

II.B.4 PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

Introduction

At the beginning of this exercise I made a commitment to fully engage the issue of economic inequality in constructing scenarios of global development. For our ideal scenario I suggested that an 80/20 ratio of 2.5 to 1 is perhaps the lowest practicable degree of inequality towards which a society might aspire. Is this a desirable, credible, compelling level? If not, what is? We've just finished considering empirics, theory and policy that might help us address this question. In this section we review the results of surveys of public opinion that asked people how they felt about income inequality, policies to reduce it, and related topics.

II.B.4.a. Satisfaction with Current and Projected Income Levels

Box IIB-36 shows the levels of income people say they need to enjoy different lifestyles. The \$30,000 per year needed in 1996 to “just get by” and the \$40,000 needed to “live in reasonable comfort” are essentially unchanged from their levels of eight years earlier. Median family income in 1996 was \$44,000, which suggests that a majority of families experienced themselves to be reasonably comfortable. By contrast, the level of income needed “to fulfill all of one’s dreams” grew from about \$70,000 to about \$100,000, an increase of over 4% per year. This pattern is perhaps consistent with the real income trends of the period. Most incomes remained constant but the highest percentiles increased markedly, in effect raising the standard for “dreams.” In 1996 about 7% of families had incomes over 100,000.

With respect to our advocated scenarios, the fact that Americans believe a yearly income of \$40,000 affords a life of reasonable comfort should be encouraging. This is well below the mean family income of about \$112,000 that even the most constrained scenario, Scenario 4, projects for 2150. Of course, to the degree that “comfort” is a function of relative position, either with respect to past incomes or to the incomes of others, this encouragement is dampened. **IIB-**

BOX IIB-36. Income needs for various lifestyles (1)

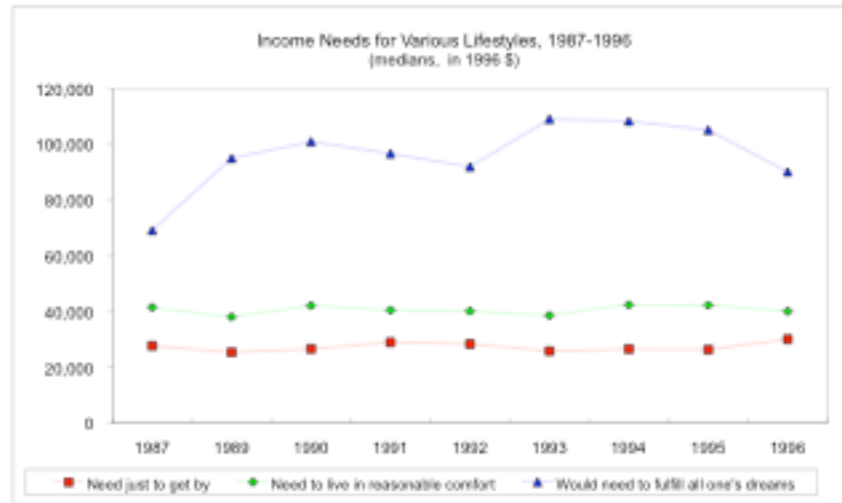
Question: How much income per year do you think you and your family...

Need just to get by	Need to live in reasonable comfort	Would need to fulfill all your Dreams	CPI-U (1996 = 1)	Need just to get by	Need to live in reasonable comfort	Would need to fulfill all your Dreams
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(medians, in current dollars)

(medians, in 1996 dollars)

1987	20,000	30,000	50,000	1.38	27,623	41,435	69,058
1989	20,000	30,000	75,000	1.27	25,306	37,960	94,899
1990	22,100	35,000	84,000	1.20	26,530	42,016	100,839
1991	25,100	35,100	83,800	1.15	28,915	40,435	96,536
1992	25,300	35,800	82,100	1.12	28,293	40,036	91,814
1993	23,700	35,500	100,300	1.09	25,734	38,546	108,907
1994	25,000	40,000	102,200	1.06	26,468	42,348	108,200
1995	25,500	41,000	102,000	1.03	26,253	42,211	105,012
1996	30,000	40,000	90,000	1.00	30,000	40,000	90,000



source: surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide (1987-1995) and by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research/University of Connecticut, as reported in Ladd & Bowman (1998:14)

source of CPI series: US Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
Average CPI, all urban consumers (CPI-U)
U.S. City average; all items
<ftp://146.142.4.23/pub/special.requests/cpi/cpiat.txt>

37 shows that reported income needs for the three lifestyles vary among persons. The ratio of higher and lower estimates of incomes needed to live in “reasonable comfort” is actually very moderate, perhaps not much more than 2 or 3 to one if figured by quintiles, again near the levels projected for Scenario 4. However, perhaps 25% of Americans say they need \$1 million or more to fulfill all their dreams. This appears to be unrealistic, considering that the high-growth advocated scenario, Scenario 2, shows mean annual family income of the top 20% in 2150 at about \$400,000.

How do people feel about their own economic situation, and that of the country’s as a whole? How do they feel about the economic prospects for coming generations? Presumably, people who are dissatisfied or anxious on any of these accounts should be open to considering alternative economic scenarios.

Box IIB-38 shows survey data concerning people’s satisfaction with their personal financial situation, their satisfaction with the “way the country is going”, and their assessment of whether the “condition of the average man” is getting better or worse. The nearly constant proportion of persons who report “satisfaction” with their personal economic situation is remarkable, especially given the economic turmoil of that period: record inflation in the 1970’s, recession in the early ‘80’s, downsizing and restructuring in the early 90’s, and steadily increasing inequality. The trends in IIB-38 show that people evaluate their personal situation consistently more favorably than they do the prospects of others or the condition of the country as a whole. Pollsters have long noted that people are reluctant to give responses that might imply personal inadequacy or disgruntlement at one’s personal situation, and an admission of dissatisfaction with one’s economic situation may be a response of this sort. I won’t attempt any further to interpret at this point the levels and trends shown in IIB-38, except to note that the rise in reported satisfaction with the way things are going in the US since 1992 is certainly dramatic and presumably reflects real changes in expectations.

