlation between party identification and past financial situation affect was .000 (gamma). This lack of partisan distortion of personal financial attitudes is highlighted by the evidence in Table 5-5: at similar occupational levels, Republicans were as likely as Democrats to internalize the recession (i.e., feel that their past financial situation was the same or worse due to unemployment or recession). It should be noted, however, that there were more internalizers among Democrats than among Republicans due to the fact that most internalizers were blue collar workers--and blue collar workers are likely to be Democrats.

Although party identification was not a strong enough factor to distort people's evaluations of their personal financial situation, it may have biased awareness

TABLE 5-5

PER CENT OF PARTY IDENTIFIERS WHO INTERNALIZED THE RECESSION WITH OCCUPATIONAL STATUS CONTROLLED (All cases, including unemployment experience)

Party Identification	Businessmen and White Collar[a]	N	Blue Collar Workers[b]	N
Republicans	7%[c]	114	13%[c]	101
Independents	12%	75	17%	96
Democrats	4%	158	17%	305

[a]No respondents in the "Professional" occupation status category internalized the recession.

[b]Skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled workers.

[c]Cell entries are the per cent of each group who internalized the recession (felt that their past financial situation was the same or worse due to unemployment, shorter hours, or recession).

of the type of financial worries that friends and neighbors were having. We see in Table 5-6 that Republicans were somewhat less likely than Democrats to think that the people around them were worried about unemployment. It was not that Republicans denied that their friends and neighbors were having financial worries of some sort; rather, Republicans did not see or did not want to see as much unemployment as was recognized by Democrats or Independents (see particularly the right-hand portion of Table 5-6). Of course, as we might expect, businessmen, professional people and white collar workers, regardless of party

TABLE 5-6

AWARENESS OF FINANCIAL WORRIES OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS BY PARTY IDENTIFICATION WITH OCCUPATIONAL STATUS CONTROLLED
(Unemployment experience excluded)

Party Identification	Business, Professional and White Collar					Blue Collar Workers				
	No Worries, DK	Worried About:		Total	N	No Worries, DK	Worried About:		Total	N
		Unemployment	Other				Unemployment	Other		
Republicans	68%	14	18	100%	152	58%	19	23	100%	81
Independents	58%	28	14	100%	96	58%	33	9	100%	66
Democrats	62%	17	21	100%	188	55%	27	18	100%	222

identification, were less aware of unemployment worries in their immediate communities than were blue collar workers.

The effect of party identification and occupational status on overall affect

It will be recalled that at the end of Chapter Four a measure of "overall affect" was introduced to summarize the affective or evaluative components of attitudes toward personal financial situation, economic worries of friends and neighbors, and domestic problems in the country. We have just observed that there was no bias in these attitudes due to party identification except in the case of evaluation of national domestic problems. Thus, we would expect Republicans to be slightly more optimistic than Democrats in their overall affect as a result of their tendency to view the domestic scene more positively, but not for other reasons arising from psychological attachment to party. This is indeed the case. Looking at the mean affect scores of all party identifiers (bottom row of Table 5-7), we observe a steady, but not pronounced, increase in pessimistic or negative affect as we move across the table from Strong Republican (with a score of 3.1) to Strong Democrats (with a score of 3.9). It should be noted that when we control for occupational status, however, there is no significant difference in overall affect between party identification groups.

TABLE 5-7

CO-VARIANCE OF MEAN OVERALL AFFECT SCORE[a] AMONG PARTY IDENTIFIERS AND OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS (Excluding unemployment experience)

Occupational Status	Party Identification					Significance[b]	Total
	Strong Rep.	Weak Rep.	Ind.	Weak Dem.	Strong Dem.		
Professional	2.7	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.8	ns	2.9
Businessman	3.3	2.9	2.2	3.0	3.6	ns	3.1
Small businessman	2.7	3.1	4.0	3.6	3.8	ns	3.6
White collar	(3.3)[c]	3.5	3.7	3.9	3.5	ns	3.6
Skilled worker	(3.3)	3.1	2.9	3.4	3.6	ns	3.3
Semi-skilled	(3.3)	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.6	ns	4.2
Unskilled	(3.5)	(3.9)	3.7	3.4	4.4	ns	3.8
Significance[b]	ns	ns	s	ns	s		
Total	3.1	3.3	3.6	3.6	3.9		

[a]Score ranges from 1 (most positive) to 7 (most negative).

[b]ns indicates that F is not significant at $p \leq .01$.
s indicates that F is significant at $p \leq .01$.

[c]Parenthesis indicates that mean affect score is based on 10 cases or less.

On the other hand, there is a good deal of difference in general outlook among occupational groups, ranging from 2.9 among professional men to 4.2 among semi-skilled workers.[8] Judging from what we now know about the impact of economic deprivation and the financial worries of people at various occupational levels, these findings are hardly surprising.[9] What is most important to observe in Table 5-7 is that among Independents and Democrats, it was occupational status that accounted for most of the negative or pessimistic overall affect.[10] In other words, it was occupational status (or more precisely, factors associated with occupation such as relatively greater economic deprivation, more financial worries of self, friends and neighbors, etc.) and not party identification, that gave rise to significant variation in overall affect.

Factors That Help Give the Recession Meaning

Cognition of the recession

In order for an event to become part of a person's cognitive structure, it must have some meaning for that

---

[8]If unemployment experience were included in this table, the score for skilled workers would be 3.6; semi-skilled, 4.4; and unskilled, 4.2.

[9]The relative optimism of high level businessmen and skilled workers, however, should be noted.

[10]If unemployment experience is included, there is also a significant variation in affect scores between occupational groups for the "Weak Dem." column.

individual. People who have some concept of a national economic system, for example, are more likely to see a recession as a meaningful event. On the other hand, those who do not conceive of a general economic order, although they may be aware of unemployment and bad times around them, will be unable to meaningfully structure these fragmentary perceptions of economic happenings.

In addition to showing awareness of and concern about economic conditions, the measure of recession salience used in this study can give some indication of the degree to which respondents structured information about the recession. In order to be highly salient, the recession or unemployment had to be mentioned at least twice in the course of the interview. A person with only fragmentary bits of information about the recession would be less likely to have it as a constant point of reference, and therefore would be less likely to mention unemployment or recession in response to various different questions in the course of the interview.

It is particularly important to study this ability to meaningfully cognize the recession, since many of those who suffer deprivation as a result of recession may be the very ones who are unable to relate their experience to an economic-political order. We have already seen some evidence of this cognitive deficiency among least-skilled workers and their families. Returning momentarily to Table 5-3, it can be noted that the recession was less salient for

unskilled workers than for semi-skilled or skilled workers. Obviously, this relative decline in cognitive references to unemployment or recession cannot be attributed to a lack of negative economic stimuli; the unskilled and their families must have seen signs of unemployment and hard times all around them.[11] However, when we consider the fact that over 80 per cent of these unskilled workers had not finished high school (indeed, over half had only a grade school education or less), the reason for their relative lack of recession salience seems evident. With this low level of education, these unskilled workers were probably less able to fit their fragmentary perceptions of economic difficulties into a meaningful whole. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that when the unskilled workers were questioned about how things had been going in the country at large, 45 per cent either had no idea of how things had been going or were unable to form a clear conception of any domestic problem. Furthermore, semi-skilled workers (over

---

[11]When asked about the financial worries of their friends and neighbors, however, an unusually high proportion of unskilled workers (over 20 per cent) said that they did not know anything about it. (Only about 7 per cent of the skilled and semi-skilled workers said they did not know anything about the financial worries of their friends and neighbors.) Perhaps the unskilled live in such social isolation that many of them really do not have enough interpersonal contacts to know what is happening to people around them, or maybe they simply had difficulty understanding the interview question. At any rate, in studying the unskilled it is apparent that we are dealing with a group that has only the most marginal comprehension of the world about them.

It should be mentioned that we have excluded any personal or family experience with unemployment in the data just presented as well as in Table 5-3.

60 per cent of whom had never completed high school) were almost equally at a loss when it came to comprehending something as abstract as a national problem.

Level of education and social environment

From the foregoing observations, we would easily deduce that level of education would be an important factor in making the recession a more meaningful (and thus salient) event. It may come as somewhat of a surprise, then, to learn that there is no general association between level of education and recession salience. Apparently there were factors other than education that aided people, especially those at lower occupational levels, in cognizing the economic event. It may be supposed that certain personal and interpersonal (social) forces are present during a domestic event such as a recession that help make the event more meaningful to those who are deficient in formal education. Evidence of this more direct local (probably interpersonal) influence is found in Table 5-8. Where adverse local economic stimuli were present in D, E and F areas, education was not related to recession salience. However, in C labor market areas, where these local stimuli were relatively absent, education did play a part in bringing about recession salience. Without strong stimuli from their immediate environment (in C areas), the less educated tended not to know about the recession, but it was a meaningful

TABLE 5-8

RELATION (GAMMA) OF EDUCATION TO RECESSION SALIENCE WITH LABOR MARKET AREA CONDITIONS CONTROLLED (Unemployment experience excluded)

	Average Labor Market Area Conditions, 1958			All Cases
	C	D	E-F	
Association between Education and Recession Salience	.24	.02	-.03	.06
Number of cases	102	380	105	1,057

Cell entries are gamma measures.

event for the better educated in these areas not directly hit by the recession. (Part of this salience is no doubt due to greater news media usage among the better educated.[12])

One of the social factors that apparently aided the less educated--the blue collar workers--in perceiving the importance of the economic events around them was union identification.[13] A fairly strong relationship (gamma = .27) existed between union identification and recession salience. To exemplify this association, only 21 per cent of non-union members found the recession highly salient, while 42 per

[12]The correlation between education and media usage is very strong: .50 (gamma).

[13]For an explanation of union identification, see Campbell et al., The American Voter, pp. 306-308. In brief, union identification is a measure of how close one feels to other union members, and how much interest one has in how union people are getting along.

cent of those strongly identified with their union were highly cognizant of the recession.

Another factor that undoubtedly "brought the recession home" to many workers and their families was personal experience with unemployment or fewer hours of work due to economic slowdown. The proportion of people who suffered economic deprivation and said that it was due to unemployment or recession (internalizers) increased dramatically in the lower occupational levels. While only 5 per cent of the businessmen and white collar workers internalized the recession, 12 per cent of the skilled workers, 18 per cent of the semi-skilled workers, and 21 per cent of the unskilled felt that their past financial situation was the same or worse due to unemployment or recession.[14]

To summarize these findings concerning the importance of personal and interpersonal factors in giving rise to recession salience, let us compare salience at various occupational levels when the effect of union identification and internalization (felt personal experience with the recession) is removed. In Table 5-9 we see that there is far less recession salience among blue collar workers who did not feel personally hurt by the recession and/or did not have a union identification to help orient them in the economic world. Union identification and internalization, in other words, contributed mightily in making the recession salient

---

[14]The overall correlation between occupational status and internalization was .44 (gamma).

TABLE 5-9

THE EFFECT OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS IN CREATING RECESSION SALIENCE AMONG OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Head's Occupational Status	Recession Salience					
	All Cases			Excluding Influence of Unions and Felt Personal Experience with the 1958 Recession[a]		
	Score[b]	Per Cent No Salience	N	Score[b]	Per Cent No Salience	N
Professional	-32	44%	101	-32	44%	96
Businessmen	-10	34%	55	-15	36%	53
Small businessmen	- 7	33%	190	-14	36%	162
White collar	-16	37%	108	-28	43%	75
Skilled workers	+ 4	29%	198	-18	41%	85
Semi-skilled	+ 4	31%	212	-23	43%	79
Unskilled workers	- 8	36%	123	-37	47%	71

[a]Excludes union members and internalizers.

[b]Score is the per cent with high recession salience minus the per cent with no recession salience. The more negative the score, the less salient the recession.

among people at lower occupational levels. But union membership and internalization are only two among many personal and interpersonal stimuli which may have reached people, especially in areas hardest hit by the recession. The data do not contain measures of other possible personal or social factors, but it is evident in examining just these two variables that such forces are at work and aid immeasurably in increasing awareness and understanding of an economic event among poorly educated workers.

Acquisition of recession's meaning differs by occupation

For different occupational groups, then, the recession took on meaning in different ways. Businessmen, who tend to be better educated and who are very likely to attend news media regularly,[15] do not need to personally experience unemployment or economic deprivation or see these things happening to their friends and neighbors in order to be aware of and understand the significance of economic decline.[16] On the other hand, working class people, especially the semi-skilled and unskilled, attend the news media quite infrequently and, with their lack of education, they seem to depend on such socializing forces as union membership

---

[15]The correlation between occupational status and media usage is .27.

[16]Obviously, businessmen gain knowledge of and insight into economic events from interpersonal contacts as well as from the media. However, we have no way of measuring this type of interpersonal information flow.

and personal contact to capture the meaning of the fragmentary signs of an event which happens to pass their way. Probably only an event such as a recession, which has effects that can be seen and felt locally, has a chance of becoming highly salient to these people.

As we have mentioned, and can note again in Table 5-9, the recession was not particularly salient for professional men or their families either. Lack of education (75 per cent had attended college--far more than in any other occupational group) or inattention to news (80 per cent use at least 3 media regularly) cannot explain this. We must conclude once more that the absence of a threat to personal well-being can reduce salience of an event.

The salience of an economic event, then, is a result of several factors--perception, concern for well-being, comprehension, and avoidance of dissonance. Whether or not any or all of these factors are present for the individual depends on such forces as direct (local) stimuli, personal experience with the effects of the event, level of education, media usage, membership in a socializing agency (such as a union), and party identification.

Other Factors Influencing Recession Salience

Personal experience with the 1930 Depression

We have as yet not discussed prior personal experience with the Great Depression as a possible factor in intensifying recognition and understanding of economic events in 1958. Presumably, people who were in the labor force at the time of the Depression in the 1930's would be more likely to pay attention to current signs of recession or depression and to understand the significance of economic decline as a potential threat to their well-being. We have already noted, though, that the public generally does not view a recession as a prelude to a depression and they are not particularly apprehensive when a recession does occur. (See Chapter Three, pages 54-57.) Perhaps this view was more prevalent among those too young to have had a direct experience with the Great Depression or not. At any rate, let us see if an earlier experience with the Great Depression had any effect on recession salience in 1958.

If we divide our sample into two age groups, one being 36 or younger at the time of the 1958 interview and the other being 37 or older, we will have an indicator of who was in the labor force in the 1930's and who was not. The oldest people in the first group (36 or younger) would have been 11 years old in 1933 at the height of the Depression, and most would have been younger at that time. Also,

few of them would have had to seek a job until the end of the Depression years. From Table 5-10 it is readily apparent that the 1958 recession was just as salient to those who had not been in the labor force in the 1930's as those who had. Further analysis revealed that this finding

TABLE 5-10

EFFECT OF DIRECT EXPERIENCE WITH THE GREAT DEPRESSION ON 1958 RECESSION SALIENCE
(1957-58 unemployment experience excluded)

Age in 1933	Recession Salience			Total	N
	None	Slight	High		
11 years old or younger	39%	37	24	100%	314
12 years old or older	37%	42	21	100%	743

applies to all components of the recession salience measure. In particular, the younger people were just as likely to be aware of the 1958 recession as a domestic problem as those who had been adults during the Depression years.

This finding should not be too surprising in light of our discussion of the personal and interpersonal stimuli arising from the 1958 recession itself or stemming from communicating factors (e.g., unions, news media) which would be part of people's life space in 1958 regardless of business conditions past or present. In other words, there were many

ways that people could learn about the 1958 recession and understand its meaning without having lived through the 1930's catastrophe. This is not to say that the kinds of messages people received from the news media or from unions, for example, would have been the same if the Great Depression had never occurred. It means only that a direct personal experience with the Great Depression did not make any measurable difference in current attention to economic news or ability to comprehend the importance of the 1958 recession.

