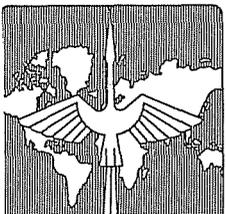


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# A Farewell to Welfare

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# **A Farewell to Welfare**

Reflections on the Political  
Function of Social Welfare in  
the Philippines

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## PROMOTING DEPENDENCE OR SELF-RELIANCE

J.B.W. Kuitenbrouwer

### INTRODUCTION

This analysis is the result of a study undertaken in the Philippines in the course of 1975. Fieldwork was preceded and followed by a series of meetings with officials of the Department of Social Welfare and of other Departments, as well as with scholars of the University of the Philippines and of the Catholic University. In addition, I visited the province of Antique in order to acquire first-hand knowledge of the situation and problems and of the government programmes for rural development and social welfare. This visit helped me to verify the findings of a number of studies on the dynamics of rural/urban relationships and the processes that generate various forms of social disorganization. A second visit to the Bicol River Basin Project and the Department of Social Welfare in Naga gave an idea of government attempts to develop an integrated approach to regional and area development and of the role of the Social Welfare Department in that approach. A third visit to the slum area of Tondo in Greater Manila provided more direct understanding of the nature of problems that displaced peasants face upon migration to the Metropolis and of the ways in which the Department of Social Welfare cooperates with other departments in helping the new urban population to solve its problems.

### THEORY AND PRACTICE OF SOCIAL WELFARE IN THE HISTORICAL PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT

It has been suggested that the nature and scope of social welfare depends upon the state of development of a society as well as on the (corresponding) socio-cultural framework, the historical origin of its services, the perception of its needs; and on the priority given to such services.

Prior to conquest by the Spaniards and the development of feudal society, the small scattered local communities of the Philippines were basically self-sufficient and self-reliant, and community solidarity and mutual aid were a natural feature of communities of people, marked by a relatively high degree of equality and cohesiveness. Service from people to people within the communities was a direct outcome of the low level of production and productivity. People who were faced with common problems relied upon, and supported, each other. As feudal society

developed during the Spanish period, economic, social and political inequalities emerged and reinforced each other, and poverty developed together with the concentration of political and economic power and wealth. As the generation of poverty is inherent in the growth of a feudal order, there is a need to develop values and social mechanisms that will meet the requirements of society. The view grows that poverty is inevitable, that resignation to the will of God is a virtue, and that it is the task of the rich to have compassion and to help the poor whenever poverty becomes manifest (in the disintegration of family and community life). Welfare is entrusted to the church and to that organization that it inspires. Privatization of the social welfare function grew during the American Period in which individual responsibility of the citizens was emphasized, in (natural) correspondence with the ideal of individual freedom and initiative. Thus, social welfare is increasingly perceived, not as the responsibility of the organized community as a whole, but as the task of private groups of citizens, whether religiously or otherwise inspired.

The patron-client relationship that is required and strengthened by the feudal social and economic dominance-dependence relationships, became modernized with the development of the monetary economy. The growth of the economy during the American period prior to independence was particularly characterized by the expanded production of agricultural export commodities, which led to an increase of poverty. Small and medium-scale industries which developed during the feudal period were prevented from expanding, or disappeared under the pressure of imports of foreign goods. This impeded the development of an organic relationship between industry and agriculture, heightened the pressure on land, and incited further growth of dependency (e.g. sharecropping, rent increase, indebtedness). Further breakdown of this organic relationship in the context of the development of a feudal agrarian structure and the subsequent dependent modernization, blocked the growth of a diversified productive structure and generated a variety of improductive forms of economic activity (e.g. usury, intermediaries, speculation). It also induced habits which are too easily analyzed from a merely moralistic point of view while ignoring the historical conditions which had engendered them, as well as the social security function of the State as provider of work and income (Samir Amin: *Critique de la Theorie du Sousdeveloppement*, 1970). Such habits can only be overcome insofar as government officials become directly accountable to the people whom they are supposed to serve. Manila, as the political and

administrative centre during the colonial period, continues to concentrate new functions and services; external economies accumulate which, since Independence, make it the place where industrialization, particularly by way of import substitution, will be concentrated.

Since Independence, with the aggravation of poverty, the State is gradually taking over part of the functions of private groups and agencies which become grouped in the Social Welfare Administration. In 1968, this Administration was converted into a full-fledged Department. As the impoverished's perception of poverty as a mass phenomenon becomes more articulate, strong pressures develop to re-orient the functions of the Social Welfare Department. Thus new views emerged suggesting that social welfare and social work should cease to provide mere relief and be turned into instruments to help the poorest part of the population to constructively face their problems and to develop self-reliance instead of accepting and deepening their dependence on the State. The growing insistence on self-reliance by people and the communities in which they live and work is engendered by various pressures. One is that, as the capacity of the State to expand the funding of welfare services is limited in view of the priority requirement allocated to economic growth, self-reliance is not desirable but necessary. The pressure for self-reliance heightens as budgetary limitations develop and economic expenditures in the more restricted sense come first. Another pressure may arise from the growing insight that development cannot be equated with economic growth by principally relying on the stimulus of foreign and national investments in the modern industrial sector, concentrated in Manila and a few other major urban centers. Genuine national development implies the fullest mobilization and utilization of the creative and productive potential of the mass of the Filipino people, whose effective opportunities for participation in the development of their own society have been blocked by the uneven access to resources and opportunities in the rural areas and agriculture, resulting in massive underutilization and waste of manpower, as well as by the nature of the post-independence process of industrialization through capital-intensive import substitution. The combined impact of rural stagnation and the negative effects of the import substitution policies with their bias against intensive use of labour (even where it would be cheaper to rely on it at market prices) have been analyzed in the ILO study: *Sharing in Development*. A principal conclusion of this study is that the Philippines can only break with the spectre of relative stagnation and uneven growth between agriculture and indus-

try, city and countryside and central and peripheral regions, if the path of narrow unbalanced growth is abandoned and a sustained effort is undertaken to transform the prevailing pattern and to restructure society, so as to ensure the fullest utilization of the population in productive activity. Three-quarters of the population live in the rural areas, and the realization of people's participation in national government requires above all an inclusive and vigorous process of agrarian transformation. Redistribution of land has now started, but only a major redistribution of economic, social and political power will ensure that the benefits accruing from a break-through in the modernization of agriculture will be shared by the rural masses, that they will be liberated from the bondage of dependency, and that their immense but suppressed potential of creativity will be released.

Technological change, vigorously pursued by a multiplicity of productivity programmes (e.g. the package approach to inputs, mechanization, new management techniques), should be preceded or accompanied by an inclusive programme of effective equalization of access and use of land, water and other resources. There is abundant evidence that a modernization approach that is not embedded in a transformational approach is a major cause of misery in rural areas. It becomes manifest in the development of antagonism between the rich and the poor and in the forced migration of peasant families to the towns where they are bound to become unproductive producers (joining the ranks of the unorganized service sector) and consumers.

There is good reason to stress the immense waste to the country of the massive underutilization of manpower, as those who do not or cannot work still need to consume. Rather than serving as productive consumption (as basis for productive work), such consumption only serves to keep people alive, without helping them to develop themselves and to contribute to the creation of wealth for the economic and social development of their local community and the country. Full utilization of marginalized peoples' creative and productive potential entails significant savings, apart from the opportunity it gives them to live a more human life. The increase and generalization of productive activity will not only enable the *magsasaka* to meet his basic needs but will go beyond these by improving individual conditions as well as those of the community. A broad advance in production and productivity not only allows for further development of the economy; it permits the people to create and to contribute to meeting their expanding needs and requirements in education, health, housing, recreation and social

security provisions. Participation of the mass of the population in productive production in the rural areas, thanks to the combination of agrarian transformation with agricultural modernization, creates the basis for self-reliance. Thus, growth and equity, employment and self-reliance, which are the major objectives of the Four-Year Plan, are not mutually exclusive but preconditional to each other's development. Only such development is capable of lowering the pressure by the impoverished for 'free' or heavily subsidized services from the State. It enables communities to assume responsibility in meeting their own needs and in solving their own problems by relying on themselves. Such an orientation towards self-reliance and self-management, which is part of the long-term perspective planning of the Department of Social Welfare, requires the development of a firm material basis in the communities. As such an orientation develops, the State can gradually withdraw from the direct administration of services and limit its task to the general orientation, coordination, supervision, training and matching of the communities' efforts.

Such a perspective may be qualified as Utopian. It may be argued, however, that the vision of Utopia is a necessary condition for its ceasing to be a Utopia, and that to reject such a vision is an implicit subscription to the status quo which condemns the mass of the people, not only in the Philippines but in other Asian countries, to the paralysis of their creative and productive potential, both in consciousness and in action.

While national industry can only advance if accompanied by a vigorous development of agriculture, agriculture can only advance by the development of industry which supports it by providing the repair facilities, inputs and new equipment, by producing goods to meet the basic needs of the rural population at large, and by organizing the processing of its products. Thus, agriculture and industry are complementary or organically interdependent. Development of the people's motivation to be creative and productive and committed to their community and country is dependent upon the development of a proportional balance in the distribution, not only of resources and of income, but also of goods to use that income satisfactorily. A decline in real income among the mass of the population prevents them from developing commitment and creativity, as it deprives them of a fair reward for their work and of the means to reap the fruits of their work. It is suggested that appeals to such a commitment gain in force if there is a corresponding development in the distribution of material opportunities.

