

# The American Labor Congress and the Welfare State: A Historical Perspective, 1935-2024

The American Labor Congress (ALC) is a major player in the development of the welfare state in the United States. This article explores the history of the ALC and its role in shaping the welfare state, from its founding in 1935 to the present day.

## The Origins of the ALC

The ALC was founded in 1935 by the merger of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). The AFL was a federation of craft unions, while the CIO was a federation of industrial unions. The merger of the two organizations created a powerful labor federation that represented workers from all sectors of the economy.



## American Labor, Congress, and the Welfare State, 1935–2024 by Tracy Roof

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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The ALC's mission was to promote the interests of working people through collective bargaining, legislation, and political action. The ALC played a major role in the passage of the Social Security Act of 1935, which established a system of old-age insurance, unemployment insurance, and aid to families with dependent children.

### **The ALC and the New Deal**

The ALC was a strong supporter of the New Deal policies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The New Deal was a series of programs designed to combat the Great Depression and promote economic recovery. The ALC supported New Deal programs that created jobs, such as the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps.

The ALC also supported New Deal programs that expanded social welfare programs, such as the Social Security Act. The ALC believed that these programs were essential to protecting the interests of working people and their families.

### **The ALC and the Cold War**

The ALC played a major role in the Cold War, which was the period of tension between the United States and the Soviet Union from 1947 to 1991. The ALC supported the Truman Doctrine, which committed the United States to supporting free peoples who were resisting communism. The ALC also supported the Marshall Plan, which provided economic aid to Western Europe to help rebuild after World War II.

The ALC's support for the Cold War was based on the belief that communism was a threat to the American way of life. The ALC believed that the welfare state was an important part of the fight against

communism, as it provided a safety net for working people and their families.

## **The ALC and the Great Society**

The ALC was a strong supporter of the Great Society programs of President Lyndon B. Johnson. The Great Society was a series of programs designed to address the problems of poverty, racial inequality, and environmental degradation. The ALC supported Great Society programs that expanded social welfare programs, such as Medicare, Medicaid, and Head Start.

The ALC believed that the Great Society programs were essential to protecting the interests of working people and their families. The ALC also believed that the Great Society programs would help to create a more just and equitable society.

## **The ALC and the Neoliberal Era**

The ALC has faced challenges in the neoliberal era, which began in the 1980s. Neoliberalism is a political and economic ideology that emphasizes free markets, deregulation, and privatization. The ALC has opposed neoliberal policies that have led to cuts in social welfare programs and the decline of unions.

The ALC has also faced challenges from globalization, which has led to the loss of manufacturing jobs in the United States. The ALC has supported policies that promote fair trade and protect the rights of workers.

## **The ALC and the Future of the Welfare State**

The ALC continues to play a major role in the development of the welfare state in the United States. The ALC is committed to protecting the interests of working people and their families. The ALC believes that the welfare state is an essential part of a just and equitable society.

The ALC has identified several challenges that the welfare state faces in the 21st century. These challenges include:

- The aging of the population
- The rise of income inequality
- The decline of unions
- The globalization of the economy

The ALC is working to address these challenges and ensure that the welfare state continues to meet the needs of working people and their families.

The ALC has been a major player in the development of the welfare state in the United States. The ALC has supported policies that expand social welfare programs and protect the rights of workers. The ALC continues to play a major role in the development of the welfare



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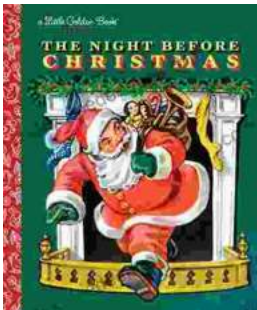
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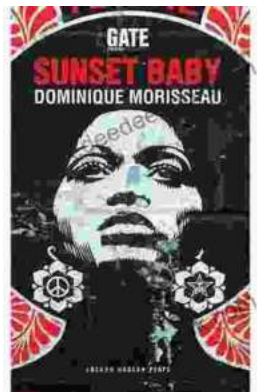
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