Political involvement and level of conceptualization

Finally, let us consider the possible effect of political involvement and level of political conceptualization on economic perceptions and attitudes. We might hypothesize that those people who are highly interested in and are greatly concerned about political affairs (the politically involved) would also pay more attention to and be more concerned about economic events. This is true to a very limited extent: we find that the recession was not salient for 47 per cent of those with little or no interest in politics, while 33 per cent of those with high political involvement never mentioned unemployment or recession in the course of the interview. However, the overall relationship between degree of involvement and recession salience

was an exceedingly modest .12 (gamma).[17] The reader may suppose that those with low political involvement, like those with little education, nevertheless found the recession salient due to felt personal deprivation, interpersonal contacts, and other local direct stimuli. Removing these personal and interpersonal factors, however, did not improve the relationship; political involvement is simply quite independent of economic concern--at least as measured by recession salience.

On the other hand, an ability to conceptualize politics in a fairly sophisticated way apparently does aid in the conceptualization of economic events as well. In Table 5-11, we can note quite a strong relationship between level of political conceptualization and recession salience.[18] In the table, respondents are arranged in groups, with the most politically sophisticated at the top and the least knowledgeable at the bottom. Recession salience increases as we move up from the lowest to the highest level of conceptualization with one notable exception--there is a pronounced tendency for those with a rather sophisticated understanding of politics as it relates to

---

[17]The primary reason that there was any relationship at all between involvement and recession salience was that many of those with low involvement did not perceive or could not conceptualize a national domestic problem of any sort. Thus, no event was salient for them.

[18]The idea of level of conceptualization was discussed briefly in Chapter Two, pp. 30-31, and is based on the measure described in Campbell et al., The American Voter, Chapter 10.

TABLE 5-11

Description of Level of Conceptualization Categories

Ideologue or Near Ideologue - People who gave evidence in their comments about the parties and candidates that they had some concept of an underlying liberal-conservative continuum, or at least they talked about some abstract principles such as local versus federal power.

Group Interest - Indicates that the respondent had some perception of politics as a conflict of group interests with one party taking the side of a certain group and the opposite party helping that group's natural antagonist (e.g., "The party of big business versus the party of the common man.") The respondent had to indicate a considerable understanding of this group-based opposition between parties in order to be placed in this category. Usually there was some specific mention of a party program or policy which benefitted or hurt a certain group.

Group Interest (Impoverished) - Similar type of group-related comment as outlined in the description of the previous category. However, people in this group gave little indication that they really understood clearly the nature of political conflict. Responses were slogan-like without supporting content. Also included in this category were people who mentioned only a single group interest (e.g., party is "for poor people," "for the Negro," etc.), but did not conceptualize the other party as taking an opposing position.

General Economic Concerns - Respondents saw no group differentiation in politics. Content consists of vague references which link a party with economic conditions or personal finances (e.g., "Times are good when the Democrats are in"), or mention of economic issues such as "too much government spending."

Meager Issue Content - Some isolated reaction to a single issue or slogan-like references to war, peace or prosperity.

Know-nothings - No meaningful content.

TABLE 5-11

RELATION OF LEVEL OF CONCEPTUALIZATION TO RECESSION SALIENCE
(Unemployment experience excluded)

Level of Political Conceptualization[a]	Score[b]	Recession Salience			Total	N
		No Salience	Slight Salience	High Salience		
Ideologue or Near Ideologue	- 6	25%	56	19	100%	115
Group Interest	0	30%	40	30	100%	197
Group Interest (Impoverished)	-14	36%	42	22	100%	260
General Economic Concerns	-25	46%	33	21	100%	128
Meager Issue Content	-22	42%	38	20	100%	107
Know-nothings	-30	47%	35	17	100%	215

[a]The measure of a respondent's level of conceptualization is based upon the overall content of responses given to open-ended questions which evinced people's thoughts about the two political parties and candidates in 1956.

[b]Score is the per cent with high recession salience minus the per cent with no recession salience.

social groups and conflicts among groups (Group Interest category) to have high recession salience. We will find our attention drawn to this group once more in the next chapter when we study political translation. One of the most interesting aspects of the findings in Table 5-11 is that the people who talked about a connection between a political party and economic conditions, or about other economic issues, in 1956 (the General Economic Concerns category) did not find the recession particularly salient in 1958. Apparently a generally low level of cognitive ability precluded it. Many of these people in 1956 had said something to the effect that "times are good when the Democrats are in." This "knowledge" or belief apparently did not help them in comprehending that times were not good in 1958.

CHAPTER VI

POLITICAL TRANSLATION OF ECONOMIC EVENTS

This study has shown that the 1958 recession was highly salient for a considerable number of people, but in order for the recession to have had any influence upon their voting behavior, these people must have had some notion that governmental activity could have some effect on economic conditions. In Chapter Three it was concluded that the public in general is not conceptually equipped to make congruent appraisals of specific governmental counter-cyclical programs. However, we are not asking here that people be able to judge specific governmental economic policies, or know anything about Keynsian economics. All we ask is that they recognize some connection between a political party's stewardship and economic conditions. This ability to conceptualize some sort of a relationship between economics and politics--this ability to give political meaning to an economic event--is what is meant by the term <u>political translation</u> (or, more precisely in this case, economic-political translation).

Measuring Economic-Political Translation

The content of each respondent's answers to certain questions in the interview will be used to indicate whether or not the individual cognized a connection between economics and politics. Two indicators of whether or not translation took place are based upon the types of comments expressed in response to the following open-ended questions: "Is there anything in particular that you like about the Democratic party?", "Is there anything in particular that you don't like about the Democratic party?", and the same two questions asked concerning the Republican party. If respondents said anything to the effect that "times" are good under one or the other of the parties; or that a certain party "brings" depression, or cannot help us out of recession; or that one of the parties would bring higher wages or more jobs, they were considered to have made a translation based upon a Party Attitude Related to Recession.[1] If, in response to these same four open-ended questions, there were comments to the effect that one or the other of the parties was for (or that the opposite party was bad for) the "common people," "poor people," "people like me," the "working man" or "labor," these respondents were considered to have made a translation based upon a Party Attitude Related to the Working Class. A third measure of translation (or lack of

---

[1]We have already observed the distribution of these responses in 1956, 1958 and 1960. See pp. 71-73 above and especially Table 3-3.

translation) is based upon the question: "Do you think it will make any difference in how you and your family get along financially whether the Republicans or Democrats win the election?"[2] An affirmative answer indicated that the respondent was aware of the connection between politics and economics.

These indicators were combined to form two summary measures of translation: Total Political Translation and Partisan Direction of Political Translation. Total Political Translation is simply a summary of the three components just described. If a respondent gave no indication of econo-political translation in discussing the good points and bad points of the two political parties, and gave a negative (or "don't know") response to the question about whether or not it would make any difference to him financially which party won the election, he apparently did not cognize any relationship between economics and politics, and was therefore given a Total Political Translation score of zero. If a respondent used one kind of translation, but not the other two (e.g., he mentioned that one of the parties was the party of depression but did not mention anything about the working class, and said it would make no difference to him financially which party won), he was given a score of one

---

[2]The question was changed slightly in 1958 when it was asked in a post-election interview. It read: "Do you think the way the election for Congress came out across the nation will make any difference in how you and your family get along financially?"

in the Total Translation measure. If a respondent translated in two different ways, he was given a score of two. A few respondents translated in all three ways and were given a score of three. In many of the tables in this chapter the 1, 2 and 3 scores are collapsed and the Total Translation measure simply shows that at least one indication of econo-political translation was found in the interview.

The Partisan Direction of Political Translation measure is similarly composed of the three components described above, but is designed to retain the partisan direction (pro-Democratic or pro-Republican) of the translation. In a very few cases, people would give a pro-Democratic translation in one of the component measures and a pro-Republican translation in another. These people were considered to be ambivalent.

Stability and Change in Economic-Political Translation

This section will examine each of the three component measures of econo-political translation across the time period from 1956 to 1960. The principal purpose of this exercise is to gain some insight into the responsiveness of these measures to changing economic conditions. Such insight will not only provide useful background information for what is to follow, but should also be an aid to future researchers who may endeavor to use similar measures of translation.

It is difficult to know, a priori, what amount of change to expect in these translation attitudes. On one hand, we could expect these attitudes to be rather stable over time--that is, individuals should have basically the same attitude toward the two parties over the course of this limited period in history. Certainly, attitudes which are reflected in comments such as "it is the party of the common man" or "it is the party of depression" existed prior to 1956, and we might expect these attitudes to remain fairly stable during the period under study. Also, we would expect people to respond rather consistently to the question about whether or not it will make any difference to them financially which party wins; either they have a concept of a link between their personal economic lives and governmental activity or they do not. On the other hand, stimuli arising from the 1958 recession might be expected to increase awareness of the role of government in the economy, or to remind people of their previous attitudes which perhaps they had forgotten to mention in the prosperous year of 1956. We can expect, then, two basic types of patterns in these attitudes in the 1956-1958-1960 interviews. One would be a stable or consistent pattern; the other would be one in which no attitude became manifest in 1956, but was brought forth in 1958.

Before examining the attitude patterns of individual Political Panel respondents in the 1956-1958-1960 time series, let us look briefly at the distribution of responses

in the sample in each of these years (disregarding how many might have changed from one response to another between interviews). We have already seen the distribution of Party Attitude Related to Recession for the years 1956, 1958 and 1960 in Chapter Three, Table 3-3 (page 72). There we noted that about the same number--18 per cent--of the respondents mentioned something about a party of "good times" or "bad times," prosperity or depression, in each of the three years. As for Party Attitude Related to Working Class, respondents who mentioned something about the "party of the working man" or "common man" were also found in equal proportions in each of the three surveys; in 1956, 1958 and 1960 about 30 per cent gave pro-Democratic or anti-Republican comments pertaining to the working class. (Only 2 per cent in any given year felt that the Republican party, and not the Democratic, was the party for the working man.) The fact that the distribution of these attitudes did not change during this three year period would seem to indicate that these are stable attitudes within the populace. The lack of an increase in "bad times" or "recession" responses in 1958 is especially worthy of note. However, as we shall see shortly, these data do not give any indication of what changes were occurring among individual voters from one year to the next.

Let us also examine the distribution of responses to the question about whether or not it will make any difference financially which party wins. It is important to note

that this is a direct question to which all respondents were asked to give a definite reply. The previous two attitudinal measures of translation relied on the respondent to remember and articulate an attitude in response to open-ended questions.

In Table 6-1, we see that in 1956 and 1960 only one out of every three respondents thought that it made any difference financially which party won the election, and in the recession year of 1958 this proportion was even less--only one in five thought that they would be better off financially with a certain party in Congress. Obviously most

TABLE 6-1

DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO: "DO YOU THINK IT WILL MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE IN HOW YOU AND YOUR FAMILY GET ALONG FINANCIALLY WHETHER THE REPUBLICANS OR DEMOCRATS WIN THE ELECTION?" 1956, 1958 AND 1960 COMPARED

Response	1956	1958	1960
Better off with Democrats	21%	18%	21%
Better off with Republicans	12	3	11
No difference	58	64	61
Depends	1	3	1
Don't know	8	12	6
	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	1,208	1,205	1,740*

*Weighted.

people in the country either do not understand that party programs can affect the national economy which in turn could affect their personal financial situation, or they must feel that their line of work or personal economic endeavors are quite immune from politico-economic forces. But it is difficult to explain why--just after the severest recession in the post-war period--there was a drop in the proportion of people who felt their personal fortunes could be affected by political policies. This anomaly is probably a result of two factors: (1) a decline in personal involvement and concern in off-year congressional elections, and (2) a lack of reliability of this rather difficult question. In Presidential years when larger numbers of people are stimulated to take an interest in politics, apparently there is an increasing realization that the outcome of the election could somehow affect them personally. This stimulus perhaps reminds people of attitudes they held at the time of their last political excitement--that is, during the last Presidential election. This conjecture is derived from the following observations. When we look at the question concerning whether or not it makes any difference financially which party wins and compare the answers of Political Panel respondents in 1956 and 1960, the correlation is .52 (gamma). In contrast, there is only a .25 correlation between answers given by the same respondents in 1956 and 1958, and a .33

correlation between 1958 and 1960.[3] In other words, respondents were far more likely to give the same answer in 1960 that they had given four years earlier than they were to repeat in 1958 what they "thought" in 1956.

Undoubtedly, much of this lack of correlation is also due to the possibility that some respondents did not understand the question but obligingly supplied an answer anyway (i.e., the question is probably not too reliable). This is, after all, a very difficult question; it asks the respondent not only to connect party policies with the nature of economic conditions in the country, but also to see the connection between these general conditions and his own financial well-being. The relative difficulty of the question is borne out by the fact that those who were able to give an affirmative answer to this question were generally at the highest levels of political conceptualization.[4] (See Table 6-6 which appears later in this chapter.)

---

[3]The reader may suppose that this lack of correlation between 1956 and 1958 may have in part been due to a reaction to the "party of recession"; that is, many people may have switched from a pro-Republican answer in prosperous 1956 to a pro-Democratic response in 1958. The number of people making this switch was so small (1.4 per cent of the panel) that it had very little effect on the overall correlation. The lack of correlation was due mainly to switching from an affirmative response in 1956 to a "no difference" response in 1958 and, to a lesser extent, vice versa.

[4]People in the two highest categories of level of conceptualization (Ideologues and Group Interest) were also found to be unusually likely to give consistent affirmative responses to this question over the three interviews.

Yet, in spite of the difficulty of the question and the variation in response to it in Presidential and off-year elections, we should not lose sight of the principal finding depicted in Table 6-1: in any given year, the vast majority of people fail to see any connection between their own financial well-being and the outcome of an election.

Patterns of attitude change

Let us now look at the pattern of responses to the political translation measures made by the Political Panel over the time period from 1958 to 1960. (See Table 6-2.) In the discussion above, it was suggested that two types of patterns would be expected: a consistent pattern reflecting a stable attitude (or non-attitude) and a change pattern in which translation would be made in 1958 but not in 1956--reflecting, perhaps, stimuli from the 1958 recession. These expected change patterns are shown in columns 1 and 2, 4 and 5 in Table 6-2. As we might expect, the type of attitude reflected in the measure called Party Attitude Related to Recession was the most sensitive to the impact of the 1958 recession. Fourteen per cent of the panel (columns 1, 2 and 4) apparently learned or were reminded in 1958 that one of the parties (usually the Democratic) could take care of the recession or was the party that could bring better times--an attitude that these same people failed to express in 1956. However, over 60 per cent of the panel respondents never made this kind of connection between parties and

TABLE 6-2

FREQUENCY OF RESPONSE PATTERNS TO POLITICAL TRANSLATION MEASURES, 1956-1958-1960

Translation Measures	Recession Impact Score[a]	Change Patterns[b]					
		Pro-Democratic			Pro-Republican		
		N-D-N (1)	N-D-D (2)	N-N-D (3)	N-R-N (4)	N-R-R (5)	N-N-R (6)
Party Attitude Related to Recession	+6	10%	3	5	1	**	2
Party Attitude Related to Working Class	+5	6%	6	5	1	0	1
Make a Difference Financially Which Party Wins Election?	-1	6%	3	7	2	1	5

*Weighted.

**Less than one per cent.

[a]Recession Impact Score = per cent in column 1, 2, 4 and 5 minus per cent in columns 7 and 8 (per cent moving toward translation from 1956 to 1958 minus per cent moving away from translation).