This implies that in national development policy not only do standards need to be set for minimum consumption but also for maximum income and consumption. It may well be argued that a growing concentration of income tends to induce a pattern of production of goods that is geared to such an income structure. It tends to induce the production of an increasingly diversified package of conspicuous consumer goods for the higher income groups. Insofar as such a productive pattern is likely to be capital intensive, it limits employment and reduces a possible re-distribution of income to workers whose demand is for basic goods which can be produced with more labour-intensive income-spreading methods. A process may thus be set in motion which is accumulative. This can be counteracted, however, by the vigorous development of small and medium-size industries, both to support the development of agriculture as well as for export, as appears to be the government's proposition. If concentration on labour-intensive industries for export is principally pursued by foreign investment in association with national entrepreneurs in order to make use of cheap labour, then the result is likely to enhance profit maximization by investors at the expense of the working population. The latter would only benefit if it receives fair remuneration for its work and its income increases with the increase in productivity, rather than being faced with inflation resulting from over-emphasis on exports at the expense of basic consumer goods and services. Inflation is also promoted by rises in production costs as the Philippines become more integrated into the prevailing framework of international relations which limit the freedom of Third World countries to allocate their resources in accordance with their own national needs and those of the mass of their population. Firm support to small and medium-size industry has a profound bearing on social welfare, insofar as it helps to generate employment and diminishes the government's need to continue its relief function. Insofar as the process of concentration of economic power intensifies polarization of income and leads to a decline in labour utilization, however, the functional necessity of social welfare will increase in order to counteract the marginalizing effects of uneven economic growth. Thus, the actual function of social welfare is closely related to changes in the objective conditions prevailing in the patterns of production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in a society.

The growth pattern of services (e.g. health services, higher education, recreation, transport, market centres) tends to correspond to the evolving pattern of income distribution and the organized commodity sectors to which

they are closely linked. Most *barrio* people still depend on the *herbolario* (herb-doctor) and the *hilot* (midwife). It is suggested that, insofar as the barrios are not profitable for the establishment of private medical practice, traditional practitioners should be allowed to function. Dominant values corresponding to established interests, however, question the validity of such forms of traditional practice. This was recently illustrated when, inspired by a lady doctor-pharmacologist who had not forgotten the wisdom and validity in the traditional use of herbs in her home region, the planners in the Bicol River Basic Development Authority developed a proposal to promote the activation of these traditional forms of self-reliance and met with stiff resistance from a variety of established scientific and professional associations. This is not to argue the superiority of indigenous medicine, but to stress its historical and experimental validity (it served the people for centuries long before the Spanish conquest) and the danger of its destruction. It is opposed not because it does not serve (*it serves the people's real needs*), but because it does not meet the requirements of the commodity economy (i.e. that it serves to maximize profit). It has been argued that it is the massive exodus of doctors and nurses which is responsible for the lack of adequate coverage of the country, but this explains neither the high concentration of medical practices and services in Manila nor the emphasis on curative at the expense of preventive medicine. Both forms of concentration may be rooted in the fact that they are more profitable. Thus, services in a 'free market' context may become concentrated and developed not in the function of the people's needs but as they meet the requirements of profit. Consequently, higher income groups are naturally the best served.

This is only one dimension of the interpretation. The other is that the idea of the superiority of western medical science (this is not to question its validity and the need to make it accessible to all people) is part of the totality of dominant values in which anything that belongs to the indigenous or native patrimonium is consciously or unconsciously rejected as being inferior and negative.

It has been suggested earlier that fundamental transformation of the agrarian structure and organization and of the industrial sector is necessary to enable the full utilization of people's productive and creative capacity, a more equal income distribution which enables the mass of the people to meet their basic needs and aspirations, as well as a more equal distribution and use of services.

A generalized upsurge of agricultural productivity would generate work for all those people in the service sector in rural areas which now provides work (but only at a low level of income) for about half the people in the national 'unorganized' service sector (e.g. small operations in transport, repair, maintenance, marketing). The growth of these services into productive operations requires, however, that the government supports them and does not allow the 'modern' capital-intensive sector to take over and gradually monopolize such activities. It also implies that the government should provide well-directed and cheap capital to allow the mass of small operators to cease their dependency in which they have to borrow capital for the initiation and expansion of their operations against high or even exorbitant interest rates. Fegan has called the informal, traditional sector of small-scale operations the equivalent in the secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy of the tenancy system in the primary. As to the urban sector where the mass of newcomers are engaged in small-scale operations in the service sector, to secure a minimum perspective for them would imply that the government should not erect any barriers to their self-supporting activities and should allow them to enter the service sector. A further step would be to actively help them to improve, upgrade, modernize and rationalize their operations. Small-scale, scattered, atomized operations can be rational, efficient and productive, but to take such a position may too easily serve to justify the promotion of rapid-growth large-scale operators which by-pass the mass of poor people. It is decidedly more difficult for the government to help the poor to organize gradually and step-by-step, a process in which it would encounter the natural opposition of vested interests (as is the case in the Land Reform Programme). A necessary consequence of excluding the poor from the firm support of government would be that they are looked upon as a liability and even as a threat to the existing order. To support them may well imply that government has to discourage the initiation or expansion of large-scale modern commercial enterprises (e.g. marketing, transport), whose monopolization practices would be bound to further marginalize the displaced peasant population who have become slum dwellers. A new approach by government implies identification with the needs and interests of the people who have become poor through no fault of their own. It also implies that the Government dissociates itself from the reflexes and conditions of the rich who consider the poor as a liability rather than an asset in the development of Philippine society, and relies on the immense reservoir of resilience and creative

power which has not been broken by the adversities that they have had to face during the long colonial period and since political Independence.

Such a position by the government would imply the need to study the poor's own strategy for survival, self-reliance and self-improvement. This may well mean planners and professionals must engage in an act of humility and realize that they can only serve the people if they undo themselves of prejudices and pre-conceived notions acquired during their socialization and professional education. They may well perceive and value as superior all that is foreign and as inferior all that is Filipino, by-passing the fact that the vicissitudes of the past were not due to the people but to the denationalizing forces of the colonial process. In this sense, the struggle to develop Filipino society is a struggle to develop a genuine national consciousness which will induce the growth of a spirit and practice of self-reliance among the whole Filipino people. To develop such self-reliance, however, requires equalization in the access to and use of society's resources. In this conception, social welfare as a relief operation, expressing the forces of the past which still shape the present, will be dispensable in future, insofar as poverty as a specific product of the colonial process and its aftermath will disappear.

It cannot be sufficiently stressed that government attempts to make its development operations responsive to the needs of the people are first and last determined by whether they truly meet those needs and aspirations. The people themselves not only have to be consulted but should also play a major role in making and shaping their own lives and environment. This position views the State as a service organ whose function is to support and strengthen the process of the people's own growth, of their well-being and welfare, the development of their potential and of their personal being. This position rejects the approach which narrows the problem to manpower training in function of the prevailing economic order and the requirements that this imposes (vocational and technical training) in dissociation from broader education for life.

In the rush to accelerate rural development, institutions and new forms of organizations are introduced which, in terms of purpose and consistency, appear at first sight to be perfect instruments to promote both productivity and equity. An example is the government's cooperative programme (*samahang nayon*). It is not likely, however, that tenants and sharecroppers will wholeheartedly associate with such a programme unless they are free to

choose and experience it as beneficial.

Despite their poverty -- rather, *because* of it -- they are reluctant to be involved in any change that may upset the precarious balance of forces by which they presently survive. They are in no hurry to move upward, and will generally opt for the status quo.

This reluctance to accept the land-consolidation plan without proof of its viability makes good sense both to them and to an impartial observer; fears will not be banished by fiat or decree. Instead, planners must deal with the people's apprehensions in an intelligent, respectful manner.

Given the negative attitude of farmers toward the land-consolidation scheme, it must be introduced with strategic care, lest it be rejected without trial, or, worse still, be accepted and then confirm the worst fears of the conservative. (R.C. Salazar and F. Lynch, S.J.: *Farmers of the River Basin's Land Consolidation Project Area: Nowhere to go but Up -- and in No Great Hurry to Get There*; Social Survey Research Unit, Bicol River Basin Development Programme, May 1974).

It may be asked whether new programmes make creative use of the experiences and own forms of organization of the rural people. These forms of organization, based on kinship and reciprocity, have been born out of necessity and common interest (in the Naga region, the tenants spoke of themselves as *partidarios*; one may also think of the people who are compadres to each other or of irrigation associations and of a variety of self-help societies). Such groups and forms of cooperation and mutual aid are the expression of solidarity and unity in (small-scale) planning and action, in confronting a harsh and often hostile world. They are as a rule forms of organization in which the barrio people, faced with serious insecurity (e.g. the landlord, indebtedness and other forms of misfortune) have given strength to their pre-colonial unity of kin. Making use of them, they have developed remarkably efficient mechanisms of social security and social welfare. If *samahan* has a common root with *kasama*, it means that the conception of togetherness which implies sharing and reciprocity has its roots in the common interest of the associate producers, bound by kinship and territorial proximity. It suggests that development starts from the people and where they are (in terms of their own consciousness, experience, values and interests). They will not easily give up their own organization, which has helped them in times of adversity, for new institutions, unless these prove valid in improving their security and perspective. Thus, they may well make use of government programmes insofar as these are beneficial to them (e.g. the

compact farming programme in the Bicol River Basin Project which is based on the pre-existing cooperative group organizations).