BOX IIB-37. Income needs for various lifestyles (2)

Question: How much income per year do you think you and your family would need...

percent

just to get by?	
less than \$20,000	26
\$20-35,000	45
\$35-50,000	15
more than \$50,000	14

live in reasonable comfort?	
less than \$35,000	37
\$35-50,000	21
\$50-70,000	25
more than \$70,000	17

fulfill all your dreams?	
less than \$50,000	12
\$50-100,000	28
\$100-200,000	28
\$200-1 million	14
more than \$1 million	18

source: Roper Starch Poll, 1995. Cited in Hacker (1997)

BOX IIB-38. Satisfaction in the USA

Table 1

	A	B	C
	% satisfied with conditions in the USA	% saying condition of "average" person is stable or improving	% satisfied with personal financial situation
1979	19		75
1980		31	74
1981	26		73
1982	24	31	73
1983	35		70
1984	50	43	75
1985	51	50	75
1986	57		74
1987	45	37	79
1988	48	38	77
1989	45	41	75
1990	41	42	73
1991	47	39	75
1992	21		74
1993	28	31	73
1994	33	31	75
1995	32		74
1996	39		72
1997	49		
1998	61		

Figure 1. Satisfaction in the USA (1979-1998)



Survey questions and sources:

A: In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States at this time? [Gallup Polls, www.gallup.com/poll/satus].

B: Agree/disagree: In spite of what some people say, the condition of the average man is getting worse, not better. Column B shows the percent of all persons who disagree with this statement. [National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable ANOMIA5].

C: We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. So far as you and your family are concerned, would you say that you are pretty well satisfied with your present financial situation, more or less satisfied, or not satisfied at all? [National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable SATFIN. www.icpsr.umich.edu/gss/codebook]

Further ambiguity concerning economic satisfaction is shown in **IIB-39**. In the most recent survey reported, 41% of respondents say they are satisfied with their level of earnings and 59% say they are not. But of those who are not, 33% percent appear confident that they will be able to earn a satisfactory level in the future. Thus we might broadly characterize 74% as “satisfied,” which is the level reported in the GSS survey shown in Box IIB-38.

Additional ambiguity is seen in responses to questions concerning the economic prospects for future generations. **IIB-40** shows responses to two questions worded almost identically, except that one question asks about the future of “your children” and the other asks about “the next generation.” An average of only 17% of respondents say that their own children’s standard of living will be lower than theirs, but an average of 46% of respondents say that *the next generation* can expect a worse standard of living than we have now. Put differently, 83% of respondents say the standard of living of their children will be the same or better than their own, while 50% of respondents say that the next generation can expect a standard of living the same as or better than today’s. A third survey, shown in Table 3, asks whether or not “your children’s generation” will enjoy a higher standard of living, without offering an “about the same” choice. In this instance the responses are on the average split nearly 50-50 between “Yes” and “No”. It would probably be a mistake to try to use these results as evidence of either great optimism or great pessimism concerning future economic prospects.

II.B.4.b. Economic inequality

When given a dichotomous choice, upwards of 60% of Americans say that the distribution of money and wealth in America is not fair and should be more evenly distributed, as shown in **IIB-41**. When given a three-way choice the proportion of respondents that say that income differentials in America are too large is only slightly less—56 %--as shown in Table 3. The survey reported in Table 2 where 59% of respondents said that the distribution of income should either remain as it or be even more *unequal*, seems to contradict these results. However,

BOX IIB-39. EARNINGS SUFFICIENCY AND EXPECTATIONS

Table 1. Do you now earn enough money to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

	Yes, enough money	No, not enough
Jan 1992	39	61
Mar. 1994	44	56
Feb. 1995	41	58
June 1996	44	56
Nov 1997	41	59

Table 2. To those who answered "no" to the above question, do you think you will be able to earn enough money in the future to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

	Yes, enough money	No, not enough
Jan 1992	34	22
Mar. 1994	33	20
Feb. 1995	35	20
June 1996	34	20
Nov 1997	33	24

note: all respondents were currently employed.

sources: Princeton Survey Research Associates for U.S. News & World Report (Jan 1992); Times Mirror-Center for the People & the Press (Mar. 1994, Feb. 1995); and Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (June, Nov. 1997).
Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:96).

BOX IIB-40. Standards of living for future generations
[percents]

Table 1

Do you think your children's standard of living will be higher, lower or about the same as your standard of living?

	higher	lower	about the same
1989	52	12	19
1992	47	15	28
1993	49	17	27
1994	43	22	28
1995	46	17	29

source: Surveys by Cambridge Report/Research International. Cited in Ladd & Bowman (1997:61).

Table 2

Do you expect the next generation of Americans will have a better standard of living than the one we have now, a worse standard of living than now or about the same standard of living as we have now?

	better	worse	about the same
Nov. 1991	20	51	23
Oct. 1992	24	36	36
Jan. 1993	23	38	35
June 1993	14	51	32
Dec. 1993	15	47	35
Oct. 1995	13	51	33
Aug 1996	18	46	33

source: Surveys by Los Angeles Times. Cited in Ladd and Bowman (1997:70).

Table 3

Do you expect your children's generation to enjoy a higher standard of living than your generation?

	Yes	No
May 1990	60	37
July 1994	45	50
Sept 1994	49	45
Dec. 1994	48	46
Mar. 1995	49	45
Jan. 1996	41	52
Mar. 1996	41	51
June 1996	43	47
Sept. 1996	43	47
Apr. 1997	52	44
June 1997	53	42

(registered voters)
(registered voters)

source: surveys by NBC News/Wall Street Journal and Hart/Teeter Research for the Council for Excellence in Government.

BOX IIB-41. Is the distribution of income in this country fair?
[percents]

Table 1

Do you feel that the distribution of money and wealth in this country today is fair, or do you feel that the money and wealth in this country should be more evenly distributed among a larger percentage of the people?

	Distribution is Fair	Should be more evenly distributed
1984	31	60
1685	28	61
1987	27	66
1990	28	66
1996	33	62

source: Surveys by the Gallup Organization (1984; 1987-1996) and the Los Angeles Times (1985).
Cited in Ladd and Bowman (1997:110)

Table 2

Some people say that incomes should be completely equal, with every family making roughly the same amount of money; others say that things should stay about the same as they are now; and still others think incomes should be less equal than they are now. Ideally do you think there should be...

Complete equality of income	3
More equality than there is now	38
About the present level of income equality	52
Less equality of incomes than there is now	7

source: survey in 1980 by Kleugel and Smith (1986:112)

Table 3

Do you agree or disagree: Differences in income in America are too large.

Agree	56
Neither Agree nor Disagree	22
Disagree	19

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, 1983-87, codebook variable INCGAP

the wording of the survey question suggests a different set of choices than are finally prompted, so the results are not conclusive. Even in this case the 41% of respondents who think there *should* be more equality of incomes is hardly a small minority.