[b]In the change patterns, N = no response, or in the case of the question about whether or not it will make a difference financially which party wins, a "no difference," "don't know" answer. D = Pro-Democratic (or Anti-Republican) response; and R = Pro-Republican (or Anti-Democratic) response. The first letter represents the 1956 response; the second letter, the 1958 response; and the third letter in the chain indicates the 1960 response.

TABLE 6-2--Continued

Other			Consistent Patterns[c]			Total	Number of Cases
D\N-N (7)	R\N-N (8)	Misc. (9)	D-D-D	R-R-R	N-N-N		
4	4	2	7 (3%)[d]	1 (e)	61	100%	1,139*
7	1	2	26 (14%)[d]	** (e)	45	100%	1,136*
7	6	2	12 (4%)[d]	4 (1%)[d]	45	100%	1,110*

[c]The D-D-D pattern represents a stable pro-Democratic (or Anti-Republican) attitude in 1956, 1958, and 1960. Actually, this category also includes those with D-D-N and D-N-D patterns. These latter patterns were considered to be indicative of stable attitudes. It may be argued that the N-D-D pattern should also be included in this stable category. It was not included because it is a pattern that we might expect as a result of economic conditions in 1958 and 1960, and thus it was singled out for special attention. Similarly, the R-R-R category contains those with R-R-N and R-N-R responses.

[d]The per cent with "pure" D-D-D and R-R-R patterns are shown in parentheses.

[e]One case.

economic conditions in any of the interviews, and relatively few of them gave indications of having a consistent or stable attitude toward parties as managers of the economy. In other words, this kind of attitude was not widespread in the latter part of the 1950's, but the 1958 recession did seem to trigger thoughts among some people that party policies and economic conditions were connected.

On the other hand, Party Attitude Related to the Working Class is quite a stable attitude among a substantial group of the population--26 per cent consistently mentioned (in 1956, 1958 and 1960) that the Democratic party was for the working class or the "common man." (See column 7 of Table 6-2.) This seems to be a kind of attitude that is expressed in good times as well as bad. For many, it is undoubtedly one of the things that is learned about the Democratic party in the process of political socialization. However, the idea that the Democratic party is the party that can help the working man apparently is also sensitive to changing economic conditions. Twelve per cent of the panel who had failed to express this attitude in 1956 did so in 1958. Also, the Recession Impact score (see Table 6-2) was about the same for both the Party Attitude Related to Recession and Party Attitude Related to the Working Class. Thus, both Party Attitudes--those Related to the Recession

and to the Working Class--seem to be equally sensitive to change in economic conditions.[5]

The response patterns for the question about whether or not it will make any difference financially which party wins show a Recession Impact score of -1. We have already observed the correlations of panel responses to this question between the different years, so the essentially equal (random) distribution of response patterns seen in Table 6-2 should not be surprising. These random responses reflect the difficulty (unreliability) of the question.

What is most striking about Table 6-2 is that the response patterns indicate very little overall recession impact. Although we can find some traces of recession impact in the Party Attitude measures, there was no general surge of econo-political attitudes among individuals in 1958.

Another thing should be noted in the data thus far presented about econo-political translation--a pro-Republican or anti-Democratic attitude is a rarity in good years as well as bad. The Republicans simply are not seen as the party that helps the economy or the working class. It may be argued that the measures of translation we have been able

---

[5]There are other indications that the Party Attitude Related to Recession (PA-R) and the Party Attitude Related to the Working Class (PA-WC) were about equally responsive to recession stimuli. For example, on the PA-R measure, 18 per cent of the internalizers changed from a non-response in 1956 to a translation response in 1958, and 16 per cent of the internalizers made a similar change on the PA-WC measure. Only about 10 per cent of the non-internalizers made this change from a non-response to a pro-Democratic response on either measure between 1956 and 1958.

to derive from the available data are unduly restrictive. In particular, by selecting out comments which refer to one of the parties as the party that helps the working class, are we not automatically biasing the translation in favor of the Democratic party? Are there, for example, no people who think that one of the parties is good for business, industry, or the middle class? Yes, in any given year (1956, 1958 or 1960) there were a small number of such responses--about 5 or 6 per cent of the respondents talked about the parties in such terms. But even here, pro-Democratic responses outnumbered pro-Republican comments three to one.[6] Furthermore, the question which asks whether or not it will make a difference financially which party wins presents no bias--respondents could name the Republican as well as the Democratic party as the one most favorable to their economic advancement. The fact is that most people in the country simply do not connect the Republican party with good management of the economy.[7]

Recession Salience and Economic-Political Translation

Having observed the general distribution of responses to our measures of econo-political translation in good and

---

[6]This includes comments pertaining to small business.

[7]As we shall see, one of the basic reasons why the Republican party is seldom thought of favorably in matters pertaining to the economy is that Republicans themselves seldom view their own party in these terms.

bad times for the population as a whole, let us now turn to an examination of the psychological structuring of recession-related attitudes among individuals. Although the recession of 1958 did not have a widespread impact on the econo-political attitudes of the population in aggregate, we might well presume that those individuals for whom the recession was highly salient would be likely to become aware of the political relevance of these economic attitudes. In other words, concern about the recession might be assumed to trigger econo-political attitudes.

Turning to Table 6-3, it should be noted, first of all, that concern about the recession by no means assured that an econo-political translation would be made by the individual; 38 per cent of those with great concern about the recession (those with high recession salience and pessimistic affect) gave no indication of seeing a link between these economic difficulties and political policies.

However, Table 6-3 does indicate that there was a certain degree of psychological constraint between recession salience and econo-political attitudes--there was a definite tendency for those who were concerned about the recession at the time of the 1958 interview to have at least one, and often two or three, econo-political attitudes. This is exemplified by the fact that of those who found the recession to be highly salient and who felt pessimistic about these economic conditions, 36 per cent translated in at least two ways, while only 15 per cent of those who were also

TABLE 6-3

ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION AS A FUNCTION OF RECESSION SALIENCE AND OVERALL AFFECT, 1958

Total Econo-Political Translation Score	Economic Attitudes					
	Pessimistic Overall Affect[a]			Optimistic Overall Affect[a]		
	Recession Salience			Recession Salience		
	None	Slight	High	None	Slight	High
None	53%	47%	38%	61%	52%	50%
1	32	26	26	25	30	26
2 or 3	15	27	36	14	18	24
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of cases	187	244	237	252	224	74
	gamma = .22			gamma = .15		

[a]Pessimistic affect = overall affect score from 4 to 7, and optimistic affect = overall affect score from 1 to 3. See Chapter IV, pp. 138-139 for a review of the Overall Affect measure.

pessimistic but did not attribute these difficulties to the recession showed a similar degree of econo-political translation. (See left hand portion, bottom row, of Table 6-3.) It is also important to note that those who felt optimistic about economics or finances at the time of the 1958 interview showed considerably less tendency to translate in 2 or 3 ways than those who were pessimistic.

We have postulated that this relationship between recession salience and econo-political attitudes was primarily a result of the activation of latent attitudinal structures--that is, people who perceived the recession and developed negative attitudes toward it were reminded of certain econo-political attitudes that they had held for some time. Evidence presented in the following section will lend support to this.

The Role of News Media and Local Economic Conditions in the Formation of Economic-Political Attitudes

In Chapter Four it was demonstrated that greater news media usage produced higher levels of recession salience, and that people living in labor market areas hardest hit by the recession were more aware of economic difficulties. If these stimuli helped produce recession salience, could they not also have been an important source for learning econo-political attitudes? Apparently not. No relationship was found to exist between amount of media usage and Total Political Translation, and the association

between Labor Market Area Trends and Total Political Translation (gamma = .14) is scarcely worth mentioning.

Probing these data a little further, it was found that people who used the news media little, if at all, had relatively no difficulty in making a political translation if the recession was salient for them. As for the stimuli received from local economic conditions (Labor Market Areas), Table 6-4 shows that the strength of the relationship between Labor Market Area Trends and Total Political Translation increased as recession salience increased. If the

TABLE 6-4

RELATION BETWEEN LABOR MARKET AREA TRENDS AND TOTAL POLITICAL TRANSLATION, WITH RECESSION SALIENCE CONTROLLED

	Recession Salience		
	None	Slight	High
Association between LMA Trends and Total Political Translation	.07	.16	.26

Cell entries are gammas.

recession was not salient, respondents were no more likely to translate if they lived in declining areas than if they lived in stable economic areas. Yet, if the recession was highly salient for the respondent, the degree of translation increased as the local economic conditions in which he found

himself worsened. Stimuli from local environment, then, did somehow add to the individual's ability to translate, but not in the absence of recession-related attitudes.

In summary, neither the information conveyed in news media about the 1958 recession, nor worsening local economic conditions, were important factors in creating (or reactivating) the econo-political attitudes we have been describing. Although these two factors did help create awareness of the 1958 recession, they were not responsible for political translation. In short, econo-political attitudes do not seem to be learned from information emanating from a short-term economic event.

Intervening Variables: Factors Which Help Establish Economic-Political Attitudes

We have observed that even a substantial proportion of those who were aware of the recession or unemployment in 1958 gave no indication in their interviews that they saw a connection between economic decline and party policy. We might immediately surmise that much of this inability to translate would be due to a deficiency in education. However, this is not the case--the data revealed no association between level of education and Total Political Translation. Indeed, one of the components of the Total Translation measure--Party Attitude Related to Recession--is negatively associated with level of education (gamma = -.29). In other words, the least educated were most likely to make this kind

of translation--to link a political party with the nature of the "times" in the country.[8]

It might also be hypothesized that those who had been in the labor force at the time of the Great Depression and had been old enough to vote during the New Deal period would be able to see the connection between economics and politics more easily than those who had not learned by that particular experience. Again, the data yield no evidence to support this hypothesis. Those who were 11 years old or younger in 1933 were just as likely to have econo-political attitudes as those who were older during that period in history. Apparently attitudes which relate the political parties to economic circumstances--that label a party as the party of the "working man," or as the party of "bad times"--have become part of the general political folklore and are assimilated during the process of socialization.

We have already observed that these attitudes were present in good economic periods as well as bad. For example, Party Attitudes Related to Working Class were articulated rather consistently in interviews throughout the 1950's (see Table 6-2), and are probably also expressed

---

[8]We have already commented on the difficulty of another component of the Total Translation measure--the question about whether or not it would make any difference financially which party wins. The difficulty of this question is borne out again by the fact that the proportion of "don't know" answers to it increases as educational attainment decreases. That is, the less educated were more likely to say "don't know" than to say "no difference" in response to the question. However, affirmative answers to this question were found in similar proportions at all levels of education.

with some consistency in interpersonal political conversation which forms part of the socialization process.

There is another hint in the data that these econo-political attitudes are most often established through socialization rather than from new stimuli at the time of a recession. Labor unions can certainly be considered as important agencies of political socialization, and a fairly strong relationship (gamma = .30) was found to exist between strength of union identification and Total Political Translation. However, since many union members (workers) are likely to be personally hurt by a recession (i.e., to be internalizers), it might be suspected that this relationship is due to the short-term economic concerns of these workers brought on by the 1958 recession rather than from assimilation of attitudes from union sources.[9] Table 6-5 indicates that each of these factors--internalization and union membership--acts independently to produce econo-political attitudes. Among those who were not personally hurt by the recession, 60 per cent of the union members translated while only 44 per cent of the non-union members did so. Internalizers, of course, translated with greater frequency than those less personally concerned with the recession, yet

---

[9]It may be that some union members developed econo-political attitudes for the first time in 1958 as a result of current information from union sources concerning the political significance of the recession. However, we are assuming here that most of these econo-political attitudes were assimilated over the whole period of time that a member had identified with a union.

TABLE 6-5

ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION AS A FUNCTION OF INTERNALIZATION AND UNION MEMBERSHIP

Internalization of Recession	Per Cent of Respondents Making a Translation		
	Non-Union Member	Union Member	Total
Non-Internalizer	44%	60%	48%
Internalizer	52%	74%	64%

internalizers who were not union members translated with less frequency than union members who were not internalizers. The combined effect of internalization and union membership produced a very high level (74 per cent) of translation.

Political factors

Since we are dealing with political attitudes (political translation), we would certainly expect the individual's orientation to the political world--his political involvement, level of conceptualization and party identification--to have a strong bearing on his econo-political attitudes. This is indeed a promising area of investigation; as the findings in this section unfold, we shall see that these particular political variables explain a great deal

about an individual's ability to make an econo-political translation.[10]

Political involvement and economic-political translation

We noted earlier (in Chapter Five) that awareness of the 1958 recession (recession salience) was not much affected by political involvement. However, a fairly strong association was found to exist between Total Political Translation and political involvement (gamma = .32). Since political involvement does not give rise to recession salience, it is not an underlying dimension or common source of attentiveness to economic events on one hand and recognition of the political relevance of economic matters on the other. Rather, recession salience and political involvement, each acting independently, can help produce econo-political attitudes. (See Table 6-6.) However, when both happen to coincide, they each act to boost the likelihood of econo-political translation--65 per cent of those with high recession salience and high political involvement had at least one econo-political attitude. On the other hand, where both recession salience and involvement were lacking, only 27 per cent indicated that they were aware of some connection between economics and politics. From Table 6-6 we see that

---

[10]It should be mentioned that another well-known dimension of political orientation--sense of political efficacy--is not related to ability to make an econo-political translation.

TABLE 6-6

ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION AS A FUNCTION OF POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT AND RECESSION SALIENCE

Political Involvement[a]	Per Cent of Respondents Making a Translation		
	Recession Salience		
	None	Slight	High
Low	27%	32%	45%
High	53%	59%	65%

[a]Since involvement changes to some extent from one election to the next, usually declining in off-year Congressional elections, a more stable measure of general involvement in politics was sought. Thus, involvement in the 1956 and the 1958 elections was averaged for each individual. This average is the measure of involvement used throughout this study.

political involvement is a slightly more powerful influence than recession salience in giving rise to (or reactivating) latent econo-political attitudes: 53 per cent of those who are highly involved in politics but were not aware of the recession held econo-political attitudes, while only 45 per cent of the less politically involved who were highly aware of the recession translated.

Level of conceptualization and economic-political translation

In 1956 Survey Research Center measured the level of political conceptualization of their respondents by using

special content coding of responses to open-ended questions which evinced the respondent's attitudes toward the two political parties and the candidates. (A description of these various levels of conceptualization was presented with Table 5-11.) Two of my measures of translation are based on the same type of materials in the 1958 interview. Thus, in comparing 1956 level of conceptualization and 1958 econo-political attitudes for Political Panel respondents (as we have in Table 6-7), we would expect a certain degree of redundancy due to re-articulation of the same attitudes. Yet, to a surprising extent, 1958 econo-political translation attitudes are not simply a repetition of 1956 political attitudes, but are a function of the total dimension of political sophistication captured by the level of conceptualization measure.

To be sure, two-thirds of those in the Group Interest category reiterated "party of the common man" or "working class" attitudes in 1958--attitudes which helped earn them their Group Interest position in 1956. Yet a much larger number--an impressive 80 per cent--of this highly sophisticated group translated. This means that many in the group who did not happen to mention "working class" attitudes showed up on the other two measures of translation. Indeed, over half of the Group Interest respondents who translated did so in more than one way; they were not simply relying on the single concept that politics is a conflict between

TABLE 6-7

TYPE OF ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION AS A FUNCTION OF LEVEL OF CONCEPTUALIZATION

Level of Conceptualization[a]	Type of Econo-Political Translation			Number of Econo-Political Attitudes			N
	Make a Difference Financially Which Party Wins?	Party Attitude Related to Recession	Party Attitude Related to Working Class	1	2 or 3	Total (1 or More)	
Ideologue or Near Ideologue	26%[b]	9%	30%	35%	16%	51%	122
Group Interest	35%	26%	66%	37%	43%	80%	226
Group Interest (Impoverished)	22%	20%	39%	31%	24%	55%	302
General Economic Concerns	14%	28%	22%	24%	19%	43%	155
Meager Issue Content	16%	17%	16%	20%	15%	35%	124
Know-nothings	13%	12%	14%	18%	10%	28%	251

[a]See Table 5-11 above for explanation of level of conceptualization categories.