This is not a romantic plea for the preservation of traditional institutions, but it serves to stress that successful transformation of the traditional patterns of production and cooperation and social welfare is determined by enhancement of the original function of such organizations; namely, to meet the needs of the partners and their families. Development obviously implies scale-enlargement. No large-scale capitalization (e.g. irrigation; drainage; levelling; dam construction; fish ponds; forestation; construction of roads, services, homes) can take place without the conversion and rationalization of multiple unproductive small-scale activities into integrated and coordinated operations which allow for self-reliant economic growth as well as for social development supported by such economic growth. But people will only be motivated to transcend the safety boundaries of their own small community and to work with and for the development of the community beyond their own little world, if and when they receive an equitable share in the total product which is the fruit of their toil, and if and when sacrifices and burdens are equally distributed and they receive fair treatment (e.g. terms of trade, prices, taxes). This implies the elimination of the more visible direct forms of dependency, such as those practices which limit the peasant's fair share (e.g. parasitic intermediaries and usurers) as presently pursued by government. It also implies transformation of the relationship between industry and agriculture and city and countryside and the allocation of resources, not in function of profit maximization (e.g. real estate speculations in the urban areas), but in line with the needs and potentialities of the people.

Thus, the transformation of the spirit and practice of *bayanihan*, to secure a broadening and diversification in production and a rise in productivity and more advanced forms of social development, requires transformation from a highly unequal monopolistic control and use of resources to de-monopolized democratic control and use of resources.

#### POVERTY, SOCIAL WORK AND DEVELOPMENT

Pre-colonial Philippine communities, although characterized by low level of productive forces (small-scale organization, minimal differentiation of functions, primitive technology), knew neither poverty nor starvation, although there was a certain degree of differentiation

in status control and possession. Maintenance of the well-being and welfare of all was the responsibility of all and mutual aid was a 'natural' feature of community life. Production was for the people, and not people for production. Poverty emerged with the rise in productive forces during the Spanish and American colonial periods. The process of polarization has intensified and widened since Independence. Although the nation is independent politically, economically, socially and culturally, it remains highly dependent on the interests in the dominant countries which shape its society, and which do not function in the first instance to meet the need of the Filipino people to use resources primarily for self-development, for the improvement of their livelihood and wellbeing. It is only recently that the movement towards economic decolonization has acquired major impetus and that countries of the Third World have effectively joined in forging common policies and actions, so as to ensure conditions for balanced self-reliant national development. Measures to ensure equality, however, are far from complete. Also, although substantive improvement in exchange relations may strengthen the balance-of-payments positions of Third World countries, this does not automatically imply self-sustained dynamic national development. Such development requires the fundamental transformation of the internal social and economic structure so that the gains of increased strength and income from equal external relations of exchange can be productively used and will support a resource allocation that will meet the people's needs and free their motivation and creative potential (Bettelheim; 'Theoretical Comments', Appendix I to Arghiri Emmanuel; *Unequal Exchange*, 1972).

Emphasis on the creative use of indigenous forms of social organization and experience and practices is shown in the Instructor's Manual for volunteer barrio workers, which is used in the samahang nayon operation. Volunteers are asked to give the barrio people a full presentation of the history of the cooperative movement in the rest of the world (England, France, Germany, Belgium, Japan, Taiwan and Israel), but there is no provision for analysing the rich experiences of the rural people of the Philippines. This conveys a particular form of separation of national identity and national consciousness. It idealizes the experience of other countries in which the cooperative movement has played a minor role upon its adaptation to and incorporation into the prevailing economic structure, while wholly underplaying or even ignoring the ways in which the Filipino people have shown great resourcefulness and evolved their own solutions in their struggle for survival. There is an urgent need to

replace the mechanistic transfer of foreign formulae, approaches and methodologies by developing indigenous forms of social practice and organization, which draw upon the historical experiences and practices of the people.

Fals Borda, a distinguished Latin American social scientist, has directed an UNRISD project on cooperative experiences in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The conclusions of that project, synthesized in *Ciencia Propia y Colonialismo Intellectual* (1970), are that Third World countries should not imitate foreign experiences which have emerged in wholly different contexts and that such imitation is bound to benefit the few at the expense of the many. The UNRISD study brings home the point that cooperatives which are developed in a context of inequality tend to increase rather than diminish such inequality. From this study it may be concluded that a redistribution of resources in the rural areas, so that the mass of the people not only carries the burden but fully shares in the fruits of its work, should have priority over all other programmes, as it serves as the principal instrument and leverage in liberating people's creative and productive potentials.

This position is well-expressed in the section on agrarian reforms and cooperatives in the barrio workers' Manual. In my view, land reform should not be limited to rice and corn land but should also include other lands reserved for the production of industrial inputs and of export crops (e.g. sugar, coconut, banana). Cooperativization of the latter would ensure to many tenants and workers, who are now often in precarious conditions, control over the resources they mobilize. It would be a major advance in the democratization of hitherto concentrated oligarchical power, and would permit the government to productively utilize part of the profits for the purpose of national development. That cooperativization does not need to imply a drop in productivity or need necessarily affect the balance of payments has been demonstrated by the Peruvian example. Thus, national development, it is proposed, presupposes transformation of the twin forces of external and internal structures that now impede the realization of the people's collective national and individual potential.

During the Spanish colonial period the Filipino people were socialized into believing that poverty was an act of God and had therefore to be accepted without protest. During the American colonial period, the dominant view, strongly infused through the values propagated in the educational system which promoted individual opportunity and mobility, was that all people have equal opportunities

(each for himself and God for all). This partly reflected the historical process of settlement in the United States and the corresponding conception of pioneer and individual achievement and initiative. On the other hand, it served to regulate relations between the colonial ruler and the ruled in such a way that the unequal structure could be maintained by the idealization of equality. Only a minority was coopted into sharing the privileges of the old and new colonial elites. Thus the feudal structure was not abolished but modernized (Owen; 'Philippine Economic Development and American Economic Policy, a Reappraisal', *Compadre Colonialism*). While during the Spanish colonial period the responsibility to take care of the poor was with the church and connected religious associations, during the American period, it shifted to private initiative although the religious inspiration was maintained. Social welfare was still a community function, entrusted to the establishment, which had the obligation to take care of the poor. With the coming of Independence, the patronage function shifted to the State; although private groups and associations continue to operate, they increasingly maintain their patronage function with the support of the State. The religious 'defence' of poverty has faded to the background in dominant values, being replaced by a perception of society in which poverty is attributed to individual characteristics or to lack of opportunities for the 'underprivileged'.

Apolinario Mabini, the principal theoretician of the Filipino revolution, said that 'one of the noble reasons for democratic government is to end "the elevation of the few over the degradation of the many" which, by the way, is the essence of oligarchical society.' The insight that poverty and wealth are the results of social arrangements, that they are an outcome of an historical process of formation of social and institutional relations which have benefitted the few and impoverished the many, cannot but have a profound bearing on the analysis of poverty and on actions to reduce and abolish it. The perception of poverty as being the result of individual characteristics of individual people or groups of people, i.e. the poor, represents the dominant values that correspond to dominant oligarchical interests. This perception is not limited to the privileged few, but is also acquired by those who are less privileged than the few but more privileged than the masses. Let us therefore call them the less/more privileged. It is this group in society who, not primarily because of inherited wealth or power or 'connections', but often through hard work as well as through education, has managed to acquire a

modicum of welfare but whose condition if not infrequently insecure or precarious. These people have good reason to ascribe their relative social achievements to their sense for modernity, entrepreneurial initiative, dynamism, innovativeness, intelligence, diligence, thrift and confidence. They associate with the oligarchical group in ascribing to the poor a set of properties such as: traditional orientation; apathy; lack of foresight, initiative or imagination; poor intelligence; laziness; wastefulness (think of the critique of wasteful spending by the poor during the fiesta); distrust and conformism. The lingering dependence by the poor on the religious interpretation of poverty, deeply internalized from the Spanish colonial period onward, through which the friars were able to secure the necessary ideological support to the dominant feudal order of which the church was the main support and beneficiary (see Rizal's writings), has been reinforced by the fact that the impoverished have as a rule also internalized the new dominant values which attribute their state of poverty to themselves and not to the social arrangements of which they are part. It may be argued that this is a necessity from the point of view of the privileged, insofar as it serves to stabilize the prevailing structure of social relations.

These perceptions of the origins of modernity and traditionalism serve in a variety of ways to explain and legitimize unequal relations. One way in which the dominant perception, corresponding to dominant interests which oppose modernity to traditionality, is expressed in the analysis of urban/social relations. Modernization is equated with the city, whereas the rural areas are assumed to be prevented from development by the traditionality of the rural people. Such a view ignores the fact that the urban centres have historically served as pump priming mechanisms to promote their own growth and expansion by extraction from the rural areas which supplied them with raw materials produced at low cost, with a reservoir of cheap labour, and with profits from production (e.g. sugar) and trade on unequal terms and usurious money lending. Thus, the relative stagnation and impoverishment of the countryside should not be imputed to the 'nature' of its people, but to the relations between the city and the countryside in which the development of the one is premised on the underdevelopment of the other. Yet another way in which poverty and wealth or progress and stagnation are intertwined is in the relations between the so-called 'formal' and 'informal' sectors. It may be argued that the relative stagnation of the 'informal' sector (small-scale production, indigenous technology, labour-intensive productivity and low wages) cannot be explained by itself but only by its

relation to the 'formal' sector (association with foreign investment, capital-intensive foreign technology, high productivity, higher wages for some). Rather than due to the dynamism, entrepreneurial initiative and superior qualities of owners and managers, the advance of the formal sector is due to the superior opportunities and preferential treatment which gives those associated with it a chance to develop their talents.