Further results suggesting that the distribution of income in America is believed to be unfair are shown in **IIB-42**. Pollsters have said that beliefs about “inequality” and “income distribution” are difficult to assess in a polling context because for many Americans these are abstract concepts. The format used in IIB-42, in which people are asked to assess the relative incomes of different occupations, was devised as a way to elicit opinions about equity in a more concrete manner. We see that strong majorities feel that the first 4 are underpaid and that the last 5 are overpaid. The occupations in the middle group—numbers 4 through 10—are believed to be paid about the right amount.

Box IIB-43 shows an extension of this procedure that assesses income equity in dollar terms. The authors note that the perceived incomes suggested by the respondents were not very different from the actual incomes of the occupations listed. The fair incomes suggested by the respondents represent a rather dramatic decrease in income differentials. If we suppose that the average of the incomes of the top three occupations might crudely approximate the mean income of the top quintile of earners, and that the average of the incomes of the bottom three occupations approximates the mean income of the bottom quintile, we see that the “80/20” ratio of the perceived incomes is 12.6, and that of the “fair” income is 6.2. It so happens that the 80/20 ratio of American family incomes in 1992 was precisely 12.5. An 80/20 ratio of 6.2 is very close to that of France and Poland in 1996, and in fact is close to the average for all industrial nations.

Table 1 in **IIB-44** shows that fully 82% of Americans believe that the “growing divide between rich and poor” threatens the American Dream. This result is supported by Table 2, which shows that 84% of Americans are “concerned about” the “gap between the rich and poor.” Both tables show that 38% of respondents are “severely” concerned.

BOX IIB-42. Fair Pay (1)

[percents]

I'd like you to tell me about the amount of income that different kinds of people receive. For the contribution that they make to society, do (occupation) receive... (too little income, about the right income, or too much income) ?

	Too little	About the right amount	Too much	Don't know
1. teachers in elementary and high schools	62	31	5	2
2. lower level white-collar workers	62	33	2	4
3. non-unionized factory workers	61	28	2	9
4. teachers in colleges and universities	53	34	7	7
5. owners of small businesses	40	49	4	8
6. middle-level managers in business	18	58	8	16
7. unionized factory workers	14	53	28	5
8. skilled blue-collar workers	8	47	42	3
9. stockholders of large corporations	4	34	47	15
10. landlords	5	39	49	8
11. government officials	4	24	67	4
12. professional athletes	3	18	77	2
13. medical doctors	2	27	69	1
14. owners & execs of large corporations	1	23	71	5
15. movie stars and top entertainers	1	18	78	4

Source: 1980 poll conducted by Kleugel and Smith (1986:120)

BOX IIB-43. Fair Pay (2)

In 1976 Verba and Orren polled a group of 2762 leaders of the constituencies listed below for their opinions about distributional equity. The leaders were asked to note the income they believed each of the listed occupations received, along with the incomes that they believed would otherwise be fair. The perceived incomes were very close to actual incomes.

The results of the exercise are shown here:

occupation	absolute levels (1985 \$)		ratios	
	perceived income	fair income	perceived income	fair income
Top executive	167,070	95,230	13.8	7.9
Professional athlete	112,703	42,612	9.3	3.5
Doctor	74,374	52,798	6.1	4.4
Cabinet secretary	48,062	48,119	4.0	4.0
Engineer	24,916	24,705	2.1	2.0
Professor	20,268	22,766	1.7	1.9
Plumber	18,845	15,575	1.6	1.3
Auto Worker	12,100	12,100	1.0	1.0
Police Officer	12,012	14,385	1.0	1.2
Teacher	10,474	12,812	0.9	1.1
Bank Teller	9,083	10,454	0.8	0.9
Elevator Operator	6,877	7,954	0.6	0.7
	average, top 3:		9.70	5.40
	average, bottom 3:		0.77	0.87
	ratio:		12.60	6.20

The leaders chosen by Verba and Orren were selected from organizations associated with "Business, Labor, Farmers, Intellectuals, the Media, the Republican and Democratic Parties, Blacks, Feminists and Youth." Income values are logged to adjust for extreme estimates.

Source: Verba and Orren (1985:156)

BOX IIB-44. Concern about the Gap between Rich and Poor

Table 1.

I am going to read to you a list of things people have said may pose a threat to the future of the American Dream. As I read each one please tell me if you find it severely threatens the future of the American Dream, somewhat threatens it, or doesn't threaten the future of the American Dream at all...a growing divide between rich and poor.

Severely	38
Somewhat	44
Does Not	14

source: Roper Starch Worldwide, December 1995. Cited in Ladd and Bowman (1997)

Table 2.

I'm going to read a list of concerns people might have about the way we live today in the United States. For each one, please tell me whether you personally are Very concerned, Somewhat concerned, a Little concerned, or Not concerned at all... The gap between rich and poor.

Very concerned	38
Somewhat concerned	35
A little concerned	12
Not concerned	14
don't know	2

source: Merck Family Fund Survey on consumption/Materialism (Feb. 1995:1)

What is to be done? Although the survey results just reviewed point to concern about income inequality, they haven't addressed the question of whether anything should actually be done about it, and if so, what.

Box IIB-45 shows that over the 18 years beginning in 1978 an average of about 47% of Americans have consistently agreed that government should “do something to reduce income differences between the Rich and the Poor,” while an average of about 32% have said that it should not so concern itself. The sentiment in favor of action is clear and consistent, although not overwhelming.

When specific programs and policies are suggested Americans are in general less supportive of taking action to address income inequality. However, significant minorities continue to support strong redistributive policies. This pattern is illustrated in **IIB-46**. A majority of Americans are opposed to a guaranteed annual income (by 57%), wage controls (by about 50%), proposals that governments should be involved in redistributing wealth (by 52%), and increased inheritance taxes (by 73%). But 20-30% of Americans consistently support these policies. Further, fully 81% of Americans call on corporations to distribute more of their profits to workers and less to shareholders.