[b]Cell entries are the per cent who made the indicated type of translation.

the working class and another group in order to understand the relation between economics and politics.

It is also interesting to note that only 28 per cent of the General Economic Concerns group--those who made comments which linked a party with economic conditions or personal finances, or mentioned other economic issues in 1956--reiterated those comments in the recession year of 1958. (As we saw earlier in Table 5-11, almost half of the General Economic Concerns group were not even aware that a recession had occurred.) Although no other conceptualization group was quite as likely to make this type of translation based upon Party Attitude Related to Recession in 1958, 28 per cent is hardly an impressive showing for a group who seemed to see some connection between economics and politics in 1956. Apparently, a comment like "times are good when the Democrats are in" or "we have prosperity now" in the absence of other cognitive materials is simply a slogan that has little lasting meaning for the respondent.[11] The shallowness of econo-political understanding within the General Economic Concerns group is further highlighted by the fact that only 14 per cent of them replied affirmatively when

---

[11]It will be recalled that this type of translation (Party Attitude Related to Recession) was easiest for the less educated to make. (See above, pp. 195-196.) Apparently these types of comments (nature of economic times) are so much a part of the folklore of political commentary that they are one of the things that a poorly educated or less politically sophisticated person can come up with in a search for political attitudes within his impoverished cognitive files.

asked if they thought the outcome of the Congressional election would make any difference to them financially. They ranked with the Know-nothings in this denial of a connection between election outcome and economic well-being.

Looking at the total number of econo-political attitudes in Table 6-7, we can observe that econo-political translation increases monotonically as we move from lower to higher levels of conceptualization--with the notable exceptions that translation drops off among Ideologues and is unusually high for the Group Interest people. These exceptions are not readily explainable. Careful analysis, using all appropriate controls, failed to turn up any third factors that might have contributed to this pattern of translation within levels of conceptualization.[12] We are forced to conclude that Ideologues--those who see politics in liberal-conservative or other ideological terms--are less aware of the connection between economic conditions and party policy (or at least it is less salient for them) than their level of political sophistication would lead us to expect.

Since those in the top three levels of conceptualization were the most likely to perceive the recession (have

---

[12]For example, as we have seen, union membership has a strong effect on ability to translate. As one might expect, Group Interest contains a disproportionate number of union members. Removal of this factor failed to alter appreciably the pattern shown in Table 6-7.

recession salience),[13] and also to make an econo-political translation, it is instructive to observe the kind of voting behavior that we might expect from them. In Table 6-8 we find that the Ideologues have an unusual tendency to vote Republican year after year, while the Group Interest people have an almost equal propensity to vote consistently Democratic.[14] At the same time, these two groups change votes less often than we would expect by chance. In other words, they are not likely to contribute to a change in electoral result. Yet these are the very people for whom the 1958 recession was a politically meaningful event (and for whom any event is more likely to take on political meaning). Because of their propensity to vote steadily for one party, they will contribute less to electoral change than those with a more impoverished understanding of the political order. It should be noted, however, that the third most politically sophisticated cohort, the Group Interest (Impoverished)--a very large group (almost twice as numerous as the top two groups combined)--does show some inclination

---

[13]See above, Table 5-11.

[14]This study is, of course, only able to observe voting patterns for the three elections 1956, 1958 and 1960. The Republican voting behavior of the Ideologues can be explained in large measure by the fact that Republican identifiers comprise an unusual portion of their ranks. (Fifty-two per cent of the Ideologues are Republicans, while in the national population only 27 per cent usually so identify.) The Democratic identification of the Group Interest people is equally as disproportionate; 70 per cent are Democrats--some twenty per cent more than the national average.

TABLE 6-8

CONGRESSIONAL VOTING BEHAVIOR OF PANEL IN 1956, 1958 AND 1960
BY LEVEL OF CONCEPTUALIZATION
ACTUAL CASES AS A PERCENTAGE OF EXPECTED CASES[a]

Level of Conceptualization	Consistent[b] Non-Voter	Consistent[b] Democratic Vote	Consistent[b] Republican Vote	Change[c] Patterns	N
Ideologue or Near Ideologue	20%	100%	245%	88%	116
Group Interest	23%	225%	74%	95%	205
Group Interest (Impoverished)	87%	105%	64%	114%	296
General Economic Concerns	150%	42%	95%	102%	131
Meager Issue Content	96%	50%	130%	112%	109
Know-nothings	185%	46%	82%	90%	246

[a]Cell entries are the percentages formed by dividing the observed number of cases by the number of cases expected by chance.

[b]Consistent behavior means that the individual members of the Political Panel voted (or did not vote) in the same way for Congress in 1956, 1958 and 1960.

[c]Change patterns represent all kinds of voting change (all patterns other than consistent). Included are changes from vote to non-vote as well as change from one party to another.

to change their voting behavior. We have seen that this group was about equal to the Ideologues in recession salience and in econo-political translation. It is through this group, then, that an economic event could have the greatest potential impact on election results.

Party identification and economic-political translation

In Table 6-9 we observe an extremely powerful relationship (gamma = .66) between party identification and Partisan Direction of Political Translation--a relationship that is independent of the recession salience of the respondent.[15] Obviously, the political orientation that is inherent in party identification is a most important factor for individuals not only in aiding their recognition of a connection between economics and politics (ability to translate), but also in giving partisan direction to that recognition. Yet, the force of party identification does not act symmetrically--it does not affect Republicans and Democrats equally. For example, while 75 per cent of the Strong Democrats made a translation, only 29 per cent of the Strong Republicans did so. And while the econo-political attitudes of the Democrats who translated were nearly unanimously pro-Democratic, only the strongest of the Republican

---

[15]The relationship between party identification and Partisan Direction of Political Translation remains constant when recession salience is controlled.

TABLE 6-9

RELATION OF PARTY IDENTIFICATION TO ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION

Party Identification	Partisan Direction of Political Translation				Total	N
	Pro-Dem.	Pro-Rep.	None	Ambi-valent		
Strong Dem.	75%	*	24	1	100%	321
Weak Dem.	49%	2	47	2	100%	275
Independent	42%	5	51	2	100%	234
Weak Rep.	13%	8	77	2	100%	193
Strong Rep.	6%	23	69	2	100%	142

Gamma = .66

*Less than 1 per cent.

identifiers who translated thought that their party was the one that could best maintain good times or help the working class (and this belief was not held unanimously).[16] Most of the Weak Republicans who translated gave the Democratic party the credit in these economic matters.

[16]The Partisan Direction of Political Translation measure is, of course, a combination of the three component measures of translation. Each of these component measures contributed equally to the combined result shown in Table 6-8. In particular, Strong Republicans were just as likely to say that their party was the party that would help the working class, or bring about better times, as they were to say that they would be better off financially if the Republican party wins. Of course, very few Republicans (only about 10 per cent) said any one of these things.

The major thrust of the data presented in Table 6-9, however, points to the fact that most Republicans simply do not see any connection between party-in-office and the economic system (or their own financial well-being). We might suggest several reasons for this failure of Republicans to make an econo-political translation.

In the first place, many Republicans probably believe that the government and the economy are indeed separate institutions, or that they should be.[17] Although general evidence to support this supposition about the laissez faire ideology of rank-in-file Republicans is not available, there are data on one issue which lends weight to it: there is a relative lack of support among Republican identifiers for government help to the unemployed. When asked in 1958 whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement "The government in Washington ought to see to it that everybody who wants to work can find a job," Democrats were in agreement three to one, while Republican opinion was about equally divided. (This finding was similar in 1956 and 1960.)

We might also suppose that since Republicans are less likely to be in those occupations that are most subject to unemployment and other economic deprivation resulting

---

[17]Certainly, if Eisenhower's views are indicative of the beliefs of the Republican party's rank-in-file, most Republicans would feel that the government's role in countering business cycles is at most a rather limited one. (See the review of President Eisenhower's policies during the 1958 recession above, pp. 73-77.)

from general economic decline, they would have less reason to call on the government for help, or less understanding of why such help was necessary. We have already seen in Chapter Five that the Republicans were somewhat more optimistic than the Democrats in 1958 due largely to this occupational factor. As another indication of this type of motivation, it was learned that close to 70 per cent of those who mentioned unemployment as the first most important problem in 1960[18] were Democrats, while only about 10 per cent were Republicans.[19] (Needless to say, most of those [60 per cent] who mentioned unemployment as a primary problem thought that the Democratic party would be the most likely to handle this problem in the way they wanted; only 6 per cent saw the Republicans doing what they wanted.)

And finally, we might suggest that, with the legacy of the "Hoover Depression," Republicans would rather not talk about party policy as it relates to the national economy; they would rather talk about their party's strong points--such as policies related to foreign affairs.

But, no matter what the cause, the fact remains that most Republicans do not see, or do not wish to see, a

---

[18]See above, pp. 131-132, for a discussion of the "most important problem" question which was asked in 1960.

[19]Interestingly, in light of the Eisenhower administration's policies, the only domestic economic problem that some Republicans seemed relatively concerned about was inflation. Of the handful of people (1.6 per cent of the sample) who mentioned inflation as a primary problem in 1960, close to 40 per cent were Republicans. Other domestic problems drew only half that proportion of Republicans.

connection between economics and politics. This was true not only in the recession year of 1958, but in 1956 and 1960 as well; and there is every reason to believe that this lack of translation on the part of Republicans will continue.[20] This is a very important factor to consider when assessing the impact of any recession on electoral behavior: except for a few of the strongest Republican identifiers, Republicans have virtually excluded themselves from changing the results of an election as a reaction to economic conditions. If most Republicans do not see any connection between economic conditions and the outcome of an election, then their votes could not be influenced by a recession. At least this was true of the vast majority of Republicans in 1958. It is the Democrats and Independents, then, who have the potential to effect the outcome of an election in a recession year. We will examine this point further when we study voting behavior in the 1958 election.

Finally, we should make the observation that the working class, especially the semi-skilled and unskilled workers who are most likely to be hurt by a recession, have relatively no difficulty in making an econo-political translation.[21] (See Table 6-10.) This is not at all surprising

---

[20]This assumes that a Democratic president does not preside over a prolonged depression.

[21]The reader may suppose that people in the working class were able to translate in large measure because Party Attitude Related to the Working Class was an obvious and easy reference for them. We should hasten to point out that, except for professional men, about equal proportions of <u>all</u>

TABLE 6-10

ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION OF OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS

Occupational Status	Partisan Direction of Political Translation				Total	N
	Pro-Dem.	Pro-Rep.	None	Ambi-valent		
Professional	29%	15	55	1	100%	101
Business (high level)	20%	13	65	2	100%	55
Small businessman	42%	5	51	2	100%	190
White collar	43%	2	52	3	100%	108
Skilled worker	46%	2	50	2	100%	198
Semi-skilled	54%	2	42	2	100%	212
Unskilled worker	50%	4	45	1	100%	123

in light of what we have learned in this chapter. Since econo-political translation is not a function, for example, of education or media usage (factors which are relatively lacking in lower occupational groups), and since this type of translation is a function of such things as union membership, internalization, and, especially, Democratic party

---

occupational groups held Party Attitudes Related to the Working Class. Furthermore, the working class (three lower occupation groups) were by no means deficient in Party Attitudes Related to Recession and in understanding the connection between the election outcome and their own financial well-being. In other words, all three measures of translation contributed to the total translation measure shown in Table 6-10.

identification (factors which are plentiful in these groups), we would be hard pressed to explain any different finding.

The powerful force of party identification is superimposed on Table 6-10. Most of the relationship that is found in that table is not a function of occupational status, but rather is almost entirely a result of the unequal distributions of Republican and Democratic identifiers within various occupational groups. The fact that business executives and professional people, for example, did not translate as frequently as other occupational groups, and often were pro-Republican when they did translate, can be explained almost completely by the Republican orientation of most business executives and professional men.

The powerful effect of party identification on econo-political attitudes is highlighted once more in Table 6-11. There we see that Republican union members in large measure seem to shed the econo-political attitudes that their Democratic and Independent compatriots tend to absorb.

TABLE 6-11

ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION AS A FUNCTION OF UNION MEMBERSHIP WITH PARTY IDENTIFICATION CONTROLLED

Partisan Direction of Econo-Political Translation	Union Members			Non-Members		
	Party Identification			Party Identification		
	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	Dem.	Ind.	Rep.
Pro-Dem.	69%	58%	14%	58%	35%	8%
Pro-Rep.	1	4	11	1	5	15
None	28	34	72	39	59	74
Ambivalent	2	4	3	2	1	2
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Number of Cases	195	74	63	386	152	265

CHAPTER VII

THE 1958 RECESSION AND VOTING CHANGE

Previous chapters of this study have probed the formation of economic attitudes engendered by the 1958 recession, and have examined the nature of econo-political translation. This chapter will now observe the effect of these attitudes on voting behavior. The reader may, at this point, want to review the theoretical construct which was discussed in Chapter Two and, especially, refer to the schematic presentation of the theoretical construct in Figure 1 (page 34). Chapter Two stressed that in order for the 1958 recession to have resulted in voting change, the political actor must have perceived that there was a recession and shown concern about it in his economic attitudes, and he also must have understood that there was a connection between economic events and public policy (i.e., made an econo-political translation). If the voter was not aware of the 1958 recession, for whatever reason, the event could not affect his political behavior; if he did perceive it, but did not link it with party policy, it could not affect his vote; and if he did have econo-political attitudes, but was not aware of the 1958 recession, it must be assumed that

his voting behavior was not a result of a reaction to that current economic event.

The Normal Vote Construct Applied to the 1958 Election

The concept of the "normal vote" was introduced in Chapter One (pages 22-27) and will be employed to a great extent in this chapter. As the reader may recall, the "normal vote" is the vote that we would expect under conditions where short-term forces had not contravened normal political predispositions. The importance of this concept is that it enables the political scientist to establish a baseline from which to measure voting change. By using the normal vote construct, we can compute the "expected" vote for a set of respondents if we know the distribution of party identification in the group.[1] A comparison of the actual vote of these respondents with their expected vote enables us to determine whether or not short-term forces have (1) stimulated their interest in the election (as measured by higher than expected turnout) and/or (2) deflected some voters from their partisan predispositions. (See Appendix B for a full explanation of the normal vote construct.)

In Table 7-1, the normal vote construct is applied to the total sample of respondents in 1958. These data

---

[1] In essence, this construct provides an elaborate control for party identification while voting behavior is being examined.

TABLE 7-1

1958 CONGRESSIONAL VOTE OF ENTIRE SAMPLE
ACTUAL VOTE COMPARED WITH VOTE PREDICTED
BY NORMAL VOTE CONSTRUCT

	Expected Vote			Actual Vote		
	Per Cent of Turnout	Per Cent of Total Sample	Number of Cases	Per Cent of Turnout	Per Cent of Total Sample	Number of Cases
Dem. Vote	57%	35%	425	61%	37%	449
Rep. Vote	43	27%	324	39	24%	292
	100%			100%		
Turnout		62%			61%	
		N = 1,210			N = 1,210	

show that there was no overall stimulation effect in that recession year--62 per cent would be expected to turn out and 61 per cent actually did go to the polls. There was, however, a certain amount of deflection in favor of the Democrats. Using the normal vote construct, we would expect 57 per cent of the predicted turnout to vote Democratic (given the distribution of party identifiers in the sample). Actually, 61 per cent of those who said they voted reported voting for Democratic congressmen. The difference of these two percentages (61 per cent minus 57 per cent) gives a +4 pro-Democratic deflection.[2]

[2]At the beginning of Chapter Three, aggregate election data were used to show the dramatic surge of votes for Democratic congressmen in 1958. In this present chapter

In the tables which follow, stimulation and deflection will be indicated separately to enable the reader to see how each component contributed to voting change. In addition, a summary measure called Net Democratic Gain will be used to show the net effect of the stimulation and deflection components. The net number of votes gained by the Democrats will be summed and expressed as a per cent of the group total. Applied to the data in Table 7-1, for example, we see that the Democrats received 24 more votes than expected (449 minus 425), and the Republicans received 32 less than expected (292 minus 324) to give the Democrats a net gain of 56 votes over "normal" for this sample. Thus, in 1958 there was a Net Democratic Gain of 4.6 per cent.