It is suggested that the sets of properties which are ascribed to the poor represent the ideological legitimation of the evolving underlying structure of asymmetric relationships. It is undoubtedly true that poor people phenomenologically manifest the negative characteristics imputed to them in a variety of degrees, but this is no reason to equate them with the characteristics they exhibit. What is needed is to examine the origin of these characteristics and what they signify. Rather than being inherent properties, they often prove to be expressions of the ways in which the poor react to the conditions imposed on them and to the social arrangements which produce these conditions. What appears for example, as apathy and lack of dynamism in the eyes of a landlord, may be a form of self-defence and self-protection by the exploited sharecropper. Why should he work beyond what is needed to keep his family alive and to fulfil his obligations if the landlord appropriates a disproportionate share of his produce? The old half/half or one/two *tercios* arrangements, still widely practiced, show the tenacity of the feudal social and economic production relations. Thus, a tenant's lack of commitment may be interpreted as a tacit form of protest as he feels that other means of expression are not available to him in view of his precarious condition, which does not allow him to take risk. (See Rizal's vivid analysis of the ideology of the colonial masters to justify their position: 'Believe it? Just as I believe the Holy Gospel! The native is so lazy!'... 'Quite right', Mr. Lanuza agreed promptly, 'there is nobody lazier anywhere in the whole wide world than the natives of these parts.' *Noli Me Tangere*, the Leon Maria Guerrero translation, 1973.)

The distrust and forms of subtle opposition by peasants vis-à-vis government officials and professionals from outside appear to be a quite rational reaction in view of the exaction and discrimination that they have been subjected to. The word 'peasant', although not commonly used in the Philippines, is used here for the mass of the toiling people, as the word 'farmer' presumes full incorporation in a modern market and commercial economy and the absence or transcendence of feudal or semi-feudal forms of social and productive relations. Rizal, in his novels *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*,

is very precise in distinguishing between people with regard to the use of resources. He clearly distinguishes between the *hacendero* (landlord, larger owner), the *aparcero* (sharecropper) and *labrador* (labourer); the small cultivators or the toiling people in general (*mahihina*) he calls *campesinos* or *paisanos*. He does not create an idealized picture which suggests equal conditions and opportunities ('all are farmers'), but lucidly conveys the colonial condition of the people. In view of this deep identification with their sufferings, he is able to use the colonial language to forcefully denounce the colonial condition.

The lack of initiative which is usually ascribed to the poor bypasses the concrete reality which shows that, given the limitations set to their self-realization, they demonstrate high degrees of resilience and imagination. Their need to survive and their will to live under the daily burden of frustration, bring these virtues forth out of sheer necessity. In view of their limitations, they cannot take the same initiatives as the upper and middle-classes, and their values as to what is good and valid do not necessarily conform to the dominant values which societal norms and regulations oblige them to exhibit. Poor people cannot be expected to change their values unless material conditions make it safe for them to change themselves. Their existence and their being are not identical, and they can only develop the latter insofar as they overcome the constraints that mark their concrete situations (existence) and transform the relations which shape their condition.

Poor people tend to rely on structures of informal co-operation and mutual aid which are vital for their survival, livelihood and minimal security. These mechanisms are born out of necessity. If such forms of co-operation are referred to as virtues, such virtues are rooted in material necessity. A related expression of necessity in the poor is their individualism, which varies with the degree and nature of the concrete dependency structure of which they are part. Faced with a situation of scarce resources and limited opportunities, they are induced to view those who are in the same situation (landless tenants, displaced peasants looking for work) as actual or potential competitors. Under prevailing conditions, they have to obtain favours from those who control resources and opportunities, and depend on their patronage. This may prevent them from perceiving their unity of interests with their fellow workers, whom they may view as opponents rather than as allies. Insofar as those in control and power promote the search for favours and a structure of exchange which promotes dependency, the *mahihina* have to look up to the *malaka* or

powerful as their source of salvation. This cultivates their dependency as their vulnerability tends to shape in them a feeling of impotence. It weakens and prevents the growth of a spirit and practice of self-reliance, and their objective condition of poverty tends to promote short-term *ad hoc* action. It also impedes the development of foresight, which is the fruit of a capacity to reflect upon one's condition. Their involvement in small-scale primitive production prevents them from acquiring wider horizons and from seeing the power dormant in the practice of cooperation on a larger scale. Thus, the perception of poverty, infused by dominant interests and values, tends to be re-enforced by the nature of the dependency and productive practices among the mass of poor people. Only the growth of a new consciousness and of theoretical insight into their condition, together with the emergence of a new set of social and production relations, could break this dependency and free the way to self-reliance and self-realization.

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Dominant views and interests have in a variety of ways shaped the theoretical interpretations of social reality as well as the ways of dealing with problems of social reality by social practitioners. Thus, economic theory has been shaped in response to the requirements of the dominant classes, as evidenced in its basic assumption of equilibrium and of the non-relevance of distribution to production, resulting in their consequent separation. Economic theory became a major instrument in the defence of the *status quo*, and served to justify processes which led to underdevelopment and disequilibrium (Gunnar Myrdal: *Economic Theory and Underdeveloped Regions*, London, 1957). *Sociology*, as it developed in reaction to major movements for social transformation in 19th century Europe, served to secure stability and adaptation by legitimizing prevailing dominant norms. *Political science* developed as the study of (prevailing forms of) government which it tends to take for given, ignoring the historico-social processes which have given rise to particular forms of government, thereby precluding the study of relations between societal movements and the need and desirability for transformation of government, in function of people's changing needs and aspirations. *Psychology* developed to reduce people's problems to those of individual existence, supporting the view of society as an aggregate of individuals, living and acting on themselves, rather than as being part of a structured whole of relations by which they are shaped and which they shape in accordance with their specific insertion and position in this whole (Norbert Elias: *Introduction to Uber den prozess der Zivilization, sociogenese and psycho-genetische Untersuchungen*, Bern and Munchen).

Similarly, *psychiatry* served to reduce social to medical problems, thus neutralizing people's reaction to constraints on self-realization by isolating the investigation and understanding of these problems from their societal and social nature and origins (see the studies by Ronald Laing of the London Tavistock Institute on the nature of psychosis and those of Thomas Szasz on the ideological nature of western psychiatry).

*Social work* grew as a professional specialized practice, in response to the problems of the poor in the development of and transition of a rural to an industrial society, first in Europe, then in the United States and other industrializing countries (e.g. Japan). Subsequently, it spread to all earlier colonies when they

faced problems of relative stagnation and uneven growth in agriculture as well as industry and services, with the concomitant phenomenon of polarization in the social structure and in the distribution of income, manifest in mass poverty. Social work training was from its inception strongly oriented towards helping people in their individual problems and needs, to mitigate their poverty and/or to assist them in finding their way. Insofar as people manifest problems, they are helped to adapt and adjust to society as it functions and to the values which support such functioning. People are treated as if their individual problems have no relationship with the nature and movement of society. When at a later stage, with the increase of poverty, group work and community organization are introduced for reasons of efficiency and practicality, the original assumption remains. Individuals, groups or communities are approached (in terms of implicit theoretical premises and in terms of action) as if they are isolated, self-contained units of operation. For theoretical (interpretative, legitimizing) reasons as well as for all practical purposes, the overall societal dynamics and the relations of individual, group and community consciousness, culture, values, problems to the movement of society as a whole (and that between societies), are ignored. In social work, as in the social sciences, the transferability of forms of thinking and action was mechanically assumed to be valid; education, particularly higher education, was judged valid insofar as it faithfully reproduced patterns and forms of knowledge, approaches, and methods and techniques of social and economic organization and management from the industrialized countries. In the case of the Philippines, the United States, the most advanced industrialized country, served as model in view of the particular historical relationships of dominance-dependency.

The study of the social sciences as well as of ways of dealing with social problems (psychology, psychiatry, social work) thus became patterned on that of the industrialized countries. Forms of material production as well as of the production and formation of knowledge and culture tended to be reproduced. The basic assumption is that all sectors of production, particularly industry, have their fixed recipes, in the main determined by technology, which prescribe the input co-efficient matrix and are derived from the input-output tables of industrialized countries. These recipes are supposed to represent a complete cookbook of modern technology, constituting the structure of a fully developed economy which all countries have to follow if they wish to develop. In this view an economy is defined as under-

developed to the extent that it lacks the working parts of the system (Leontieff) which can be acquired by faithfully reproducing the prescriptions for industrialization worked out in the industrialized countries. As the negative effects of such an approach, which promotes high growth, capital-intensive and concentrated industrialization for the benefit of the few, have become visible and serious, a natural counter-movement has arisen within the Third World countries to combine capital with labour-intensive, large-scale with medium-size and small-scale industry, and to ensure the use of more appropriate forms of technology. A movement for intermediate technology has started (Schumacher; 'Industrialization through Intermediate Technology', *Developing the Third World*, 1971). The establishment of the Institute for Small-Scale Industries at the University of the Philippines manifested the necessity to develop new patterns of production which will generate both work and a more even income distribution. It is clear, however, that the scope for intermediate technology depends decisively on a process of demonopolization and democratization in the economic, social and political structure as a whole (Cooper; 'Choice of Techniques and Technological Changes as Problem of Political Economy', *International Social Science Journal*, 1973). There is evidence that there is no inherent compulsion in the technology of production, but that the structure and form of production (e.g. economies of scale) are a function of the specific historically-shaped forms of social, economic and political organization as they become manifest, for instance, in specific forms of market organization (Raj; 'Linkages in Industrialization', 1974). This implies that changes in production and distribution and consumption patterns require social transformations that will enable the mass of the people to be productively and gainfully involved in production, permitting them to share in consumption, without being dependent or parasitic.