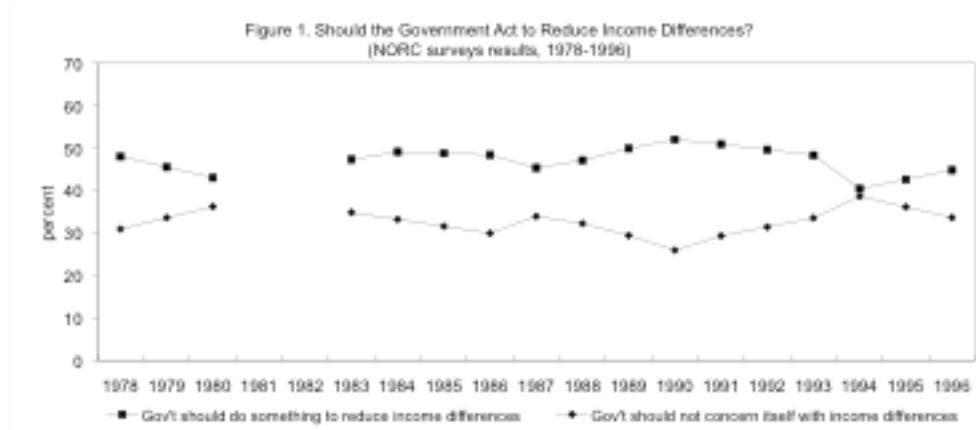
Support or opposition to policies draws on complex sets of values that people hold. In **IIB-47** we see that when publicly-financed jobs are described as a “responsibility” that government owes to “everyone who wants one,” only 45% of Americans are supportive. But if the same program is described as a way that government might “help the economy,” support increases to 70%.

Further rejection of government efforts to take steps to redistribute income is shown in **IIB-48**. In recent years fully 74-80% of respondents oppose “a law limiting the amount of money any individual is allowed to earn in a year,” or wording to that effect. More ambivalence is shown in response to the question of whether people “should be allowed to accumulate as much wealth as they can even if some make millions while others live in poverty.” It can be interpreted

BOX IIB-45. Should the government act to reduce income inequality?
[percents]

Question: Should the Government Do Something To Reduce Income Differences Between Rich and Poor, OR Should the Government Not Concern Itself With Income Differences?

Table 1	Should Do Something	Should Not Concern Itself
1978	48	30.9
1979	45.5	33.55
1980	43	36.2
1981		
1982		
1983	47.3	34.8
1984	49.1	33.2
1985	48.75	31.55
1986	48.4	29.9
1987	45.3	33.9
1988	47.1	32.2
1989	49.9	29.4
1990	52	25.9
1991	50.9	29.3
1992	49.6	31.4
1993	48.3	33.5
1994	40.4	38.6
1995	42.6	36.1
1996	44.8	33.6



Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable EQWLTH.

BOX IIB-46. What should the government do about income inequality?
[percents]

Table 1

Do you agree or disagree: The government should provide everyone with a guaranteed basic income.

	1987
Agree	20
Neither Agree nor Disagree	20
Disagree	57
Can't choose	3

Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, 1983-87; codebook variable GOVMINC

Table 2

What is your opinion of the following statement? It is the responsibility of the government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and those with low incomes.

	1985	1990	1993	1994
Agree	28	34	32	29
Neither Agree nor Disagree	21	27	21	19
Disagree	50	40	47	52

Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable EQUINCOME.

Table 3

Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Circle one number for each action to show whether you are in favor of it or against it... Control of wages by legislation.

	1985	1990
Agree	22	25
Neither Agree nor Disagree	21	25
Disagree	56	50

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable SETWAGE.

Table 4

Tax laws should be strengthened to limit the amount of wealth that can be inherited.

	1980
Agree	26
Disagree	73

Source: Kleugel and Smith (1986:164)

Table 5

Corporations should pay more of their profits to workers and less to shareholders.

	1987
Strongly agree	22
Agree	59
Disagree	17
Strongly disagree	1
Don't know	6

source: National Opinion Research Organization General Social Survey, 1983-87, codebook variable PROFITS2.

BOX IB-47. Contrasting opinions about job creation
[percents]

Table 1

On the whole, do you think it should or should not be the government's responsibility to provide a job for everyone who wants one?

	yes	no
1985	35	66
1989	48	52
1990	44	56
1991	45	55

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable JOBSALL.

Table 2

Here are some things the government might do for the economy. Circle one number for each action to show whether you are in favor of it or against it... Government financing of projects to create new jobs.

	in favor	neither in favor nor against	against
1985	68	16	15
1990	70	20	10

Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable MAKEJOBS.

BOX IIB-48. Limits on earnings and wealth?
[percents]

Table 1

Do you think there should be a law limiting the amount of money any individual is allowed to earn in a year?

	Yes	No
1980	21	79
Mar. 1981	20	75
Jan. 1992	9	83
Aug. 1994	22	74

Note: Question wording varied. 1980: Agree/disagree: There should be an upper limit on the amount of money any one person can make. Mar. 1981: Agree/disagree: There should be a limit on incomes so that no one can earn more than \$100,000 a year. Aug. 1994: Should there be a top limit on incomes so that no one can earn more than \$1 million a year?

sources: 1980: Kleugel and Smith (1986); 1981: Civic Services; 1992: Roper Starch Worldwide; 1994: Roper Center for Public Opinion Research/University of Connecticut for Reader's Digest. Cited in Ladd and Bowman (1997:108)

Table 2

People should be allowed to accumulate as much wealth as they can even if some make millions while others live in poverty.

	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree
Total	56	11	30
Income			
< \$15,000	51	12	33
\$15,000-19,999	59	7	33
\$20,000-29,999	54	11	34
\$30,000-49,999	60	11	27
\$50,000-74,999	60	10	27
>75,000	65	12	22
Party			
Republican	66	10	22
Democrat	50	10	36
Independent	56	13	29

Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable RICHPOOR

as a clear rejection of any sentiment for redistribution: majorities of even the lowest income groups *affirm* the statement. On the other hand, the fact that 30% of all respondents *reject* it shows that this position is hardly a marginal one.¹

Some differences in the survey results reviewed appear difficult to reconcile. Table 1 in **Box IIB-49** shows overwhelmingly strong agreement, by upwards of 72% of respondents, that “high-income families” pay “too little” in taxes. But the survey shown in Table 2, worded only slightly differently, suggests that the lesser majority of about 55-60% of Americans would like to see taxes on high incomes increased, while 40% would actually like to see them *reduced*; that is, they’d prefer a “flat tax” over the present system of progressive taxes. An interpretation that might reconcile the results of these two surveys is that many of the 40% of respondents supporting the flat tax might believe that it would generate higher net payments from high income families, perhaps as a consequence of the elimination of tax loopholes.

Another tension is seen in comparing **IIB-50** with IIB-47. IIB-47 shows that people believe that non-unionized factory workers, teachers, and lower-level white collar workers all receive too little compensation for their work. Yet IIB-50 suggests that one of the obvious means by which this could be remedied--stronger unionization--is opposed by large majorities of Americans.