It has been noted above that there was no overall stimulation effect in 1958. Thus, the Net Democratic Gain in the 1958 election was due almost exclusively to deflection. In any given subset of the sample, a Net Democratic Gain could be due to stimulation alone, to deflection alone, or to both factors working simultaneously. We have already seen an example of the stimulation effect acting alone: when the right-to-work issue was examined in Chapter One, Table 1-3, it was seen that there was a net gain in votes

---

survey data are being used along with an entirely different method of analysis. In Chapter Three we compared the proportion of the total national vote for Democratic congressmen in 1958 with the average proportion of Democratic congressional vote since World War II (leaving out 1958). Here we are comparing the 1958 reported vote of respondents in a national sample with a theoretical baseline established by the normal vote construct.

for Democratic congressmen due solely to the stimulation effect of the issue.

1958 Voting Change Caused by the Recession

Table 7-1 has demonstrated the presence of short-term forces which moved the electorate in the Democratic direction in 1958. If the recession was the primary short-term force that year, we would expect most of the pro-Democratic voting change to have occurred among those who were concerned about the recession and were aware of the connection between these economic conditions and party policy. Furthermore, we would expect the deflection to increase as recession salience increased.

There is little evidence in our data to support these hypotheses. In Table 7-2, the groups that satisfy the theoretical construct illustrated in Figure 1 (Chapter Two) are indicated by arrows. These are the people who were concerned about the recession (i.e., held pessimistic economic attitudes with the recession salient) and who translated. Except for the internalizers, the indicated groups showed no marked deviation in voting behavior when compared to others. (See the columns under "Voting Change.") Some of the groups that were totally unaware of the recession (had no recession salience) were almost as likely to contribute to the Democratic surge as those who were highly aware of the economic difficulties. Optimism or pessimism in economic attitudes had no systematic effect on the vote.

TABLE 7-2

Description of Voting Change Measures

[a]Stimulation:

$$\left(\frac{\text{number who actually turned out}}{\text{total number of cases}}\right) - \left(\frac{\text{number expected to turn out}}{\text{total number of cases}}\right)$$

In other words, the per cent of the total group that actually reported going to the polls minus the per cent of the total group that the normal vote construct predicted would turn out. Thus positive values indicate stimulation; negative values indicate lack of stimulation.

[b]Pro-Democratic Deflection:

$$\left(\frac{\text{number who actually voted Dem.}}{\text{number who actually turned out}}\right) - \left(\frac{\text{number expected to vote Dem.}}{\text{number expected to turn out}}\right)$$

In other words, the per cent of the actual turnout who reported voting for a Democratic congressman minus the per cent of the expected turnout that the normal vote construct predicted would vote Democratic. (Minus values indicate pro-Republican deflection.)

[c]Net Democratic Gain:

$$\left(\frac{\text{no. of actual Dem. votes - no. of expected Dem. votes}}{\text{total number of cases in subset}}\right) - \left(\frac{\text{no. of actual Rep. votes - no. of expected Rep. votes}}{\text{total number of cases in subset}}\right)$$

In other words, the net gain in votes the Democrats received over and above that predicted by the normal vote construct, expressed as a per cent of the number of people in the subset.

[d]Due to the limited number of pro-Republican translators, optimistic and pessimistic affect were not considered separately.

[e]Includes pro-Republican translators with both slight and high recession salience.

TABLE 7-2

VOTING CHANGE WITH ECONOMIC ATTITUDES AND ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION CONTROLLED

Economic Attitudes: Recession Salience	Economic Attitudes: Overall Affect	Econo-Political Translation	Party Identification: Dem.	Ind.	Rep.	Total	No. of Cases	Voting Change: Stimulation[a]	Pro-Dem. Deflection[b]	Net Dem. Gain[c]
None	Optimistic	None	41%	28	31	100%	152	-6	-2	-1%
		Pro-Dem.	71%	19	10	100%	80	+1	+8	+11%
	Pessimistic	None	34%	25	41	100%	98	-9	-3	-2%
		Pro-Dem.	74%	22	4	100%	70	+5	+4	+9%
	(Either)[d]	Pro-Rep.	10%	13	77	100%	30	0	+5	+7%
Slight	Optimistic	None	30%	20	50	100%	116	+4	+7	+9%
		Pro-Dem.	73%	18	9	100%	85	+11	-2	+3%
	Pessimistic	None	36%	25	39	100%	114	-5	+4	+4%
		Pro-Dem. →	75%	19	6	100%	113	+5	+3	+7% ←
	(Either)[d]	Pro-Rep.[e] →	8%	22	70	100%	37	+1	-6	-11% ←
High	Optimistic	None	27%	30	43	100%	37	+1	-3	-5%
		Pro-Dem.	69%	28	3	100%	29	+2	+11	+14%
	Pessimistic	None	23%	35	42	100%	62	-4	+3	+3%
		Pro-Dem. →	79%	16	5	100%	74	-7	+10	+7% ←
High + Internalization	Pessimistic	None	38%	14	48	100%	29	-20	-8	-7%
		Pro-Dem. →	64%	33	3	100%	61	+1	+19	+26% ←

In short, above the line setting off the respondents with high salience plus internalization in Table 7-2, there is no discernible pattern of voting change. By controlling for recession salience and econo-political translation, we have gained little, if anything, in our ability to explain voting change in 1958.

In order to demonstrate these data more simply and clearly, the pro-Democratic translators have been extracted from Table 7-2 and presented separately in Table 7-3.

TABLE 7-3

VOTING CHANGE OF PRO-DEMOCRATIC TRANSLATORS AS A FUNCTION OF RECESSION SALIENCE

Recession Salience	Econo-Political Translation	Number of Cases	Stimulation	Pro-Dem. Deflection	Net Dem. Gain
None	Pro-Dem.	150	+3	+6	9.3%
Slight	Pro-Dem.	198	+8	+1	5.5%
High	Pro-Dem.	103	-4	+10	9.7%

(Optimistic and pessimistic economic attitude categories were combined.)[3] It is obvious that voting change does not increase monotonically as recession salience increases.

It may be argued that we would not expect a great deal of voting change from those who made an econo-political

[3]Since optimism and pessimism had no systematic effect on voting change, combining these groups does not bias the results and offers the advantage of larger numbers of cases.

translation. After all, these groups consist preponderately of Democrats (or, in the case of pro-Republican translators, of Republicans). The high proportion of Democrats in the pro-Democratic translation groups means that it would require a nearly unanimous Democratic vote by these people to register a deflection of any magnitude. These groups, which consist of around 75 per cent Democrats, have an expected vote of about 80 per cent Democratic (as computed by the normal vote construct). Thus, for example, to get a deflection as high as +15, 95 per cent of the turnout would have to vote Democratic--a nearly unanimous vote.[4]

Perhaps, then, the 1958 recession served mainly to reinforce existing partisan predispositions and thus did not produce a great deal of deflection. (This possibility was suggested in Chapter One, page 15.) If this had been the case, however, we would expect to see a stimulation effect from this reinforcement. If people were concerned about the recession and this concern reinforced their pro-Democratic feelings, we would expect them to go to the polls in greater numbers than usual to express these feelings. Yet, those with pro-Democratic translation attitudes who were highly

---

[4]For example, in order for the internalizers who translated to have a pro-Democratic deflection as high as +19 (as shown in Table 7-2), 97 per cent of those who voted cast their ballots for Democrats. The expected Democratic vote of these internalizers was only 78 per cent. (That is, any group composed, as they were, of 28 Strong Democrats, 11 Weak Democrats, 20 Independents and 2 Weak Republicans would be expected to give 78 per cent of their vote to Democratic candidates under "normal" conditions.)

aware of the recession stayed at home more often than they "normally" would and indeed were less stimulated than those who were unaware of the recession. (See Table 7-3.) We are forced to reject the reinforcement theory.

Another possible explanation for the lack of marked voting change among those most concerned about the recession was suggested in Chapter Six. Panel data for 1956-1958-1960 showed that voters at the two highest levels of conceptualization (Ideologues and Group Interest) were unlikely to change votes from one party to another over a series of elections. Respondents at these highest levels of conceptualization were not only more likely to be aware of the recession, but also to make an econo-political translation, and therefore they can be expected to show up in large numbers among the groups which satisfy our theoretical construct. Indeed, 45 per cent of those with high recession salience, pessimistic economic attitudes, and pro-Democratic translation were either Ideologues or Group Interest conceptualizers (predominantly the latter). This large proportion of high level conceptualizers would, it is presumed, dampen voting change in this group. This may be the case.[5] When

[5]This analysis of the dampening effect of the highest conceptualizers is only suggestive. When the full array of data (similar to that shown in Table 7-2) for all groups were examined after the Ideologues and Group Interest were removed, some of the findings were somewhat ambiguous and did not uniformly support the notion that a high proportion of Ideologues and Group Interest conceptualizers in a subset will dampen deflection. However, our hypothesis concerning those particular groups which were highly concerned with the recession was substantiated and, therefore, reported in the text.

these two highest levels of conceptualizers were removed, pro-Democratic deflection increased from +10 to +15 in this high recession salience, pessimistic, pro-Democratic translation group.[6] However, this increased deflection was not observed in the slight recession salience, pessimistic, pro-Democratic group, although almost half of this group originally were Ideologues or Group Interest conceptualizers. This observation suggests that the recession may have had a greater psychological impact on voters with high recession salience than the voting change data in Tables 7-2 and 7-3 indicate. Voting change simply measures the behavioral manifestations of the recession's attitudinal impact.

We might also note that 38 per cent of the Internalizers who translated were Ideologues or Group Interest conceptualiers. When these top conceptualizers were removed, deflection increased from +19 to +24, indicating once more the possible dampening effect of these conceptualizers on voting change among those strongly concerned about the recession.

The internalizers

The only definite evidence that the recession had an effect on the outcome of the 1958 election is found in

---

[6]By removing the most politically aware and sophisticated people, we bias the remaining sample on the side of low political involvement. Thus, turnout (stimulation) would be lower than that predicted by the normal vote construct. The stimulation measure was therefore lower in all groups, including the one under discussion.

the pronounced pro-Democratic deflection of those who felt personally hurt by the recession.[7] (See Table 7-2.) However, not all of the internalizers, by any means, contributed to the net Democratic gain in 1958. It was pointed out in Chapter Four that 10 per cent of our sample (121 respondents) internalized the recession (i.e., felt that their personal finances were the same or worse due to unemployment or recession). Only half of these fulfill our theoretical proposition--that is, only half of the internalizers had high recession salience and made a connection between these economic difficulties and party policy. These are the 61 respondents presented on the bottom line of Table 7-2. Of the other 60 internalizers, 44 failed to translate and the rest showed little concern about the recession.[8] The 61 internalizers who were concerned and who did translate constitute only 5 per cent of the non-farm population.

---

[7]This evidence contradicts a finding of another analysis of 1958 voting behavior. In Chapter Fourteen of Campbell, et al., The American Voter, it was concluded on page 391 that "there is virtually no independent association between the vote choice and the recognition of personal consequences of the recession." (Italics in the original.) It should be stressed once more, however, that the measure of felt personal deprivation used in The American Voter was entirely different from the one used in this present study.

[8]Of those who showed little concern, 8 had only slight recession salience (but did translate) and 4 were generally optimistic near election time. These were eliminated after empirical investigation revealed their behavior did not warrant their inclusion with those more negatively affected.

In addition, 4 internalizers were ambivalent or pro-Republican in their translation--too few to be studied separately.

Thus, only 5 per cent of the (non-farm) population can definitely be shown to have contributed to the Democratic surge in 1958 because of a reaction to the recession.

Fifty-six per cent of these 61 internalizers who fulfilled the theoretical proposition had actually experienced unemployment (either had been unemployed themselves or had been in a family where the Head had been unemployed).[9] In other words, 34 of the 61 internalizers who contributed to the Democratic surge had had unemployment experience. These 34 constitute only one-fifth of the total unemployment experience reported in our national sample. Looking at this another way, in the recession year of 1958, about 14 to 17 per cent of the population had seen unemployment reach into their homes;[10] and only one-fifth of these people--or around 3 per cent of the total population--contributed to the Democratic surge as a result of their unemployment experience.

Thus, personal or family experience with unemployment in a recession year by no means leads directly to voting change. Many with unemployment experience do not attribute this experience to the recession (i.e., do not internalize).[11] Some who do internalize the unemployment

---

[9]It was pointed out in Chapter Four that only 46 per cent of the internalizers had had unemployment experience. Interestingly, the proportion having unemployment experience was somewhat greater in the group of internalizers under discussion.

[10]See above, p. 47.

[11]See discussion of this point in Chapter Four, pp. 109-112.

experience do not make a political translation. On the other hand, many internalizers did not have unemployment experience but felt they suffered recession-related financial deprivation for other reasons. In short, unemployment statistics cannot tell to what extent a recession has been personally felt or will become politically meaningful to individuals in the population.

The Importance of the Recession in the 1958 Election

The fact that the number of internalizers who translated is not large should not detract from their political significance. Political leaders deal in increments, trying to add enough support to gain a majority at election time. A five per cent chunk of the electorate certainly cannot be disregarded by a congressional candidate who is in a fairly close contest.[12] However, it is not the purpose of this research to study the campaign strategy of politicians, but rather to test the common notion of social scientists that ". . . except for occasional crises in foreign affairs or the impact of dominant personalities, economic conditions in the period just preceding elections are alone sufficient

---

[12]Furthermore, the five per cent are not evenly distributed within Congressional districts. Internalizers who translated were particularly concentrated in Labor Market Areas where the economic decline was steepest. (LMA Trend Indicator of -3.) Twelve per cent of the respondents in these particular areas were internalizers who had pro-Democratic econo-political attitudes.

to explain the outcomes."[13] There were, of course, bad economic conditions in the period just preceding the 1958 election. Yet, the recession alone is not sufficient to explain the Democratic surge in 1958.

It was noted at the beginning of this chapter that in the sample as a whole the Democrats gained 56 more votes than would be predicted by the normal vote construct. Of these, 16 votes came from the internalizers who translated[14] and thus can be attributed to the recession. Also, it is quite possible that the people who did not internalize but nonetheless were highly concerned with the recession, felt pessimistic, and held pro-Democratic translation attitudes voted largely on the basis of the recession. Therefore, their voting change might also be considered. They contributed 5 votes to the Net Democratic Gain. Thus, at best, only 21 of the 56 vote gain for the Democrats (or 37 per cent) had to do with the recession.[15]

Obviously, there were other short-term forces operating in 1958. We might suggest a few. The effect of the right-to-work issue that was prevalent in several states has already been demonstrated. (See Chapter One.) It was

---

[13]See Chapter One, p. 1.

[14]Twenty-six per cent Net Democratic Gain in a group of 61, or 16 votes.