Those who do not participate in production may be divided into two categories: those who derive income from the profit which their property generates and who live thanks to the labour of others; and those who cannot work or prefer not to work or to work little as their share in the social product is judged by them to be too low. Social welfare is directed to this latter group. As to the first group, it may be argued that high profits are not necessary for economic growth and that consumption by the majority need not be kept at a minimum in order to permit saving. The classical argument that concentration of income and inequality are indispensable to guarantee saving, is unconvincing in view of the prevailing patterns of unproductive investment (e.g. land and real estate

speculation, investment in trade and costly services and facilities, transfer of profits abroad by investors) and of conspicuous consumption. There is abundant evidence that saving propensities among the well-to-do are low in countries with pronounced unequal income distribution, compared with countries with less concentration of income (Seers; 'What are we Trying to Measure', *Journal of Development Studies*, 1972). There is therefore good reason to argue that a more equal distribution of income would have no negative effects but, on the contrary, would create incentives for growth and would boost growth itself (McNamara, President of the World Bank; *Address to the Board of Governors*, 1972).

Growth and equality are thus mutually dependent on each other. This implies that economic growth and the economic theory which underlies and legitimizes it, cannot be accepted as having any validity in themselves but need to be approached in the wider context of the historical process, the nature of each specific society, and the specific needs and conditions for motivation and self-development of the people at large. This need to deal with economic theory and policy as specific manifestations of historical processes and movements in society and the interests and values which they engender has gained increasing recognition, for example in the attempts within United Nations to perceive development in terms of a unified approach. The UN meetings of Experts on Social Policy and Planning held at Stockholm in 1969, stressed that 'Economic phenomena are in fact social phenomena: they are social in nature, and socially conditioned and have social consequences.' The meeting also concluded that a major pre-requisite for social development was radical change, as rapidly as possible, which would permit the full mobilization of all human and material resources of a country and people's full and dynamic participation in the process of development. Furthermore, development was defined as 'essentially a process of institutional change which was both economic and social in character.' These views and conceptions have subsequently shaped the resolutions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council and General Assembly on a unified approach to development which recommend that:

- conditions be created for growth with equity;
- that all people should participate in the development process;
- that priority should be given to the development of human potentialities; and
- that profound structural reforms should be realized.

These four directions of development are expressive of and dialectically dependent on each other, in theory and in practice. They are indivisible. Thus, no growth

with equity can be imagined without participation by all; participation by all is not possible without the full development of human potential; and no full development of human potential without profound structural transformation. The subscription by the Government of the Philippines to this approach implied a break with the view that development supports processes which simultaneously generate an increasing concentration of wealth and mass poverty. This is the position taken by President Marcos in his statements challenging a monopolistic oligarchical order. It is also that of the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare who draws upon United Nations resolutions in order to formulate an adequate conception of social welfare which ceases to reproduce dominant patterns of theory and practice, but creates new forms which respond to the requirements of Filipino society and to the needs of its own people.

The development criteria subscribed to in the United Nations Forum are, it is submitted, a response to the growing invalidation and irrelevance of hitherto pursued dominant theories and practices of development. They are at the same time a response to the growing pressure for transformation of 'the old society' which has created mass poverty and growing disparities. It has been argued that these conditions are of an explosive nature and that 'unless radical changes occur, these growing disparities cannot be contained for any length of time' (United Nations Committee on Mass Poverty and Employment: *Attack on Mass Poverty and Employment*, 1972). The increasing insistence in theory on participation by all people in the development process may be seen as a reaction to the decreasing possibilities for them to be productively and creatively involved in making and shaping their own lives, community and society. The search for an original approach is not only induced by the pressures for transformation from within Third World countries, but also by reduced credibility of the hitherto idealized 'models' of social organization in industrialized societies. There is a tendency to attribute participation with mysterious properties which, if added as an ingredient to development, would 'make it work'. This bypasses the fact that people in society always do participate in that society. It is not that they have to start to participate, but that the *terms under which they participate* need to be changed.

It has been pointed out that the scope of participation is above all determined by access to, and control over, the means of production and that participation implies sharing in the political process in and through which society, communities and social relations are shaped. It is necessary to expose the myth of the neutral nature of participation as much as it is necessary

to reject that of the neutrality of planning and planners. This myth is evident in the perception of the *magasasaka*, who distinguishes with unmatched sharpness (based not on textbooks but on own life experience) between the condition of the small powerless people, the *mahihina* and that of the *malalakas*, the powerful, on whom they depend. The *magasasaka*'s view brings out the roots and nature of different forms of participation and the types of opportunity they represent. It reflects their dependency. It also conveys the indivisibility of participation. The tenant who is economically dependent on his landlord owes him political fidelity and is forced to choose him as a *compadre/padrino* when a child is born. This depiction of the unity and indivisibility of participation has, it may be alleged, lost its validity; old forms of subordination and allegiance break down as the creation is pursued of a new society which democratizes the nature and structure of social, economic and political relations. The creation of such a society, however, is a process in which the nature and forms of social and production relations can only change in depth, insofar as the people assume a major role in making their own lives and future and share in control over their communities and institutions, so that these adequately respond to their changing needs and aspirations. The government legitimizes itself by supporting such a process and in helping people to realize themselves and their potential. In this sense, participation by the people implies their enhanced capacity to identify and comprehend the nature of their social problems, perceive their real needs, manifest and articulate their claims, organize to promote their legitimate interests, secure conditions for their improved livelihood, and play a decisive role in making and managing their own lives, community and country. This presupposes that the Government relies on them. In this conception, participation in first instance refers to participation in the process of transforming society and the redistribution of power, insofar as these shape the outcome and determine the benefits of specific development projects. Inversely, specific projects may be qualified as 'development projects' insofar as they contribute to the process of redistribution of power from minorities with monopolistic control over economic, political and cultural resources to the large majority of the population.

A unified approach to development starts from the indivisibility of what Apolinario Mabini has called the 'external' and the 'internal' revolution. A new society cannot develop without the development of 'a new man,' new people, but, inversely, 'a new man' with a new consciousness and ethos cannot emerge and develop his

potential without new institutions which support the formation of a new society. Both are dialectically interdependent and reciprocally linked. One implication of this recognition is that it is fruitless to one-sidedly focus on a change in attitudes of people, let alone on people as individuals. Is it meaningful to preach to a woman whose husband, for reasons of poverty, is continuously away, about family stability? to try to convince a tenant who feels, in the face of an insecure livelihood, that more children are the surest form of social security? to lecture on proper behaviour to young unemployed if their only way out implies a breach with the prescribed standards of 'good conduct'? The individual approach to people's problems which arise from poverty presumes, that somehow their poverty can be traced to negative forms of attitude, as though these were not related to and rooted in the nature of the social relations of which they are part, and as though the 'culture of poverty', as it manifests itself, is not situationally, relationally and structurally shaped. This is abundantly demonstrated by the fact that, if and when people's conditions and environment change and they can pursue their vital interests, they are willing to change their attitudes which reflect the specific form of consciousness which expresses and at the same time consolidates their condition of poverty.

There is a widespread conceit that the poor do not wish to change and are resistant to it: if they would only give up their resistance, they would be able to participate in the makings and fruits of modernization. In this view, the poor are considered as an obstacle to a country's development. This is evident among entrepreneurs or managers who condemn the poor for lacking any desire to change, for their resignation. The social workers of Tondo who, with an often profound sense of commitment, visit people to promote their relocation or family planning, deplore their unwillingness to change. Cooperation is shown only on the surface but underneath there is resentment or hostility. They help the *magsasaka* to make use of the *masagana* 99-package programme but encounter reservations. The *magsasaka* would like to make use of some inputs and not of others; they register for the *samahang nayon* programme to get some inputs but not to actively support the new forms of organization. It may be argued that all forms of resistance are grounded in social reality, and that beneath the apparent irrationality shown by poor people there are always a host of reasons and considerations which, from their point of view, are highly rational and which may require changes in the focus of government programmes. The President

intervened, for example, in the programme for relocating Tondo slum dwellers, and the project proposed by the World Bank was subsequently adapted to the strategy of improvement of the existing settlement. It may well be that the impoverished perceive their own interests in a distorted and aggravated way. The point is that they cannot be expected to change unless they are confident that the changes will benefit them. Not infrequently, the poor people are quite right in opposing changes; in balancing positive and negative aspects, change may well be to their disadvantage (e.g. their participation in the making of a road or of wells in a community where land is highly concentrated; the road may only make it easier for the landowner to market his products, and the wells provide irrigation only for his land).