The general resistance to income redistribution seen in these surveys appears to be supported by some very basic judgments people hold concerning human nature and human behavior, as shown in **IIB-51**. The only response that can be interpreted as supportive of redistributive policies is the response to statement number 8. However, these questions appear to have been intentionally worded to elicit a positive response. The second question, for example, could have been worded, “Although it is human nature to always want more than others have, it is

¹ It would not be difficult to design a set of questions that would explore the conditions under which successively larger shares of respondents, beyond the initial 30%, might come to disagree with the statement.

SCENARIOS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

BOX IB-49. Fair Taxes?
[percents]

Table 1

For each one would you tell me whether you think they have to pay too much in taxes, or too little in taxes or about the right amount?... High-income families?

	Too Much	Too Little	About Right
May 1977	8	75	10
May 1978	7	76	9
July 1978	8	76	9
May 1979	8	75	9
Jan. 1985	5	80	10
Apr. 1986	7	77	10
Jan. 1992	9	72	10

source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide. Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:97)

Table 2

Some people think those with high incomes should pay a larger proportion (percentage) of their earnings in taxes than those who earn low incomes. Other people think that those with high incomes and those with low incomes should pay the same proportion (percentage) of their earnings in taxes.

Do you think those with high incomes should pay a much larger proportion, pay a larger proportion, pay the same proportion as those who earn lower incomes, pay a smaller proportion, pay a much smaller proportion?

	larger/ much larger	same	smaller/ much smaller
1985	56	42	1
1990	61	38	1

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable PROGTAX

BOX IB-50 Do unions have too much power?
[percents]

Do you think that labor unions in this country have too much power or too little power?

	too much	about right	too little
1985	64	28	8
1990	47	40	13

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable LABORPDW

BOX IIB-51. Beliefs about the Sources and Consequences of Income Inequality

<u>Statements</u>	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
Incomes cannot be made more equal since people's abilities and talents are unequal	85	15
Incomes cannot be made more equal since its human nature to always want more than others have	82	18
Making incomes more equal means socialism, and that deprives people of individual freedoms	74	26
Incomes should not be made more equal since that would keep people from dreaming of someday becoming a success	70	30
If incomes were more equal, nothing would motivate people to work hard	63	27
If incomes were more equal, life would be boring because people would all live in the same way	61	39
Incomes should not be more equal since the rich invest in the economy, creating jobs and benefits for everyone	55	45
More equality of incomes would avoid conflicts between people at different levels	55	45
More equality of incomes would allow my family to live better	42	58
Incomes should be more equal, because every family's needs for food, housing and so on, are the same	39	62

source: Kluegel and Smith (1986:106)

still possible for societies to agree on policies that could make incomes more equal.” And the first question is subtly ambiguous, in effect asking respondents to first decide whether they believe that peoples’ abilities and talents are unequal, and then to decide whether, if that is so, it constitutes a *necessary* reason that “incomes cannot be made more equal.”

Similar caution needs to be taken when interpreting survey results such as those shown in **IIB-52**. Depending on how “poverty” is defined, and what is meant by “done away with” or “finally solved”, the pattern of responses shown may be trivially obvious and hardly objectionable, or profoundly disturbing. As a rhetorical counter one might cite the survey shown in which only 18% of respondents say that the government should *spend less* to reduce poverty. In any event a more informative survey would ask people about the levels of poverty reduction that they believe can and should be achieved, and by what means.

II.B.4.c. Opportunities and Outcomes

Much of the tension implied in the survey results reviewed here traces to ambivalence among Americans concerning the relative importance of procedural equity and outcome equity. The problem is that fair procedures can generate unfair outcomes, and equal opportunities can generate unequal results. When asked directly, as shown in **IIB-53**, Americans overwhelmingly endorse equality of opportunity (84%) over equality of result (12%) as a principle of equity. This preference is part of the American civil religion the roots of which go back to the founding of the Republic. But a separation of concern for equality of opportunity from concern for equality of results cannot be strictly maintained in the real world. It is possible that otherwise fair procedures could generate inequality of such magnitude that many persons would no longer be able to effectively avail themselves of them. Conversely, it is possible that the regulation of otherwise fair procedures in order to ensure more equitable outcomes might destabilize expectations upon which whole other sets of procedures depend for their legitimacy. So the conflict is very real and very complex.

BOX IIB-52. Will poverty ever be done away with?
[percents]

Table 1

Do you think poverty will ever be done away with in this country?

	Will be done away with	Will always be a major problem
1964	9	83
1967	7	89
1985	8	89
1987	14	82
1988	9	89
1989	6	92

Wording of the questions varied: 1964, 1967, 1989: as shown above (The Gallup Organization); 1985: Do you think poverty in the United States is a problem that will be finally solved, or do you think it will always be a major problem for our society? (Los Angeles Times); 1987, 1988: Do you think... an end to poverty in America... will happen in your lifetime or not? (Harris) Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:100).

Table 2

Do you agree or disagree: The government should spend less on benefits for the poor.

	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	don't know, etc.
1987	18	22	58	2

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, 1983-87, codebook variable GOVLESS.

BOX IB-53. Equality of opportunity or equality of outcomes?
[percents]

Table 1

Some people think America should promote equal opportunity for all, that is, allowing everyone to compete for jobs and wealth on a fair and even basis. Other people think America should promote equal outcomes, that is, insuring that everyone has a decent standard of living and that there are only small differences in wealth and income between the top and the bottom in society. Which do you favor: promoting equal opportunity or promoting equal outcomes?

	1993
should promote equal opportunity	84
should promote equal outcomes	12
other/don't know	4

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable OPOUTOME

Table 2

[source: Verba and Orren (1985:72)]

In 1976 Verba and Orren polled a group of 2762 leaders of the constituencies listed below for their opinions concerning distributional equity. They were asked about the desirability of equality of opportunity and equality of results as guiding principles. They responded as shown here.

Constituency leaders	N	How best to deal with inequality		What is a fair economic system	
		equality of opportunity	equality of result	earnings based on ability	all earnings about the same
Republicans	~154	98	0	99	0
Business	312	98	1	98	1
Media	318	96	1	93	3
Farm	266	93	2	90	4
Intellectuals	296	89	3	89	7
Youth	374	87	7	74	14
Labor	266	86	4	80	11
Blacks	266	86	7	67	17
Democrats	~153	84	8	79	12
Feminists	367	84	7	71	15
total	2762				

N = number of leaders from each constituency participating in the survey.