[15]This does not take into account the handful of pro-Republican translators for whom the recession was highly salient. If they were included, the pro-Republican deflection of their vote would detract slightly from the pro-Democratic gain shown here.

also suggested in Chapter One that certain foreign events (not crises of large proportions, but "bad news" just the same) might have caused people to be apprehensive about the Eisenhower administration's handling of foreign affairs. These events included such situations as the launching of the first Russian sputnik in October 1957, the landing of American troops in Lebanon in July 1958, and the shelling of Quemoy and Matsu Islands beginning in August 1958. The Russian space program may have been especially damaging to people's confidence in Eisenhower's ability to maintain the U.S. position in the world. The data presented in Table 7-4 are only suggestive--they are based only on responses to one question in the 1958 interview--but they do support the notion that the position of the U.S. in the world was of

TABLE 7-4

VOTING CHANGE AS A FUNCTION OF ATTITUDE TOWARD U.S. POSITION IN THE WORLD, 1958[a]

U.S. Position has become:	Number of Cases	Stimulation	Pro-Dem. Deflection	Net Dem. Gain
Stronger	224	+3	+1	2%
Same	248	+2	+3	5%
Less strong	280	+9	+6	10%

[a]The question was: "Would you say that in the past year or so our position in the world has become stronger, less strong, or has it stayed about the same? How is that?" Those who had no frame of reference (were unable to answer the second part of the question) were not included in this table.

concern to many Americans and that this concern was expressed in voting behavior by both stimulation and pro-Democratic deflection.

There were undoubtedly many other short-term forces operating in 1958. Most of these forces apparently were favorable to the Democrats. The important point is that the recession was only one of these various forces and contributed a rather small portion--about one-third--to the Net Democratic Gain. There are a multiplicity of short-term forces surrounding an election, and to say that an economic event such as the 1958 recession was the sole or even the major factor in the election outcome is an erroneous over-simplification.

The Party in Power

It has been determined that the Democrats did gain some electoral support in 1958 due to the recession, but a major question remains: was this voting change mainly a result of negative reactions to the party in power, or to positive attitudes toward the Democrats as the best managers of the economy? This question was raised in Chapter Two when the major hypothesis was first introduced. The major hypothesis--that the party in power will receive an electoral setback if a recession occurs near election time--assumes a negative reaction to the party in power on the part of those who change voting behavior due to recession. An alternative hypothesis--that the Democrats do better in

elections when economic conditions are poor--was also postulated in Chapter Two along with the following assumptions:

1) that the Great Depression and the New Deal have made a lasting impression on many;

2) that a large segment of the public feels that the Democratic party is the champion of economic policies which will relieve economic distress, or at least they feel that the Democrats are more likely than the Republicans to "do something" about adverse economic conditions;

3) therefore, people with these attitudes will vote Democratic in the event of a recession even if the Democrats are in office.

The findings in Chapter Six concerning the nature of econo-political attitudes lend strong support to the alternative hypothesis and the assumptions underlying it. In Chapter Six it was shown that a fairly sizeable segment of the public does hold quite lasting attitudes favorable to the Democratic party as the party most likely to relieve economic distress. These attitudes are apparently assimilated in the process of political socialization (when acquiring party identification, gaining information as union members, etc.) and probably stem from the folklore surrounding the Great Depression and the New Deal.

But can the conclusion be drawn from this evidence that voting change will favor the Democrats in the event of a recession even if the Democrats are in office? This is difficult to prove or disprove using data from 1958 when party control was not clear-cut. With a Republican holding

the Presidency, most people probably perceived that the Republicans were the party in power. (This was suggested earlier in a discussion in Chapter Five, pages 153-154.) However, the Democrats did control Congress, and there seemed to be a general sentiment among the public that Congress was more important than the President in solving economic difficulties. In the 1958 interview, respondents were asked: "When it comes to doing something about problems like unemployment and recession, which would you say is more important--the congress or the president--or are they about equally important?" Forty-two per cent felt that Congress was more important as against 12 per cent who placed the responsibility solely on the President. (About one-third said that the importance was equal, and 12 per cent didn't know.)

Despite these feelings about the responsibility of Congress, when people were asked "Do you happen to know which party had the most Congressmen in Washington before the election last month?", only about half of the respondents in 1958 knew that the Democrats controlled the 85th Congress. This question (and a similar one asking about which party won control of the 86th Congress) will be used to determine which respondents were correctly aware of party-in-Congress.[16] This information makes it feasible to try to

---

[16]Two questions testing knowledge of party-in-Congress are used in order to decrease the probability of "guessers" in the subset. With one question, the respondent can guess either that the Republicans or the Democrats had

test the alternative hypothesis--that voting change will favor the Democrats when economic conditions worsen, even if the Democrats are in power.

If this alternative hypothesis is correct, the cognition that the Democrats were the majority party (i.e., the party in power) in Congress should make little or no difference in voting change among those concerned about the recession--that is, knowing that Democrats controlled at the time of a recession should not diminish enthusiasm for voting Democratic. If, on the other hand, people tend to vote against the party in power, as the major hypothesis suggests, the knowledge that the Democrats controlled the 85th Congress should reduce pro-Democratic voting behavior. Table 7-5 presents the voting change of those respondents who were aware of the fact that the Democrats controlled Congress.[17] Internalizers and others with high recession

---

a majority, and have a .5 chance of being correct. When questioned about control of both the 85th and 86th Congresses, the respondent who did not know and was just guessing would have only one chance in four (.25) of guessing correctly.

[17]The fact that these people were aware that the Democrats were in control of the 85th Congress does not mean that this cognition was of particular importance to them. If control of Congress were very important in people's appraisal of the political scene, we would expect some perceptual distortion to occur in naming the party-in-Congress. For example, we might expect some of the Democratic identifiers who were concerned about the recession to avoid dissonance by naming the Republicans as the party in control of Congress. However, perception of party-in-Congress was not associated with party identification, even with recession salience controlled.

TABLE 7-5

VOTING CHANGE WITH RECESSION SALIENCE AND ECONO-POLITICAL TRANSLATION CONTROLLED
INCLUDES ONLY THOSE AWARE OF DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN 85TH AND 86TH CONGRESSES

Recession Salience	Econo-Political Translation	No. of Cases	Voting Change		
			Stimulation	Deflection	Net Dem. Gain
None	None	95	+7	+7	+7%
	Pro-Dem.	64	+20	+9	+27%
	Pro-Rep.	17	+2	-8	-12%
Slight	None	120	+14	+8	+9%
	Pro-Dem. →	105	+18	+3	+16% ←
	Pro-Rep. →	28	+9	-3	-11% ←
High	None	43	+12	+1	-2%
	Pro-Dem. →	50	+8	+11	+20% ←
High + Internalization	None	(10)	(+6)	(+2)	(+6%)
	Pro-Dem. →	30	+15	+20	+40% ←

salience who translated showed the same pro-Democratic deflection as we saw in Table 7-2, even though they cognized that the Democrats were in power in Congress. The alternative hypothesis is thus given some support. (The Net Democratic Gain in Table 7-5 is larger than that in Table 7-2 mainly because of increased turnout. Since correct perception of party-in-Congress is primarily a function of education, political involvement and other factors that relate to turnout, in isolating those knowledgeable about party control of Congress we have biased these subsets on the side of greater turnout.)

It would appear, then, that the Democrats stand to gain votes in the event of recession, even if they are the party in power when a downswing in the economic cycle occurs. It should be stressed that the support found in Table 7-5 is only suggestive. The alternative hypothesis should be tested at a time when a recession occurs while the Democrats hold both the Presidency and Congress. In this study the major support for the alternative hypothesis rests not on Table 7-5, but on the fact that there is a rather stable core of pro-Democratic econo-political attitudes held by a sizeable portion of the population. (See Chapter Six.) In years hence, especially if a Democratic president should be caught with a prolonged economic decline that he could not control, these pro-Democratic econo-political attitudes may change. However, they have

apparently been extant at least since World War II and will probably continue for some time to come.

Unlike farmers (whose voting behavior was summarized briefly in Chapter One), workers and others who are affected by industrial economic fluctuations are not psychologically free to vote now for one party and now for the other. Through the process of political socialization--through exposure to unions and other day-to-day interpersonal contact--attitudes develop that lead these workers to feel that the Democrats, and not the Republicans, will ease economic stress. Many workers may make no mental reference of party-in-power at all, but simply vote for the party of the "working man" when economic trouble occurs.

Concluding Remarks

There are a multitude of short-term forces that can impinge upon individual voters from one election to the next and thus have the potential to create electoral change. This study has endeavored to demonstrate how one such short-term force--an economic event--influences political attitudes and voting change.

The major purpose of this work has been to delineate the perceptual and attitudinal impact of the 1958 recession--the most severe recession in the post World War II period. For the first time, an attempt has been made to trace the changes in economic and political attitudes that may be engendered by perceptions of decline in business activity.

Previous research in this area has simply correlated an abstract measure of economic conditions (e.g., a production index) with aggregative voting statistics. This prior research has failed to examine the psychological and social processes by which economic decline becomes politically meaningful, and it has assumed that enough individuals were affected to bring about a significant electoral change.

This study has discovered that the 1958 recession was widely perceived, that it had a measurable impact on economic attitudes which, in turn, had some effect in triggering political attitudes. However, these attitudinal changes hardly affected voting behavior at all. A definite voting change was observed only among a very small portion of the public who were personally concerned about their financial situation and attributed their financial problems to the recession.

It was demonstrated (in Charts 2 and 3) that economic attitudes among the public had become decidedly negative as a result of the 1958 recession, but these attitudes had improved considerably by the time of the 1958 election. Had the 1958 recession lasted for a longer period of time, or had the 1958 election taken place six months sooner--at the low point in the recession when more people were concerned about economic difficulties--a greater amount of voting change may have occurred. The exact function that the duration of economic decline and the proximity of an election have in changing economic and political attitudes

can only be determined by a future series of studies covering several recession periods. On one hand, we can expect a depression as severe and as prolonged as the Great Depression to have an effect on economic and political attitudes for decades to come, and, on the other hand, attitudinal reactions to a recession similar in intensity to that of 1958 would probably be dissipated within six months or a year.

Much work remains to be done before the political scientist can adequately understand the attitudinal impact of the many kinds of short-term forces that have the potential to produce electoral change. Although this present study was quite restricted in scope--it concerned itself with only one type of short-term force (economic) during a limited period in time--it did present some insights into the general ability of the public to perceive and understand politically important events. It was indicated, for example, that stimuli from local economic conditions make up, in part, for a lack of information from the mass media among those who pay little attention to the news, and that personally felt deprivation and interpersonal contacts apparently make an economic event meaningful for those deficient in formal education. The data upon which these conclusions rest were far from complete, however, and this only points to the need for a more intensive study of information flow--flow both from the media and from interpersonal contact--if the political scientist is to

learn if and how events and issues become known to the public.

Researchers have paid little attention in the past to the measurement of attitudes other than the political attitudes which immediately support the act of voting. There have been few attempts to discover the origin and development of economic or other attitudes which, in turn, may lead to change in these political attitudes. This study has concluded that there were many short-term forces that influenced voting change in 1958. If the political scientist is to discover the influence that each of these incremental forces has in a particular election, more thought will have to be devoted to developing incisive measures of perceptions and attitudes related to a wide range of events and issues--with special attention to measuring the saliency of each. It is hoped that the detailed consideration of measurement methodology contained in parts of this study will be useful to researchers as they design future surveys.

APPENDIX A

DESCRIPTION OF PANEL SAMPLES, PANEL MORTALITY AND METHOD OF CORRECTION FOR BIAS[1]

The Survey Research Center of The University of Michigan obtained 1,929 interviews in September-October 1956. Of these respondents, 1,354 were reinterviewed in November-December 1958. Thus, 70 per cent of the original pool remained in 1958 and these constitute what will be known as the 1956-58 panel. About 13 per cent of the original pool had moved and could not be located; 6 per cent refused to be interviewed again due to negative reactions to previous interviews, and an additional 3 per cent refused further contact without giving a clear reason why. The remaining 8 per cent could not be interviewed because of sickness or death, absence from home, and other miscellaneous reasons.

A test was made to determine whether or not the 1,354 surviving respondents were an unbiased subset of the

---

[1]Information about the panels is based on Memo #1, Study 431, "1956-1958 Panel Mortality and Characteristics" (Political Behavior Program, Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, May 23, 1959), pp. 1-6 (mimeographed) and Memo #1, Study 440, "1956-1960 Panel Mortality" (April 5, 1961), pp. 1-15 (mimeographed).

original sample interviewed in 1956. The surviving panel and the full 1956 sample were compared on critical political characteristics such as party identification, involvement, political efficacy, and voting regularity as well as on certain important sociological characteristics such as race, sex, education, region of residence, and income. The report of this test concluded:

> People of different social and political characteristics dropped out of the panel for differing reasons . . . Fortunately, however, these varying sources of mortality tended to cancel one another out, so that on all key characteristics surveyed the 1958 survivors are an excellent match for the original 1956 sample, and on most variables the fit is truly superb. In short, we seem virtually free of any overall bias on basic characteristics due to selective mortality.[2]

By 1960, however, the original pool of 1,929 had dwindled to 1,217 respondents who constitute what will be known as the 1956-58-60 panel. This was a comparatively small mortality (137) compared with the 575 lost between 1956 and 1958; but these new drop-outs were concentrated in the category that refused further interviews because of negative reactions to previous interviews. (An exceptional effort was made in 1960 to contact those who had moved, and this proportionally reduced the drop-out in that category.) A comparison with the original pool showed that these survivors in the 1956-58-60 panel were no longer an unbiased subset of the 1956 sample. Those who remained in this 1956-58-60 panel were relatively more involved and politically

---

[2]Memo #1, Study 431, p. 2.

efficacious than the original pool. Although even this bias was slight, it reflected a selective drop-out of those who were disinterested in politics and thus refused further interviews. It was therefore necessary to up-weight the low-involvement type of respondent who did endure all the waves of interviews so that the panel would be more like the original pool. Using a very precise procedure which partitioned the panel and the original sample on the basis of political efficacy, report of past voting participation and recall of the party voted for, about 170 low involvement respondents who had survived the succession of interviews were given double weight (and 7 cases were tripled). In other words, most of the low involvement respondents who survived had to represent not only themselves, but also one of the other disinterested citizens who had dropped out. This method of weighting "accomplished its purpose quite handsomely in reducing bias apparent in comparisons of 1956 survivors relative to the original pool . . ."[3]

Two hundred seventy-six new respondents were added in 1958 at one-half the sampling rate that was used for the original 1956 sample. Thus, these new respondents were given double weight due to this difference in sampling rate. These respondents (who were interviewed again in 1960), together with the main 1956-58-60 panel, as weighted,

---

[3]Memo #1, Study 440, p. 9. See this memo for a full description of the weighting procedure.

constitute a third panel which will be referred to as the 1958-60 panel.

After removing farmers, the panels we will be working with in this study have the following basic number of cases:

Panel	Number of Respondents	Number of Cases (with weights)
1956-58	1,218	1,218
1958-60	1,380	1,798
1956-58-60	997	1,140

Note that the 1956-58 panel is, in a sense, "purer" than the others since no weighting was necessary. Throughout this study, data based on weighted interviews (the 1958-60 and the 1956-58-60 panels) will be marked with an (*) to remind the reader that the tables refer to weighted cases, not to the number of respondents.