There is abundant evidence, however, that poor people are not opposed to change but desire it, i.e. a change which will liberate them from the constraints on their lives. To them, development means liberation from the bonds of servitude. It requires a social revolution which will liquidate those institutions that perpetrate and perpetuate the colonial order. They tend to oppose changes which have only marginal benefit, but support and desire a revolution, a transformation that will truly change their lives, will abolish their poverty and open up effective opportunities. The abolition of dependency and poverty is not a target to be isolated from the necessity to transform the social relations which produce it and in which the colonial order of the old society is reproduced and perpetuated.

To pursue a transformational approach and to abandon a relief approach poses problems which are *delicado* for social workers as well as for the Social Welfare Department. The latter inevitably manifests the clash of orientations and values which correspond to its function in the past and the vision of its transformational creative self-reliance-generating role in the future. The bridge between past and future lies in the transformation and innovation of present theory and practice. This implies an unceasing battle. It is difficult for a social worker, when asked to promote the acceptance by slum dwellers of relocation, to follow her instructions and not associate with the people's needs, interests and concerns. Unconsciously, she may take the side of the people by carrying out her 'official' task with reluctance and being rather inactive in her work. If she is asked to be active in a food supply programme which officially serves to support productive activity, but in actual fact undermines the people's initiative and self-reliance, she may again feel faced with a difficult alternative. If she

is called upon to give relief to an evicted tenant, should she concentrate on the Self-Employment Assistance Programme (SEAP), or should she associate with and promote action by tenants to prevent eviction and to re-assert their rights? In concentrating on relief, she only touches on the symptoms but she does not help people to strike at the roots of social disorganization.

Cyclones, which are as much part of the life of the barrio people as sun and rain, have always reproduced and activated specific forms of patronage which in the past served to rally political support at the moment of elections (the more pronounced is inequality, the more fertile is the soil for patronage). But disasters can also be turned into opportunities to draw upon the togetherness of people who are faced with a common enemy, and to move them towards ways which generate self-reliance. Social work, in view of its function in the prevailing context, has usually served to divert attention from people's common potential strength and power by focusing on individual aid, thereby re-inforcing the position of those in power and stabilizing the *status quo*. Social workers are often *volens volens* specialists in demobilizing people's initiative for the solution of their vital needs, *inter alia* by concentrating on attitudinal change.

It is urgently necessary that social workers should shift from being 'faithful' executives in the delivery of services to being mobilizers of peoples, generating self-initiative, helping them to organize on the basis of a serious analysis of their individual problems. This is not to deny the great need for improved, extended and integrated services, but these may perhaps be left to other Departments (Land Reform, Labour, Agriculture, Health, Education) while the Department of Social Welfare could play a spearhead role in people's self-mobilization. This would demand a flexible decentralized approach which allows for a great deal of initiative at the local and provincial levels. It would also require a profound re-orientation in the theoretical and practical training of social workers, so that they can effectively serve as social or societal development workers. A central focus in their work would be to learn to identify and search for *indigenous homegrown* experience and practices of the people and to ensure that these be validated and creatively utilized in making a new society. This implies for the social practitioners a process of internal transformation and intellectual and cultural decolonization. It requires a healthy scepticism vis-à-vis imported models and methodologies. It implies above all the desire and humility to learn from the people themselves, the *magsasaka* in his barrio, or the displaced in cities and towns.

The history of the Philippines abundantly shows the willingness, desire and will of the *magsasaka*, the common people, to take great risks, to make great sacrifices, even to give their life to create a new society. It shows that it is not the poor and common people who oppose change, but those in power, the oligarchical few who cling to the *status quo* and organize society to their advantage, as well as those who, in view of their dependency, have actively internalized the dominant values. It is they who refuse genuine change, not the poor. A government which pursues genuine change therefore needs to plan and realize development on the basis of the interests, needs and aspirations of the majority of the people.

We suggest that land consolidation begin, where possible, with those who have expressed a willingness to be involved in it. These farmers will presumably be most enthusiastic about the plan and hence should constitute the best group to man those model farms which will be set up to demonstrate the effectiveness of the scheme. Beyond these practical suggestions, and of infinitely more importance in the long run, is our plea that planners and managers take constant account of the people's view. Average farmers of the land consolidation programme are poor, fearful, and proof against the wishful thinking to which so many zealous field personnel are prone. *If they resist a plan, they have good reason to do so.* Let their apprehensions be studied, understood, and reckoned with. And where necessary, social and psychological considerations modify even those aspects of planning which seem technically beyond reproach. The plan, after all, is for the people; not the people for the plan. (R.C. Salazar and F. Lynch S.J: *Farmers of the River Basin's Land Consolidation Project Area: Nowhere to go but up -- and in no great hurry to get there*, Social Survey Research Unit, Bicol River Basin Development Programme, May 1974).

One way to help the poor is to provide them with specific resources in the supposition that it is the individual lack of inputs which makes them poor. One proposed answer is education, specifically skills-training. It should be stressed that education and skills-training cannot by themselves change the condition of the poor. Educational opportunities themselves are not a source of work, but the specific social conditions of young people in society determine the ways in which they can make use of their educational opportunities. This is evidenced by the increasing number of graduates of high schools and colleges who have difficulty in finding work. As formal education is in many respects not adapted to the specific requirements of the changing industrial structure, the need for an original, flexible, creative response in non-formal training has been stressed, as well as the need to break the

link between income distribution and work as the income of the parents actually governs the distribution of students among fields of study. This problem can only be solved if a productive structure is organized in both rural and urban areas which can absorb all the young people, thanks to the accumulative and multiplier effects on productive and service activities which it would engender. A one-sided focus on education draws attention away from the need for societal transformation. To be effective and to contribute to societal and social development, the productive structure must be linked to a substantive transformation of the social and economic structure and of the income structure in order to eliminate pronounced inequalities. At the same time, however, new structures and institutions in society need to be intellectually anticipated. In this sense, education has a major role to play in helping young people to grasp the nature of the old society and to understand the social, economic and political forces which are moving the world. The youth can then serve as active, conscious, critical agents of societal transformation and their professional training is counter-balanced by the development of a critical social and political consciousness and commitment linked to vigorous training in the critical use of social science and to their active participation in the practice of social transformation.

Another input is that of monetary help to the poorest to help them on the way to a productive life. The SEAD, for instance, helps people to keep alive by engaging in im-productive but profitable activities such as vending. This is not a critique but is meant to show that under the prevailing circumstances the poor can hardly be expected to do otherwise. Moreover, their individual condition is such that they are inclined to go it alone rather than to depend on and wait for cooperative ventures. Their objective condition forces them to engage in what is immediately profitable. In most cases that is hawking and vending. There are exceptions, however, as illustrated by the artisan groups which have been started in a number of community centres. In Tondo quite a few groups produce in the informal sector, but depend on outside patrons as they have neither the means nor the know-how to relate to the outside world. As a consequence, they receive only a meagre reward for their produce.

This suggests that government should give vigorous support to all forms of production in the informal sector. It may be argued that it is not monetary support that generates a movement towards creative and productive self-reliance, but that the development of a critical consciousness and the self-mobilization and organization

of the poor helps to overcome poverty. This implies that the government should encourage not only social and economic but also political forms of self-mobilization, and is then faced with the question of which road to take. If it does not support the poor in their self-mobilization, new forms of dependency will be engendered and new demands for social welfare to meet the immediate quest for relief. In doing so, it will deprive the people of dignity, self-respect and self-realization. If government supports the people in their self-mobilization and self-organization, it accepts that there is no other road towards humanization than through social transformation and liberation. It accepts the task of challenging the *status quo* and those bent on preserving it, thereby not only impeding the self-realization of the poor but also the advance towards the national development of society as a whole. The need is evidently to organize development as a form of social and human practice so that the few will not live at the price of the many, but that all may rise together and serve each other in the struggle for a new world.

Such a new human world was foreseen in the pre-colonial Tagalog word *kasama*, i.e. the togetherness of the people, their working together, their cooperation, and even sharing. The new *kasama* implies an arduous struggle to do away with the deep antagonisms which have become embedded in Filipino society as a result of its colonization, feudalization and unequal growth. One innovation in the programme of the new society is the institution of the *barangay* as an instrument for the practice of political democracy by people in the community in which they live and work. It is intended to revive the spirit of democracy as characterized by the small community, based on the extended family, in pre-colonial days. The political life of the community was then a direct expression of economic and social democracy, the resources of the community being utilized to ensure the livelihood and well-being of all. Democratic practice was inclusive and indivisible, the expression of values of solidarity and unity necessary to secure the reproduction of life of the community at large. To become fully operative, the new *barangays* and the new society will also have to rely on such forms of democratic practice, so that people will respect and rely on each other to strengthen their self-reliance and self-realization. The necessity for transformation of society by democratization becomes every day more urgent; the technological revolution requires new forms of democracy and social control, so that the new wealth will not be concentrated among the few but will be shared by

all. The Philippine nation is rich in people and resources. The challenge is to organize society in such a way that the people can develop their full force and potential, so that society is not forced to drain itself of its life and wealth but can turn the negative into positive, and its enforced weakness into self-organized strength.

#### PLANNING OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND PLANNING BY THE PEOPLE

The basic assumption underlying the above analysis is that at no stage is social welfare planning and management independent of society. Contradictions in society not only determine the nature of social welfare and set the boundaries to the orientation and organization of government programmes, but also have an all-pervasive influence on the planners and social workers who prepare and implement those programmes.