Is equality of opportunity in fact available? Survey results in which respondents say that the average person is falling behind, or that they don't expect their children to enjoy as high a standard of living as themselves, might suggest not. But when asked directly, Americans generally affirm their faith in the availability of opportunity, as shown in **IIB-54**. They acknowledge, however, that some people have better opportunities than others, as shown in Table 3 of **IIB-54**.

Further survey results concerning inequality show even more complexity. Americans simultaneously admire and distrust those who have high incomes. **IIB-55** shows that 89% of Americans admire rich people who "worked hard" to get their money; that 62% believe that the country benefits from having a class of rich people; and that only 21% feel there are too many rich people. On the other hand, **IIB-56** shows that Americans believe "the wealthy" have too much power and influence and that a strong plurality believe inequality continues to exist because it benefits the rich and powerful.

Box IIB-57 shows a mix of positive and negative assessments of "millionaires." Note that the negative assessments are due to violations of procedural norms. Note also that even where majorities have a positive assessment of some characteristic of "millionaires," a significant portion, near 30%, has consistently negative assessments. Finally, Table 2 of **IIB-57** shows very divided feelings about whether or not social difference in the United States "are justified," with 52% believing they are and 44% saying they are not.

II.B.4.d. Other Countries

Box IIB-58 shows that American attitudes are markedly less "egalitarian" than are attitudes of people in other industrialized countries. Of the 66 survey responses obtained from

BOX IIB-54. A land of opportunity?

[percents]

TABLE 1

America is the land of opportunity where everyone who works hard can get ahead.

strongly agree	14
agree	56
disagree	27
strongly disagree	4

TABLE 2

Compared to the average person in America, do you think the chance of getting ahead for you yourself is:

Much better than average	5
Better than average	33
Average	54
Worse than average	7
Much worse than average	2

TABLE 3

Compared to the average person in America, do you think the chance of getting ahead for..... is....

	<u>better</u>	<u>average</u>	<u>worse</u>
people who grew up in rich families	83	14	3
people who grew up in poor families	19	47	34
people who grew up in working class families	23	69	8
Blacks	28	45	28
a woman working fulltime compared to a man at the same job	14	46	39

Source: 1980 survey by Kleugel and Smith (1985)

BOX II-B-55. How we feel about rich people (1)
[percents]

Table 1

I am going to read you a series of statements about a number of different things. For each, please tell me whether you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it... I admire people who get rich by working hard.

	Completely Agree	Mostly Agree	Mostly Disagree	Completely Disagree
1991	57	35	5	2
1992	47	42	7	3
1994	51	37	8	3
1997	52	37	7	3

source: Surveys by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press (1991-1994) and for the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press (1997).
note: Question wording varies slightly. Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:53).

Table 2

Does America benefit from having a class of rich people or not?

	1990
Yes	62
No	32

This question was asked of those people who did not consider themselves rich—1,249 of 1,255 respondents.
source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, May 1990. Cited in Ladd & Bowman (1997:17).

Table 3

As far as you are concerned do we have too many rich people in this country, too few, or about the right amount?

	1990
Too many rich	21
Too few	15
About the right amount	55

source: Survey by the Gallup Organization, May 1990. Cited in Ladd & Bowman (1997:16).

BOX IIB-56. How we feel about rich people (2)
[percents]

Table 1

Of course, the job of running the country is given to the President and Congress. However, there are those who say that other groups in our society also have power and influence over how our country is run. Would you call off the groups on that list that you feel have too much power and influence over our country's policies... the wealthy.

	Too much power/influence	Rank
1979	58	2 of 23
1982	63	1 of 24
1992	45	1 of 26

Note: In 1979 the Arab oil nations ranked first as having too much power and influence over our country's policies. In 1989 large business corporations were ranked second, and, in 1992, the press was a close second to the wealthy. Source: Surveys by Roper Starch Worldwide. Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:17).

Table 2

Do you agree or disagree: inequality continues to exist because it benefits the rich and powerful.

	1987
agree	46
neither agree nor disagree	25
disagree	22
can't choose	6

Source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, 1983-87, codebook variable INEQUAL3.

BOX IIB-57. How we feel about rich people (3)

[percents]

Table 1

Question: Here is a list of things you may hear said about millionaires from time to time. Would you read down it and for each one tell me whether you think it is generally true or generally untrue of most millionaires?

	Generally True	Generally Untrue
<i>(negative assessments)</i>		
Use their wealth mostly to protect their own positions in society	67	15
Don't pay their fair share of taxes	61	28
Make illegal contributions to political campaigns	45	25
<i>(positive assessments or "non-negative" assessments)</i>		
Investments create jobs and help provide prosperity	55	27
Spending gives employment to a lot of people	54	29
Are responsible for many of society's ills	29	48
Keep the common man from having his proper share of the wealth	30	50
<i>(mixed assessments)</i>		
Worked hard to earn the wealth they have	46	37
Got where they are by exploiting people	38	35

source: survey by Roper Starch Worldwide, January 1992. Cited in Ladd and Bowman (1997:18).

Table 2

Here are different opinions about social differences in this country. Please tell me for each one whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, or strongly disagree... All in all, I think social differences in this country are justified.

	<u>1987</u>
Strongly/somewhat agree	52
Strongly/somewhat disagree	44
don't know	4

source: National Opinion Research Center General Social Survey, codebook variable USCLASS8 (1983-87).

Box IIB-58. International Comparisons Regarding Economic Inequality

[selected years, 1990-1993]

	US	UK	W. Germ.	E. Germ.	Japan	Hungary	Poland	Sweden	Australia
1. In [country] people have equal opportunities to get ahead. (% who agree)	66	42	55	25	41	18	27		
2. The government should guarantee everyone a minimum standard of living. (% who strongly agree)	27	50	57	80	61	81	55		
3. The government should place an upper limit on the amount of money one person can make. (% who agree)	17	39	32	60	36	58	47		
4. The government should provide a job for everyone who wants one. (% who strongly agree)	30	37	46	84	66	80	66		
5. The fairest way to distribute wealth and income would be to give everyone equal shares (% who agree)	19	30	22	24	39	23	20		
6. It's fair if people have more money or wealth, but only if there are equal opportunities (% who strongly agree)	43	23	37	37	21	40	24		
7. The way things are in [country], people like me and my family have a good chance of improving our standard of living (% who agree)	55	29	34	39		11	12	23	49
8. Large differences in income are necessary for [country's] prosperity. (% who agree)	26	19	21	14		21	36	30	25
9. Inequality continues to exist because it benefits the rich and powerful (% who agree)	58	65	75	87		53	73	54	59
10. Differences of income in [country] are too large. (% who agree)	77	81	84	98		84	86	60	63
11. It is the responsibility of government to reduce the differences in income between people with high incomes and people with low incomes (% who agree)	38	66	66	89		75	77	53	43
12. The government should provide everyone with a guaranteed basic income (% who agree)	35	68	58	88		85	87	46	51
13. Gini Coefficients (top series) and 80/20 ratios	0.38 9.8	0.32 5.3	0.32 5.9		0.35 7.1	0.28 3.9	0.33 6.3	0.32 5.8	0.42 10.1

note: choices available for each question were: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree, can't choose. "% who agree" means the sum of the percents for "strongly agree" and "somewhat agree." "% who strongly agree" means the percent just for that single response category.