APPENDIX B

THE NORMAL VOTE CONSTRUCT DEVELOPED BY PHILIP CONVERSE[1]

First, Converse reasoned that short-term forces have two kinds of effect: (1) stimulation of interest (as measured by higher turnout rates), and (2) deflection of partisan predispositions. In examining the first effect, Converse found a linear relationship between the turnout of each class of identifier (Strong Democrat, Weak Democrat, etc.) and the general stimulation of an election as measured by overall turnout. By utilizing information from five survey studies (1952, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1960), and plotting the turnout of each group of identifiers as a function of overall turnout in each election,[2] it was found that

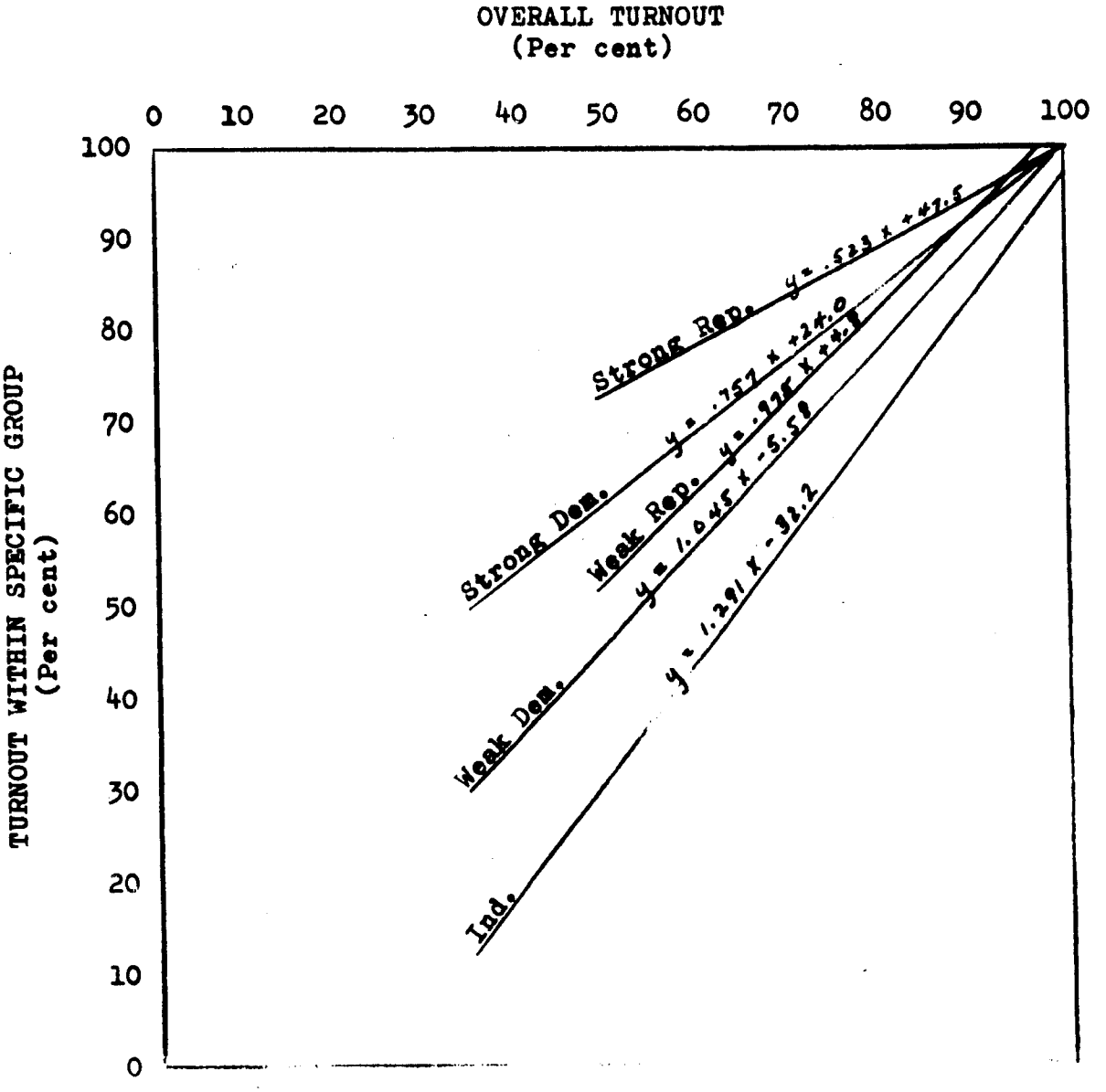
---

[1]Appendix B is based on Philip E. Converse, "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping" (Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, June, 1962), pp. 1-36. (Mimeographed.)

[2]In order to control for the markedly lower turnout in the South, each of the five samples was split into Northern and Southern residents. The turnout of the several classes of identifiers within each region was then plotted against the overall turnout measured separately in the respective regions. Thus there were actually 10 data points (5 elections x 2 regional subsets) for each of the identification groups (with the exception of Republicans who were too rare in the South to permit accurate observations). The linear functions shown in Figure B-1 fit all 10 data points.

least-squares lines in the form $y = mx + b$ could be fitted to the data points. (See Figure B-1.) (Independents who leaned toward the Republicans or the Democrats, as well as the a-politicals, were similar enough in turnout behavior to be grouped together into one class--Independents.) This linear relationship means that if we know the overall turnout (x) we can compute the expected turnout (y) of each group of identifiers. The slopes (m) of these functions indicate the degree of "drop-out" we can expect from each group as stimulation recedes. It is no surprise that turnout among Independents falls off most sharply as overall turnout (stimulation) declines, but the reason why Strong Republicans are more likely to vote under a given level of stimulation than Strong Democrats, and similarly, Weak Republicans are more likely to vote than Weak Democrats is not as obvious. This behavior can be explained in part by the fact that the Democratic aggregate is, on the whole, less politically involved than the Republicans. Many of the Democrats are in the South where the one-party system has dampened involvement. In the North, the Democratic party tends to attract people of lower education (lower occupational status), and education is sharply correlated with involvement. Thus, since the Democrats draw allegiance disproportionately from Southerners and the less educated, this "brings in its train a less politically involved clientele."

Fig. B-1.--Turnout of Party Identification Groups as a Function of Overall Turnout[a]



[a]Fig. B-1 is from Philip E. Converse, "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping" (Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, June, 1962), p. 15a. (Mimeographed.)

Let us now consider the second type of effect from short-term forces--that of deflection. Converse plotted the two-party vote division of each class of identifier against the national two-party division of the vote for the five elections mentioned above. Again linear fit was obtained (though less exactly), and the slopes of these lines indicated an expected large deflection on the part of the easily swayed Independents, but it also showed a tendency for Republicans to be more loyal than Democrats. This asymmetry in strength of identification was again attributed to differences in involvement between these two groups of identifiers, and was not "because the Democratic party is in any direct way a less stimulating object of affection."[3]

Now let us imagine an election in which there was an absence of short-term forces, or one in which the forces that were acting, balanced in partisan valence so that there was no unidirectional set of forces that would favor either the Republicans or the Democrats. In such an election we should be able to predict the partisanship of the vote fairly well from party identification alone,[4] with Independents dividing about equally between the parties. This might be thought of as a "normal vote"--the vote we would expect under conditions where there were no short-term

---

[3]Converse, "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping," p. 18.

[4]We would have to allow for differences in political involvement noted above.

forces or where those forces were in equilibrium. As we have observed, Congressional elections often approximate these conditions.

Although a "normal vote" has never been cast, Converse analytically established a point of perfect balance among short-term forces. Using observations from the five studies mentioned, he found that under conditions of perfect equilibrium (or total absence) of short-term forces we could expect the following:

	Proportion of Those Voting Expected to Vote Democratic (under "normal vote" conditions)[5]
Strong Democrats	.957
Weak Democrats	.818
Independents	.492
Weak Republicans	.162
Strong Republicans	.037

The proportions are skewed slightly in favor of the Republicans due to the involvement factor discussed earlier.

This construct enables us to compute the "expected" or "normal" vote for any sample or subset if we know the overall turnout in the election and the party identifications of the members of the subset or sample. The expected turnout of each class of identifier is given by the linear equations presented graphically in Figure B-1. The proportion of this expected turnout who can be expected to vote Democratic is given in the table just above.

---

[5]Converse, "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping," p. 22.

APPENDIX C

MEASURES OF UNEMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE, OCCUPATIONAL STATUS AND CHANGE IN FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES

In 1958 and 1960, respondents were asked: "Have you been out of a job anytime in the past two years when you didn't want to be? (If yes) When was that?" If the respondent was not the Head of the household, the same question was repeated concerning the Head's unemployment experience.[1] However, if the respondent was the Head of the household (husband), this question was not asked concerning any possible unemployment experience of the other members of the household (wife, sons or daughters). Because of this, family unemployment experience was underestimated. Unemployment probably was also underestimated due to underreporting. It has been found in Bureau of Census and Economic Behavior Program surveys that very often people do not recall an unemployment experience if it occurred a year

[1] In 1958, there were 4 instances where both the respondent and the Head (wife and husband) had experienced unemployment.

or more in the past.[2] Therefore, even though respondents were asked for a report of unemployment "in the past two years," it is unlikely that more than one year's experience was recalled, and even that was probably underreported.[3]

The measure of intensity of unemployment experience is based upon the following combination of duration and recentness of unemployment, as reported (recalled) by respondents about their own or the family Head's experience:

TABLE C-1

INTENSITY OF UNEMPLOYMENT INDEX

Recentness of Unemployment	Duration of Unemployment: Half Year or More	2 to 6 Months	Up to 2 Months
Still unemployed	1	2	3
Returned to work within 6 months of the election	2	3	4
Resumed work half year or more before election	3	4	5

In most tables in the text the five position index is collapsed into two categories:

---

[2]Wilbur J. Cohen, William Haber, and Eva Mueller, The Impact of Unemployment in the 1958 Recession, printed for the use of U. S. Senate, 86th Cong., 2d Sess., Special Committee on Unemployment Problems (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1960), pp. 14-15.

[3]There is no indication that any bias was introduced in our panel data due to selective drop-out of the unemployed.

	Index values
High intensity	1-3
Low intensity	4 and 5

Measure of Change in Family Economic Circumstances

Change in family economic circumstances from 1956 to 1958 was measured by observing the difference, if any, in the family income reported by respondents in the 1956 interview and the family income reported by the same respondents in the 1958 interview. Similarly, any change in income between 1958 and 1960 was used to establish the 1958 to 1960 economic circumstances measure. Change in the occupational status of the Head (or of the respondent if both husband and wife were in the labor force) was also taken into consideration in measuring change in family economic circumstances. Changes in status were measured by using the Occupational Status Index presented in Table C-2.

In building the measure of change in family economic circumstances, the family unit was held constant. That is, cases were excluded if the relation of the respondent to the Head of the household changed (for example, if a young respondent got married and became a head of a household himself, or if the respondent became widowed or divorced). Also, the labor force status of all family members was held constant. That is, if a housewife or a student entered the labor force, or, on the other hand, if someone in the family retired, these cases were excluded since this factor alone

TABLE C-2

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS INDEX

Level		Examples of Occupations Classified
1	High level businessmen	Business executives, bankers, managers, or self-employed proprietors--if current income was over $10,000.
2	Professional	Lawyers, physicians, engineers, etc.
3	Small businessmen	Mostly self-employed owners of small businesses, including self-employed craftsmen and mechanics. Also, supervisors, officials, wholesalers, real estate brokers, etc. (Incomes less than $10,000.)
4	White collar workers	Secretaries, bookkeepers, and other office workers; technicians, sales clerks.
5	Skilled workers	Workers with skills requiring training such as electricians, brickmasons, auto mechanics; also printers, engravers, patternmakers and other artisans or craftsmen (not self-employed); most foremen and assembly line inspectors.
6	Semi-skilled workers	Most factory workers--machine operators, assemblers; also truck drivers and other equipment operators.
7	Unskilled workers	Janitors, "maintenance" men, construction helpers, general laborers; also maids, "domestics."

Note: Separate classifications were also made for protective service workers (armed forces, police and firemen), students, people who were retired, and Heads of households whose only occupation was housewife.

could account for family income change. Finally, all who reported unemployment experience were considered separately, using the intensity of unemployment experience measure outlined in the first section of this appendix. Thus, the measure of change presented below in Table C-3 indicates as well as possible (given the data available) gains in income

TABLE C-3

MEASURE OF CHANGE IN FAMILY ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES
(Only for cases where family unit and labor force status were constant)[a]

Measure Value	Observed Change in Family Income or Occupational Status
+3	+ $3,000 or more income; and/or increase of two status positions
+2	+ $2,000 income; and/or increase of one status position
+1	+ $1,000 income
0	No change in family income or occupational status
-1	- $1,000 income
-2	- $2,000 income; and/or one status position lower
-3	- $3,000 or more income; and/or two status positions lower

[a]See text immediately above for an explanation of constant family unit and labor force status.

Note: Most classifications were made solely on the basis of observed change in income. Very few cases of occupational status change were discovered, and therefore not too much emphasis should be given to the status component of this measure. (In a few cases, observed income change and status change were inconsistent--income declined yet status increased, or vice versa. These cases were considered unclassifiable.)

and status due primarily to raises or promotions of the principle breadwinner(s) in the family, or economic deprivation due to lower pay or taking a lower status job.

APPENDIX D

LABOR MARKET AREAS: DESCRIPTION AND MEASURES

Since the early days of World War II, the U. S. government has taken periodic measures of local labor market conditions. The Bureau of Employment Security revised the classification system for labor market areas in May, 1955.[1] Lettered gradations were instituted at that time based on the following criteria:

Criteria for Major Labor Market Area Classification

1. Current labor supply-demand situation (a situation which is expected to continue over the next 4 months):

Group A	Current critical labor shortage
Group B	Job opportunities for local workers slightly in excess of job seekers
Group C	Job seekers slightly in excess of job openings

[1] U. S., Bureau of Employment Security and Affiliated State Employment Security Agencies, The Labor Market and Employment Security, June, 1955 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1955), pp. 1-4.

Group D — Job seekers in excess of job openings

Group E — Job seekers considerably in excess of job openings

Group F — Job seekers substantially in excess of job openings

2. Ratio of unemployment to total labor force:

Group A — Less than 1.5%

Group B — 1.5 - 2.9%

Group C — 3.0 - 5.9%

Group D — 6.0 - 8.9%

Group E — 9.0 - 11.9%

Group F — 12.0% or more

3. Net nonagricultural labor requirements for 2 and 4 months hence indicate:

Group A — Sizeable employment gains

Group B — Some increases in employment

Group C — No significant increases in employment

Group D — Declining employment levels or no significant increase

Group E — Declining employment levels or no significant labor requirements

Group F — Declining employment levels or no significant labor requirements

4. Seasonal and temporary factors:

Areas may shift between Groups D, E, and F in response to significant seasonal changes in

> employment and unemployment, but will not be moved in or out of Group A or between Groups C and D as a result of primarily seasonal or temporary fluctuations.

The area classifications thus represent a synthesis of a number of key elements which reflect the nature and the character of an area's labor market. The classification information is derived from regular bimonthly reports received by the Bureau of Employment Security (Department of Labor) from State employment security agencies. Estimates of future manpower requirements, for example, are based on reports from manufacturing establishments which are collected as part of the normal operations of State employment security programs. Unemployment data are based in part on state insured unemployment information from the State employment offices, and in part on the Bureau of Census monthly population surveys. For a given area, the information obtained for each criterion cited above may not indicate the same classification. For example, an area may have an unemployment rate of more than 6 per cent--indicating it would be classified in Group D; yet employers' reports may indicate an increasing need for labor--Group B.

> In such cases, the classification is assigned according to the most prominent and consistent indicators. Greatest weight is given to those indicators which reflect most accurately the area's current situation and anticipated employment outlook.[2]

---

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

At any rate, we have a measure which characterizes the status of an area's economic conditions which can be compared with conditions in other areas throughout the country. According to the Bureau of Employment Security (BES), "Area classifications permit general comparisons to be made among areas, comparisons which are not feasible through the use of any other single statistic."[3]

The boundaries of a major labor market area are defined by the Bureau of Employment Security. A major area consists of a central city or cities and the surrounding communities which are within reasonable commuting distance. "It may be thought of as an economically and socially integrated, primarily urban, geographical unit within which workers may readily change their jobs without changing their places of residence."[4] Major labor market areas usually have at least one central city with a population of 50,000 or more. In most instances, boundaries coincide with those of Standard Metropolitan Areas.