The planning of social welfare, it is suggested, is the joint responsibility of all senior officers in charge of specific areas of operations, under the leadership of the Secretary of the Department. The proposal to have an Assistant Secretary for planning, programming and operations reflects this view. A planning service that operates in relative independence of the bureaus in charge of the specific areas of social welfare is perhaps not appropriate, tending to create confusion and duplication of functions. Also, it would seem that the present planning service is largely concerned with programme and performance control rather than planning. The increasing stress on such control results from the rising pressure for 'hard' evidence of efficiency and results. This imposes great strains on the Social Welfare Department, which is forced to continuously prove the legitimacy of its operations by excessive quantification of all work performed. This pressure for quantification gravely distorts in my view, the real contribution that the Social Welfare Department and social workers could make to development. It puts also an undue burden upon all supervisory and field staff, who are forced to constantly quantify their work in terms of targets, quotas and 'outreach'. Reports on work performance may well be simplified and reduced and be made three-monthly instead of monthly. More encouragement might also be given to qualitative information. Accountability cannot be increased by pressing for more data to check performance. This may well stimulate hypocrisy. A good relationship between field workers and capable, fair and trust-inspiring supervisors is of more value. The prevailing practice cannot but distract the field

workers from their work among the people, possibly diminishing its quality by fast and superficial action. It also discourages feedback on the real nature and size of complex and varying social problems, as these become standardized to suit the requirements of homogenization of data. This encourages uniformization of programmes, irrespective of conditions, problems and people's needs and their actual and potential scope for involvement in the solution of their problems.

The pressure for excessive quantification should not be imputed to those in charge of planning and programming within the Social Welfare Department. Rather it should be seen as a consequence of an underlying economic conception of development which still dominates in national planning, in which it is assumed that only that which is quantifiable is of value in development; and that it derives its value from its comparability with commodities on the market. Such a view is also rooted in the assumption that society is nothing but an aggregate of individuals who, each for themselves, or as families, or as youths, or as unemployed, or poor, constitute 'problems' which may be solved by social workers who concentrate on them one by one, and in isolation from each other. Such an atomistic view of society is at the core of neo-classical economics and of most Western sociology. It ignores the fact that society is a structural whole of relationships and that no people, groups or problems of people and groups, can be understood other than in terms of the specific types of structural relations which they have developed with each other. Society, or the social whole, and individual human beings are not independent of each other and can only be understood in their dialectical inter-relationship, in which they continuously transform and re-transform each other so that the one cannot be reduced to the other (Hamza Alavi: 'Peasant classes and primordial loyalties', *Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, October 1973).

The focus on 'target' groups as such bypasses the elementary fact that social problems such as unemployment, low income, criminality, family instability and prostitution have their origins in the prevailing forms of social and economic organization and not in people themselves. Thus, the quantified results which in the eyes of the economists may 'justify' social welfare allocations, demonstrate in reality only that symptoms have been dealt with; the underlying processes and contradictions which produce 'cases' of an individual or group nature are likely to persist. There is often an associated assumption in the minds of economic and social

planners that society is a self-equilibrating system and that a basic harmony of interests exists among the individuals, groups and classes who comprise this system. The invalidity of this thesis is demonstrated in Keith Griffin's *The Political Economy of Agrarian Change* and Erich Jacoby's *Man and Land, the Fundamental Relationship*, both of which contain numerous references to the process of polarization in the rural areas of the Philippines. It ignores the accumulation of actual or potential conflicts, engendered by the nature of the social and economic arrangements which create polarization and impoverishment, and evidenced in the Philippines by the increasing concentration of power and wealth and the decline in real income for the mass of the workers and the peasantry.

The focus on groups 'as such' which tend to be approached as separate categories is reflected in the organizational set-up in the Social Welfare Department. It is also visible in the continuous proliferation of services. The consequence is that the problems of each category and service group are focussed on in relative isolation, forcing field workers to perceive their work in terms of a multiplicity of programmes to be carried out and services to be performed. The pressure on field workers to respond to programmes and services initiated at the centre in the Metropolis is intensified by the fact that teams of specialists attached to Regional Offices are forced to compete for the time that field workers can devote to 'their' programmes and services instead of operating as resource persons. People who experience problems are unintendedly reduced to sets of disconnected objects to be 'treated'. Thus, social workers are prevented from helping people to become active in making their own life and community, to develop and organize their own solutions to their own problems. The people need support in lifting the constraints that prevent the growth of their own consciousness and self-mobilization. This in no way implies a moral judgement of social workers, many of whom are devoted, self-sacrificing persons with great personal commitment. The intention is to indicate the serious restrictions on their involvement, imposed by the theoretical premises that underlye and support the orientation and organization of their work.

The trend to equate development with management, noticeable in the Philippines, tacitly assumes that development can be engendered from above and outside, thanks to people's faithful adherence to what government prescribes as necessary in terms of programmes and services. There is plenty of evidence, however, that

unless the people have a decisive voice in making and organizing these programmes and services to ensure that they respond to their own vital interests, these are likely to be ineffective. Only when the people can organize in pursuit of their joint interests can they find solutions to their problems and ensure that Government programmes and services respond to their needs, aspirations and interests.

All this indicates the need for a shift from emphasis on delivery of programmes and services to a 'community-oriented' approach to social welfare. But communities are always composites of groups with diverging and even seriously conflicting interests. Development is promoted by social workers, not by ignoring or concealing these conflicts, but by helping the poor and marginalized to transform the social and productive relations with those groups which, intentionally or not, are responsible for maintaining conditions which engender poverty and marginality. Only insofar as the State supports the social workers in this task can it be said to protect the vital interests of the mass of the people and promote its own legitimacy. New forms of social control and new techniques of management from above may temporarily diminish the visible articulation of developing contradictions. They can not serve as a substitute, however, for the people's own involvement in making and shaping their own future and they make it inevitable that pressures for transformation in depth of the social structure will further accumulate. In this process the dilemma between coercion and participation by the democratization of society becomes every day more obvious (see the *Preliminary Report by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on a Unified Approach to Development Analysis and Planning*, p. 15).

Social welfare activity should become action-oriented and the thrust of the Social Welfare Department's orientation should be to promote social action, requiring a change from a relief to a development approach. It may be argued that such an approach is unrealistic and inhuman in view of the urgency of solving immediate individual problems. An appeal to compassion, however, may detract attention from the violent and inhumane nature of social structures which, by their very nature, produce and reproduce poverty and impoverishment.

The Department recognizes that there is an urgent need to coordinate and integrate its activities at all levels with those of other Government services. This requires multiple and fundamental changes. It means more than the mere compounding or adding-up of sectorial or Departmental programmes which would remain juxtaposed,

except for minor administrative concessions. It implies formulating and organizing programmes around strategic areas of action, the search for a common goal, the forging of a common vision and commitment, and the development of a common methodology of working with the people. The more hierarchical a Department and the more centralized the services, the more difficult it is to achieve integration at the regional, provincial and local levels. An essential step would be that principal responsibility for annual planning and programming be transferred to the (development) regions. This would only be effective in combatting the drawbacks of overcentralized administrative and financial control if development budgets of Departments and services were directly allocated to the regions. This would require joint planning by regional development committees, composed of the chiefs of the various Departments and chaired by a Regional Development Commissioner. Delegation of authority to the regional social welfare officers to directly use funds for minor current expenditures is no more than a first step forward. The annual planning exercise by Departments would be based on a joint programming operation within the Provinces which compose a region. This would imply a profound break with the long-standing hierarchical practice, inherited from successive colonial administrations, of centralized decision-making. It may well be that it would be advisable to start in a limited number of development areas such as a particular land reform area (Central Luzon) or a river basin (e.g. the Bicol River Development Basin), so as to develop a new practice of cooperation by way of experiment. The meaningfulness of such experiments, it must be emphasized, does not depend on the extent of coordination and degree of sophistication in management, but on whether they will become effective instruments in raising people's capacity to organize themselves for securing and improving their livelihood. The government's role will be to orient, to serve and to support.

All this would imply that the role of the Central Office (of the Social Welfare Department) would profoundly change; instead of having detailed daily control over field operations, it would be limited to long-term and medium-term planning and coordination and would act as a support and resource-centre for field operations.

The proposal that social welfare services should be localized is closely connected to the attempt to ensure the more effective and decentralized organization of social welfare. It is not unreasonable to assume that pressure for localization of social welfare originated in Central Government's desire to devolve part of the growing burden of expenditure onto the local authorities.

The Department of Local Government and Community Development considers that a Presidential Decree to this effect is not advisable at this stage. This does not exclude that the Social Welfare Department encourages Municipalities and Authorities to finance their own operations whenever possible. So far, only a few wealthy Municipalities have funded their own operations, i.e. either rich business districts (Makati, Quezon City) or rich agricultural districts (Bacolod, which draws its wealth from sugar and Kabanatuan in the rich palay area of Luzon). In these centres, where wealth is highly concentrated and vested interests are strong, the problems of social disintegration and poverty (in relative terms) are serious and manifest, and social welfare in its classical function of ensuring relief is actively supported by the privileged. It might be asked whether this type of social welfare (which from a managerial and 'technical' point of view may be well organized) contributes to development, or whether it is designed to facilitate economic growth in a restricted sense.

It could well be argued that centres and areas which are able to assume responsibility for their own welfare services are likely to be those where social welfare will tend to be oriented along classical lines and will not have a transformational thrust. Thus, the most 'developed', well-established, social welfare services may be the least development-oriented. This paradox is not surprising but conveys the purpose for which the services were created in accordance with the perception of development held by the organizers. Social workers are here faced with a dilemma. If they follow the President's analysis of the nature and effects of oligarchical power they must dissociate from the approach which they are assumed to follow and search for a new theory and practice of social work, in line with the needs of the marginalized and poor.