sources: items 1-6, International Social Justice Survey, 1991, via IUCPS; items 7-12, International Social Survey Program, 1992. Compiled by Ladd and Bowman (1997:118-123). Item 13: Table 1, Part I-E of these notes; values given for united Germany.

eight other countries, only 3 are more “inegalitarian” than are the corresponding responses from the United States ²

Box IIB-59 shows opinions about the distribution of wealth in eight Latin American countries.³ With the exception of Peru, strong majorities in all countries believe their distributions of wealth to be unfair. This is understandable, given that Latin America has the worst distribution of income of any region in the world.⁴ Interestingly, the unweighted mean of Latin Americans who believe the distribution of wealth to be unfair (67%) is less than the corresponding value for the eight industrialized countries shown in Box IIB-58 who agree that “differences of income in [country] are too large” (79%). It’s not clear whether this difference is real or if it is a result of differences in survey wording, context, methodology, or other factors.

Box IIB-60 shows a dramatic difference between Swedes and Americans regarding distributive norms. Swedish business executives appear to have preferred far more equal pay scales than have American union leaders.⁵

A crude estimate of what an acceptable distribution of income might be in a European country that puts a higher priority on distributive equity than does the US can be had by use of the figures in **IIB-61**. These show the results of a Dutch study, similar to the study noted in IIB-43, in which respondents offered their opinions of what a just income for the listed occupations would be. Under the “just” distribution the incomes received by the top 3 selected categories would decrease by about 22-26%, while those in the 3 lowest selected categories would increase

² Responses that are seemingly more “inegalitarian” than those of the US are those in item #8 by Poland and Sweden; item #9 by Hungary and Sweden, and item #10 by Australia and Sweden. But the three Swedish responses may actually reflect the high degree of distributive equity that now exists in that country.

³ The countries surveyed are the five members of MERCOSUR (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay), the two members of the Andean Pact (Venezuela and Peru), plus Mexico, which belongs to NAFTA.

⁴ See country and regional income inequality comparisons in Boxes IIB-1, IIB-2 and IIB-3.

⁵ These survey results are 15 years old, and since that time the Scandinavian model has evolved in ways that may put less priority on distributive equity.

BOX IB-59. Opinions about inequality of Wealth in Latin America
[percents]

In your opinion, is the distribution of wealth in the country fair or unfair?

	very fair/ somewhat fair	neither fair nor unfair	unfair/ very unfair	no answer
Argentina	9	19	66	6
Brazil	7	11	78	4
Chile	7	30	61	2
Mexico	7	13	78	2
Paraguay	6	11	76	7
Peru	13	29	48	10
Uruguay	8	18	66	8
Venezuela	13	13	66	8
unweighted mean	8.8	18.0	67.4	5.9

source: Latinobarometer 1995. In IPO 1995-1996:622.

sample sizes: Argentina (N=1200); Brazil (N=1200); Chile (N=1240); Mexico (N=1204);
Paraguay (N=587); Peru (N=1226); Uruguay (N=1212); Venezuela (N=1200).

BOX IB-60. Commitment to income equality in Sweden and the United States

Leaders in Sweden and the United States were asked to state what they believed were equitable levels of compensation for different occupations. The figures below show the ratios between the levels that were believed to be equitable for business executives and for dishwashers (used in the Swedish survey) and elevator operators (used in the US survey).

leaders	ratios
Swedish blue-collar union leaders	2.2
Swedish Social Democratic Party leaders	2.4
Swedish business executives	4.7
US union leaders	11.3
US Democratic Party leaders	15.2
US business executives	26.0

source: 1976 survey conducted by Verba & Orren (1985:255)

BOX IB-61. Attitudes towards Income Inequality in The Netherlands

The figures in the "A" columns show the results of a 1980 opinion survey of Dutch that first asked them to estimate the current levels of compensation for different occupations, and then asked what levels of compensation they believed would be "just". The figures in the "B" columns show the ratios of the figures in the "A" columns to those of a reference occupation, the "unskilled factory worker."

A. Estimates (in 1980 Guilders)

	actual income	estimated income	"just" income
Prime Minister	189531	207451	152635
Director of a large company	186000	202607	138812
General Practitioner	160572	157717	120397
Secondary school teacher	62869	68312	59027
Head of personnel department	62640	65429	58156
Self-employed plumber	69012	53561	51781
Typewriter salesman	54270	45344	43203
Policeman	35764	43884	45236
Shopkeeper with no employees	36600	42834	46887
Construction worker	33746	36321	37524
Car mechanic	29886	33525	36502
Typist	26450	28255	30238
Unskilled factory worker	24143	24954	29496
Old age pensioner	19558	19027	23423
Person on welfare	17090	18310	20860
average, 3 highest (excl PM):	136480	142879	106079
average, 3 lowest (excl welfare):	23384	24079	27719
high/low ratio:	5.8	5.9	3.8

B. Ratios

actual income	estimated income	"just" income
7.9	8.3	5.2
7.7	8.1	4.7
6.7	6.3	4.1
2.6	2.7	2.0
2.6	2.6	2.0
2.9	2.1	1.8
2.2	1.8	1.5
1.5	1.8	1.5
1.5	1.7	1.6
1.4	1.5	1.3
1.2	1.3	1.2
1.1	1.1	1.0
1.0	1.0	1.0
0.8	0.8	0.8
0.7	0.7	0.7

	actual --> "just"	estimated --> "just"
percent decrease of 3 highest	22%	26%
percent increase of 3 lowest	19%	15%

source: Szirmai (1986:107,192).

by about 15-19%. The net result is to lower the ratio between the highest and lowest categories from about 5.8 to 3.8.

If the ratio between the higher and lower categories chosen here is at all analogous to the 80/20 ratio, it would appear that an 80/20 ratio of about 3.8 would be the preferred ratio of the Dutch people in 1980. This is the level present in Lithuania today.