In addition to the major areas, the BES also lists smaller areas (estimated labor force of at least 15,000) which are considered to have "substantial labor surplus" (Group D or less). The basis for selection and deletion of these areas on the BES list is quite unsystematic.

---

[3] Ibid., p. 1.

[4] U. S., Bureau of Employment Security, Area Labor Market Trends, January, 1960 (Washington, 1960), p. 22. (Prior to September 1957, this source was published under the title "Labor Market Developments in Major Areas.")

> The number of smaller areas included on the list does not necessarily reflect current economic trends or changes in local conditions, since this number depends to some degree on the extent to which the Department of Labor and the State employment security agencies are requested to undertake special surveys. However, deletions are more indicative of real changes than additions because, once areas are placed on the list, local labor market conditions are checked periodically until removal is warranted.[5]

Use of data based on these reports for smaller areas proved to be unrewarding. The results were quite irregular and inconsistent--probably reflecting the haphazard methods used by the BES in securing the information in the first place. Also, even if the inclusion or deletion of these smaller areas from a surplus labor list had been done more systematically, there is no way to compare these areas with the major labor market areas since no graded classification is given. Either the smaller area is on the list--meaning that it could be in Group D, E, or F; or it is not on the list--suggesting that it might be in Group C, B, or even A. At any rate, the respondents who lived in any of the smaller areas listed at one time or another by the BES as having "substantial labor surplus" had to be excluded from my analysis whenever I employ labor market area data.

From May 1955 to October 1960, there were 149 major labor market areas classified bimonthly by the BES. Thirty-two of these areas happen to contain Survey Research

---

[5]U. S., Bureau of Employment Security and Affiliated State Employment Security Agencies, The Labor Market and Employment Security, October, 1955 (Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 3.

Center sampling units. Thus, many respondents were found in the 32 major areas listed in Table D-1. Since we are

TABLE D-1

CONDITIONS IN MAJOR LABOR MARKET AREAS WHICH CONTAINED SRC RESPONDENTS
(Arranged Roughly in Order of Worsening Economic Conditions)

City and State		1956		1958		1960	
		Avg.[a]	Trend[b]	Avg.	Trend	Avg.	Trend
Washington	D.C.	B	0	C+	0	B	0
Winston-Salem	N.C.	C	0	C	0	C	0
Little Rock-N. Little Rock	Ark.	C	0	C	0	C	0
San Francisco-Oakland	Cal.	C+	+1	C	0	C	0
Stamford-Norwalk	Conn.	B	+1	C	-1	B	+1
Boston	Mass.	C+	+2	C	-1	C	0
San Diego	Cal.	C+	+2	C	-1	C-	-1
Dayton	Ohio	B-	-1	D+	-1	C+	-1
Hamilton-Middletown	Ohio	B	0	D+	-1	C	-1
Minneapolis-St. Paul	Minn.	B	0	D+	-1	C	0
Worcester	Mass.	C+	+2	D	-1	C	+1
Newark	N.J.	C	0	D	-1	C	+1
Philadelphia	Pa.	C	+1	D	-1	C	+1
Louisville	Ky.	C	0	D	-1	C	+1
St. Louis	Mo.	C	0	D	-1	C	0
Indianapolis	Ind.	B	+1	D+	-2	C	0
Houston	Tex.	C	0	D+	-2	C	0
New York	N.Y.	C	0	D+	-2	C	+1
Syracuse	N.Y.	B	0	D	-2	C	0
Tacoma	Wash.	D+	+2	D+	-2	C	0
Albany-Schenectady-Troy	N.Y.	C+	+2	D+	-2	D	0
Perth Amboy	N.J.	C	0	D	-2	C	0
Cleveland	Ohio	B	0	D+	-3	C	0
Los Angeles-Long Beach	Cal.	B	0	D+	-3	C	0
Chicago	Ill.	B	0	D+	-3	C	0
Baltimore	Md.	C+	+2	D+	-3	C	0

TABLE D-1--Continued

City and State		1956		1958		1960	
		Avg.[a]	Trend[b]	Avg.	Trend	Avg.	Trend
Bridgeport	Conn.	B	+1	E+	-3	C	+1
Flint	Mich.	C	-3	E	-3	C-	+1
Pittsburgh	Pa.	C	+1	E+	-3	D	0
Detroit	Mich.	D+	-2	F	-3	D	+1
Huntington-Ashland	W. Va. Ky.	C	0	E	-3	E	0
Wilkes-Barre-Hazleton	Pa.	F	+1	F	-1	F	0

[a]Average conditions for the 12 months just preceding the election. Based on the six bimonthly classification grades from December of the previous year until election time (November) of the year designated.

[b]Measure of the trend in economic conditions in the labor market area during the year preceding the election. This trend measure is more fully described in the text.

using panel data, some respondents were found to have moved to labor market areas other than these thirty-two. Thus a few locations which are not listed above are "represented" by a respondent or two. All movement from one labor market area to another, or from an area to a nonarea was carefully noted, and the new economic conditions in which the respondent found himself on election day duly recorded. Of course, many respondents lived neither in the major nor the smaller labor market areas. As might be expected, these areas were relatively more rural and had comparatively less manufacturing.

Labor Market Area Trend Indicator

The Trend Indicator is based on a combination of two measures of change in labor market conditions. One is the degree of change in economic conditions based on the difference between the average "grade" of an area (A, B, C, D, E, or F) for the entire period between elections and the average for the year preceding the election. This will be called the One Year Trend. The second measure is based on the difference between the average conditions for the year preceding the election and the average for the 5 months just before the election. The second measure will be known as the Five Month Trend. In computing these measures the area classifications were converted into an interval scale in which A = 5, B = 4, C = 3 . . . F = 0. The One Year Trend and the Five Month Trend were classified on the basis of the following scale:

One Year Trend and Five Month Trend Scale

+3 Conditions improving substantially[a]

+2 Conditions improving[c]

+1 Conditions improving slightly[b]

0 No change in economic conditions

-1 Conditions deteriorating slightly[b]

-2 Conditions deteriorating[c]

-3 Conditions deteriorating substantially[a]

[a]A substantial change in the Five Month Trend is one in which the difference between the average for the year preceding the election and the average for the 5 months just before the election is generally .6 or more. A substantial

change in the One Year Trend indicates that the difference between the average for the entire period between elections and the average for the year preceding the election is also .6 or more. Such a large difference reflects at least two BES classification grade changes in one direction. Temporary seasonal factors were also considered in coding.

[b]A slight change in the Five Month Trend is one in which the difference between the average for the year preceding the election and the average for the 5 months just before the election is generally .3 or less. Similarly, a slight change in the One Year Trend is one in which the difference between the average for the entire period between elections and the average for the year preceding the election is .3 or less.

[c]A difference in averages (see footnotes 1 and 2 above) within the range of .3 to .6.

By combining these two measures, it is possible to indicate the general slope of an area's economic trends as an election approaches. For example, if economic conditions broke sharply about a year before the election, but leveled off or were improving near to election time, this combined trend indicator would show a less severe change than if conditions had deteriorated steadily for the whole year before the election. Table D-2 shows exactly how the One Year Trend and the Five Month Trend measures were combined to form the Trend Indicator.

Other measures of change in labor market area conditions were tried, but the one shown below generally gave the most regular and consistent results when correlated with residents' perceptions of and attitudes toward economic conditions.

TABLE D-2

THE TREND INDICATOR

One Year Trend \ Five Month Trend	+3	+2	+1	0	-1	-2	-3
+3	+3	+2	+2	+1	+1	0	0
+2	+3	+2	+1	+1	0	0	-1
+1	+2	+2	+1	0	0	-1	-1
0	+2	+1	+1	0	-1	-1	-2
-1	+1	+1	0	0	-1	-2	-2
-2	+1	0	0	-1	-1	-2	-3
-3	0	0	-1	-1	-2	-3	-3

Distribution of Respondents in Labor Market Areas

Table D-3 gives the proportion of respondents living under the various labor market area (LMA) conditions in 1958 compared with 1960. The table also presents the proportion of the total sample not living in a labor market area, and the proportion living in smaller areas reported at some time during the preceding two years.

TABLE D-3

PROPORTION OF RESPONDENTS LIVING UNDER VARIOUS LABOR MARKET AREA CONDITIONS, 1958 AND 1960 (Shown by average and trend measures)

Area of Residence	1958	1960
Average Conditions		
B	0%	4%
C	9	45
D	36	7
E-F	10	2
Smaller Area	11	11
Not living in a LMA	32	31
Location unknown	2	0
	100%	100%
Trend Indicator		
+1	0%	18%
0	5	36
-1	17	4
-2	15	0
-3	18	0
Smaller Area	11	11
Not living in a LMA	32	31
Location unknown	2	0
	100%	100%
Number of cases	1,218	1,798*

*Weighted.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books

Ayres, Leonard P. Turning Points in Business Cycles. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939.

Bean, Louis H. How to Predict Elections. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948.

Campbell, Angus, Converse, Philip E., Miller, Warren E., and Stokes, Donald E. The American Voter. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960.

The Commission on Money and Credit. Inflation, Growth, and Employment. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1964.

Festinger, Leon. A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1962.

Katona, George. The Powerful Consumer: Psychological Studies of the American Economy. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1960.

Katona, George, Lininger, Charles A., and Kosobud, Richard F. 1962 Survey of Consumer Finances. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan, Survey Research Center, Institute of Social Research, Monograph No. 32, 1963.

Key, V. O., Jr. Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups. 4th ed. revised. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1958.

Krech, David, and Crutchfield, Richard S. Theory and Problems of Social Psychology. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1948.

Leiserson, Avery. Parties and Politics. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958.

Lewin, Kurt. Field Theory in Social Science; Selected Theoretical Papers. Edited by Dorwin Cartwright. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1951.

Morgan, James N., David, Martin H., Cohen, Wilbur J., and Brazer, Harvey E. Income and Welfare in the United States. A Study of the Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962.

Mueller, Eva, and Schmiedeskamp, Jay. Persistent Unemployment, 1957-1961. A Study of the Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan. Kalamazoo, Michigan: Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, November 1962.

Rosenberg, Milton J., Hovland, Carl I., McGuire, William J., Abelson, Robert P., and Brehm, Jack W. Attitude Organization and Change. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960.

Scott, William A., and Withey, Stephen B. The United States and the United Nations. New York: Manhattan Publishing Company, 1958.

Smith, M. Brewster, Bruner, Jerome S., and White, Robert W. Opinions and Personality. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956.

Wilcock, Richard C., and Franke, Walter H. Unwanted Workers. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, a Division of the Macmillan Company, 1963.

Articles and Periodicals

Bean, Louis H. "Happy, Hopeful Democrats," The New Republic, March 24, 1958, pp. 8-9.

Bookman, George B. "How Top Businessmen View the Recession," Fortune, April, 1958, pp. 110-113; 250-256.

Campbell, Angus. "Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIV, No. 3 (Fall, 1960), pp. 397-418.

Campbell, Angus, and Miller, Warren E. "The Motivational Basis of Straight and Split Ticket Voting," American Political Science Review, LI, No. 2 (June, 1957), pp. 293-312.

Converse, Philip E. "Information Flow and the Stability of Partisan Attitudes," Public Opinion Quarterly, Vol. XXVI (Winter, 1962), pp. 578-599.

Converse, Philip E., Campbell, Angus, Miller, Warren E., and Stokes, Donald E. "Stability and Change in 1960: A Reinstating Election," American Political Science Review, LV, No. 2 (June, 1961), pp. 269-280.

Eisenberg, Philip, and Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "The Psychological Effects of Unemployment," The Psychological Bulletin, XXXV, No. 6 (June, 1938), pp. 358-390.

Goldstein, Jacob. "The Relative Advantages and Limitations of the Panel and Successive-Sample Techniques in the Analysis of Opinion Change," Journal of Social Psychology, L (November, 1959), pp. 305-320.

Goodman, Leo A. "Statistical Methods for Analyzing Processes of Change," American Journal of Sociology, LXVIII, No. 1 (July, 1962), pp. 57-78.

Goodman, Leo A., and Kruskal, William H. "Measures of Association for Cross Classifications," Journal of American Statistical Association, XLIX, No. 268 (December, 1954), pp. 732-764.

Katona, George. "Attitude Change: Instability of Response and Acquisition of Experience," Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, LXXII, No. 10 (No. 463, 1958), pp. 1-38.

Lekachman, Robert. "The Politics of Recession," Commentary, June, 1958.

Miller, Warren E., and Stokes, Donald E. "Constituency Influence in Congress, American Political Science Review, LVII, No. 1 (March, 1963), pp. 45-56.

Mueller, Eva. "Consumer Reactions to Inflation," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXIII (May, 1959), pp. 246-262.

_____. "Public Attitudes toward Fiscal Programs," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, LXXVII (May, 1963), pp. 210-235.

Rees, Albert, Kaufman, Herbert, Eldersveld, Samuel J., and Freidel, Frank. "The Effect of Economic Conditions on Congressional Elections 1946-1958," The Review of Economics and Statistics, XLIV, No. 4 (November, 1962), pp. 458-65.

Rossant, M. J. New York Times, August 30, 1964, Section 3, p. F1.

Stokes, Donald E., Campbell, Angus, and Miller, Warren E. "Components of Electoral Decision," American Political Science Review, LII, No. 2 (June, 1958), pp. 367-387.

Stokes, Donald E., and Miller, Warren E. "Party Government and the Saliency of Congress," Public Opinion Quarterly, XXVI (Winter, 1962), pp. 531-546.

Tibbitts, Clark. "Majority Votes and the Business Cycle," The American Journal of Sociology, XXXVI (January, 1931), pp. 596-606.

Wilkinson, Thomas, and Hart, Hornell. "Prosperity and Political Victory," Public Opinion Quarterly, XIV, No. 2 (Summer, 1950), pp. 331-335.

U.S. Government Publications

Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Federal Reserve Bulletin. Vols. XLIII-XLIV (1957-1958).

Bureau of Employment Security. Area Labor Market Trends, January, 1960. (Prior to September 1957, this source was published under the title "Labor Market Developments in Major Areas.")

Bureau of Employment Security, Division of Reports and Analysis. Directory of Important Labor Market Areas, 4th ed., July 1954.

Bureau of Employment Security and Affiliated State Employment Security Agencies. The Labor Market and Employment Security, May 1955-November 1960.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. Labor Force, Employment, and Unemployment Statistics: 1947-61, October, 1962.

_____. Unemployment, Employment and Labor Force: 1947-61, February 13, 1962.

Cohen, Wilbur J., Haber, William, and Mueller, Eva. The Impact of Unemployment in the 1958 Recession. Senate, 86th Cong., 2d Sess., Special Committee on Unemployment Problems, June, 1960.

Council of Economic Advisors. Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress January 20, 1958.

_____. Economic Report of the President, Transmitted to the Congress January 20, 1959.

Unpublished Material

Converse, Philip E. "The Construct of a 'Normal Vote' Cast by a Population Grouping." Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, June, 1962. (Mimeographed.)

Mueller, Eva. "Public Attitudes toward Fiscal Programs." Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan, 1962. (Mimeographed.)

Political Behavior Program, Survey Research Center, The University of Michigan. "Memo #1, Study 431: 1956-1958 Panel Mortality and Characteristics." Ann Arbor, Michigan, May 23, 1959. (Mimeographed.)

_____. "Memo #1, Study 440: 1956-1960 Panel Mortality." Ann Arbor, Michigan, April 5, 1961. (Mimeographed.)