Applied to the United States, an 80/20 ratio of 3.8 could be achieved if the mean family income of the bottom quintile rose from its 1992 level of \$9,708 to \$26,120, while the top quintile's mean family income of \$99,250 remained unchanged. Alternatively, it could be achieved if the top quintile decreased from \$99,250 to \$36,900, while the bottom quintile remained unchanged.

Regarding our scenarios, and our desires for a more equitable world, the European results are in general encouraging. They show that countries whose citizens hold strong egalitarian values can be dynamic, productive and democratic. On the other hand, it's not clear that Europeans, whose 80/20 ratios mostly fall into the 4:1 to 6:1 range, would necessarily support policies to reduce the 80/20 ratio to our ideal level of 2.5:1.

An important question is whether Europe's values regarding social and economic equity remain intact, or whether they get cast aside, under the impact of globalization and cultural change. The conventional view is that Europe will not be able to maintain its equity norms in the face of global competition. But this is too pat a position. A unified European Community might conceivably be able to maintain its historical social commitments while participating fully, as a bloc, in the global economy. If such an effort succeeds it might serve as an alternative to the United States as a model of modern economic development.⁶

⁶ Possible impacts of globalization are discussed at length in Section II.D.

II.B.4.e. Summary

Americans mostly say that they are satisfied with their income situation and prospects for their and their children's futures. However, large majorities (~80%) are concerned about growing income disparities. Lesser but still comfortable majorities (~60%) agree that the distribution of income in the US is currently unfair. None of the surveys reviewed asked what a fair distribution might be. Pluralities (~45%) say government should take steps to reduce income inequality. However, specific policy measures that would reduce inequality were only supported by minorities (~25%-35%) of people surveyed. Americans show far more support for measures to ensure equality of opportunity (~80%) than for measures to directly ensure equality of outcomes. Europeans show higher levels of support for public policies that address economic inequality.

II.B.5. ASSESSMENT⁷

For our ideal scenario, Scenario 5, we suggested that an 80/20 ratio of 2.5, to be attained by all countries by 2150, was a desirable, credible and compelling goal. Per capita GDP of the top and bottom income quintiles in 2150 would be about \$70,000 and \$28,000, respectively. As absolute levels of income these values are very high.⁸ But for the currently developed countries they actually represent quite *low* rates of economic growth-- only 0.2% and 0.8% per year, for the top and bottom quintiles, respectively, over the period.⁹ This low, and ultimately zero, rate of economic growth was motivated by the coupled desires to close the per capita GDP gap between the rich and poor countries, and to do so in a way that the final level of GDP was not so high that it threatened the ecological integrity of the planet or forced upon us the use of unacceptable technologies. In turn, these low rates of growth require that heightened attention be given to within-country distributional concerns. This follows from the assumption that people are willing to tolerate higher levels of income inequality when their absolute incomes are increasing rapidly, but are less tolerant of inequality when their absolute incomes are growing slowly or not at all, or are shrinking.

The material covered in Sections II.A and II.B.2 suggests that it is not clear that economic growth must of *necessity* slow as dramatically as called for in the ideal scenario. On examination neither biogeophysical limits, limits to technological innovation, limits due to

⁷ This Assessment of our distributional goals is based largely on conditions in the currently industrialized countries. As noted earlier, the process of economic growth should allow the developing countries to achieve that level of distributional equity currently enjoyed in the industrial countries, as they achieve the levels of per capita GDP that the industrial countries reached in 1960.

⁸ If we assume an average household size of 2.5 persons, average annual household incomes in 2150 would be about \$175,000 and \$70,000 for the top and the bottom quintiles.

⁹ Actually, as Boxes IA-22 and IA-23 show, growth rates in Scenario 5 vary over the 150 years, being higher in the early decades and declining to zero by 2150.

complexity, nor limits imposed by growing inequality appeared to be so consequential that ingenuity, planning and leadership should not be mobilized to allow per capita GDP to continue to grow over the period of concern at levels comparable to historical levels, say between 1% - 2% per year.¹⁰

Absent the argument from necessity, the case for making a commitment to greater distributional equity must be based more heavily on preference. What light might the material presented thus far throw on the question of the extent of people's preference for greater income equality?

For those, like me, who feel strongly that a more economically equal society would be a more desirable one, the material presented in the three preceding sections presents a challenge. The survey data in Section II.B.3 suggest that large numbers of people tend to believe that the current distribution of income is unfair, and that there is a high degree of concern about the prospects of growing inequality. But there appears to be very little support for those policies that would actually *reduce* inequality.¹¹ This conclusion is reinforced by our review of policy proposals in Section II.B.4. The most redistributive of the policy packages that have any political support today are those of the liberals, which emphasize training and education. But as we saw, the real impact of these policies is likely very small. The more strongly redistributive policies advanced by the Progressives and the Greens are not in contention as serious proposals.

In short, it's difficult to make a case that large numbers of people would consider an 80/20 ratio of 2.5 to be a desirable, credible and compelling real-world policy goal.

¹⁰ The reference scenario, Scenario 1, shows global per capita income growing at 1.5% annually in 2050 and falling to 1.1% annually by 2150.

¹¹ We focus in this Assessment on survey results for Americans. It's true that Europeans show more support for redistributive policies, but they also *have* less inequitable distributions of income. It's not clear from the survey data how strongly they would support *further* reductions in income inequality. An important question, discussed in Section II.D below, is whether or not in coming decades Europe is more likely to adopt American social and economic norms, or vice-versa.

Of course, conditions could change. If the Progressive forecasts of economic crisis or the Green forecasts of ecological crisis come to appear more likely, then support for more egalitarian economic policies would be likely to grow. Further, it's not inconceivable that new religious or socio-cultural movements that embrace egalitarian values could come to global prominence, even in the absence of economic or ecological instability.

Our review of possible limits to growth in Section II.A suggests that continued economic growth need not generate critically dangerous ecological instability, at least over the coming 150 years and possibly much longer. In Section II.D we address the possibility that continued growth under conditions of globalization could lead to greater economic instability, which, in the extreme, could be a barrier to continued growth. In the immediately following section, II.C, we consider a possible candidate for the sort of socio-cultural movement noted above that could embrace egalitarian values, even in the absence of necessity. This is the global Green movement, which for simplicity I identify here with the scenario of Green sustainability. At the conclusion of that section we revisit and assess our ideal scenario, identified earlier as the combination of quantitative Scenario 5 and the narrative scenario of Green sustainability.