This serves to illustrate that the promotion of self-reliance in the official administration of Social Welfare and of self-reliance for and by the poor and marginalized may not coincide and may even be antagonistic. The fundamental question is then: what is the purpose of social welfare? An abstract normative answer is not very helpful. A true answer should emerge from the dynamics of the situation and the demands which it creates. These dynamics condition both the orientation of social welfare and of social workers. This does not mean, however, that social workers should not take a position. This analysis might also suggest that the value of an advance in management and organization cannot be judged in itself but only in relation to the

question 'Who are the beneficiaries?' (*Research Notes, UNRISD: 'Unified approach to Development Analysis and Planning', 1974*).

#### TRAINING AND RESEARCH

The theory, practice, and profession of Social Work, as these have developed over the years and were transferred from industrialized countries to the Third World, are in profound crisis. The crisis in the Philippines is part of a world-wide crisis in societies where concentrated wealth, privilege and power go hand-in-hand with poverty, impoverishment and human degradation. Foreign approaches to social welfare and to social work prove irrelevant and do not effectively answer the problems of mass poverty which characterize most Third World countries. The problem is not a quantitative but a qualitative one. Within the Social Welfare Department, each Bureau carries out its own training programming in Manila and in the field, in addition to that of the training service of the Department. The risk of over-training is more serious than that of too little training. Intense discussions have been held on the relevance of prevailing theory and practice. Basically, these turn around the question of whether social welfare practice should serve as an instrument in maintaining inequality and an inequitable social order in which social workers contribute to the reproduction of poverty and human degradation, or whether social workers should focus on eliminating the institutional and social arrangements which engender inequality and poverty. An emphasis on liberation from the injustice and bonds which prevent people from self-realization and fulfilment of their potentialities, is at the core of this discussion. It becomes increasingly clear that the social science premises on which the hitherto dominant forms of social work have been based have been ideological projections of values which emerged at a specific historical juncture, in response to the dominant interests at the time. There is now a growing awareness that social science, social work theory and practice, and research methodology are not neutral, but that they are always rooted in philosophical premises, a world view, and a valuation of society and human relations in one direction or another, and that as a rule these premises have corresponded to the needs of the powerful and wealthy. Science is never neutral and always implies commitment and choice (Rudolfo Stavenhagen: 'Decolonializing the Social Sciences', *Human Organization*, Winter 1971).

The issue is not only under discussion in scholastic precincts. The changes in society are inspiring new

forms of practice. Old approaches are abandoned for new ones which seem more adequate to the needs of the poor and marginalized and which help them to develop self-reliance, to understand their condition, and to organize in defence of their legitimate rights. In the Philippines, workers and teams of the Catholic social action programme carry out creative work in a number of areas and experiment with new approaches in promoting the people's rights and welfare. This inevitably involves a clash with (established) interests both in urban and rural areas.

From a strictly legal point of view, it may be difficult for Social Work practitioners, who have an official diploma of social work, to engage in action involving contestation and confrontation, since they are expected to adhere to the code by which their profession is regulated. This code is based on the conventional definition of social work, emphasizing its relief and adaptive function at the expense of its transformational or development function. Apart from this, social work is a profession, and the opportunity to exercise it implies competition on a labour market where supply exceeds demands. In the earlier days, social work was an 'honourable' activity reserved for a small group of ladies of the establishment; during the last few decades, Social Work has become a profession and occupation, mostly exercised by women from the middle and lower-middle class, for whom job-security is essential and who often work in order to supplement the family income. This severely limits their scope for taking unorthodox positions although they not infrequently experience the contradictions between what they are expected to do and what they feel they ought to do. Their position is thus basically ambiguous and contradictory.

A movement for transforming the social work profession is not likely to start from the established official institution but rather in opposition to it. Such a movement is often pressed and inspired by young people who are not yet 'settled' in the profession and are not yet 'tied down' by social obligations. They are likely to force their teachers to review theory in order to bring it into line with demands for new forms of practice.

The legal protection of Social Work also imposes recognition of its character as a specialized profession for which advanced training is required, and which can not be exercised by people without the proper training and certificate.

There is evidence, however, that welfare aides sometimes work with registered social workers in the field and do a better job in working with people. They have

had no training, are therefore hierarchically subordinate and lower paid. As a rule they are chosen from among young people born in the area (town or barrio), who have had experience in working with the local people. While social workers not infrequently 'apply' their 'principles', aides who do not feel tied to abstract schemes for action may display more initiative and imagination and be more effective. This raises the question of whether there should not be more reliance on local people who are genuine organizers and leaders within the various interest groups. The effectiveness of such groups may grow if and when they become part of wider movements in which they coordinate their limited objectives and group interests with wider objectives and interests. A movement can only start from the concrete needs of the people and around the solution of their grievances and problems, whatever these concern. In the process of self-organization, group and community leaders and organizers emerge and gain experience. Step-by-step, joining forces in common study, analysis and action, people acquire experience in working together and discover the advantages of cooperation. This gives them confidence and encourages them to move out of their isolation towards unity and towards larger and more permanent forms of joint action. In practice they acquire and develop theoretical insight into their conditions and learn how to proceed effectively. They need constant support and guidance, however, and one of the tasks of social practitioners is to help them to analyze and summarize their experiences and to draw lessons to support their further advance. To carry out this task, social action workers need a theoretical grounding which helps them to identify the contradictions in society and in and between communities, classes and interest groups through which societal structures reproduce themselves, and also specific problems and conditions which simultaneously prevent change and generate pressure for change. Such an approach can only be developed if concrete conditions are analyzed in an historical perspective. This should then bring seemingly isolated facts and problems into a coherent framework of analysis. An integrated view of the inner dynamics within the structured relations between phenomena and problems is then obtained and understanding of the totality of social reality may grow and develop. Practical mastery over their conditions by the people is only possible if it is supported by continuous growth in their consciousness and understanding of the relations between themselves and their conditions and society. But such a growth in consciousness and understanding can only develop within the historical development of practice.

Social practitioners can help to assist people to link theory with practice and practice with theory by helping them to investigate their own situation and conditions so as to grasp the genesis and nature of their own problems. This entails helping people to investigate the roots of their own history and identity, and can only be done insofar as the process of self-investigation is carried out with a view to promoting individual and collective self-realization. This assumes association with the process and practice of transformation. It is essential for the people to be able to develop such a method of investigation without which there is no perspective for self-liberation. From the point of view of a unified approach to development and of promotion of the productive and equitable participation of the masses in society, the development of such a method of investigation has to have priority.

In the final analysis, development action is only meaningful insofar as it responds to the people's needs and aspirations. Social action workers can only help the people to acquire self-reliance to the extent that they share the people's interests and aspirations. This does not mean that they should uncritically accept the views of the people and of the classes and interest groups of which society is made up. There is no guarantee that people will be correct in their views simply because they form a majority. Neither does involvement and commitment automatically guarantee correct insight. A continuous process of critical analysis must be promoted among the people on the basis of joint reflection and discussion, and positions and views can never be taken as final. They need always to be subjected to systematic critique and self- and mutual criticism, as positions and views cannot be dissociated from one's personal and social position. Such an approach prevents an *a priori* and dogmatic approach and mechanical reliance on abstract principles and premises. The development of such a method is qualitatively different from the development of a technique such as participant observation and action research. It presupposes unity between theory and practice, not outside, but through personal existential involvement in the process of transformation.

The objection may be made that to guarantee proper research it is necessary to take a distance but that this is prevented by involvement. Indeed, it may be argued that proper involvement is not possible without analyzing social processes from a distance (theory formation); on the other hand it may also be argued that a proper view cannot be acquired from a distance, and that it has

to grow out of direct existential understanding and experience through involvement. Thus, theory and practice are conditional to each other's development. The development of such a method of social action and investigation seems crucial for all social workers. It does not stand alone, but is organically linked to the epistemological assumption that theoretical insight into social reality always grows out of experience of the real world, which presupposes practice. If this method of investigation is to have priority, it is because development only contributes to human development if it starts from the problems and needs which people experience in the real world, so that development policies and strategies can adequately respond to those problems and needs. The question of what are priority areas of research may therefore be changed to methods of research needed. But once again, the effect of a method is determined by the purpose for which it is used.

The rationale for the use of this approach is that it helps to provide the vital information needed for sound planning and action. It must not be assumed, however, that governments always plan and act to meet the people's needs and aspirations. Similarly, social workers cannot automatically assume appreciation if they identify with the needs and interests of the people and act as 'the people's voice'. Government often assumes that its plans and programmes are good for the people and should not be questioned by government officials, unless at a high policy level. This brings up the question of the extent to which democratic practices of discussion and exchange prevail within a Department, expression of critical views is encouraged, and frank criticism and mutual criticism is allowed. Such a climate determines whether field workers feel free and are encouraged to serve as 'the voice of the people', and are willing to provide a good feedback.

The existence of strongly hierarchical relations between superiors and subordinates hinders the emergence and flourishing of a democratic climate, based on trust and confidence. Profound changes in the orientation and organization of the public administration would be needed. A major point would be the increased accountability of Government workers vis-à-vis the people and their organizations. It would perhaps also be useful if field workers were able to elect from among the staff of the Department those who would assess their work. Relations may also be democratized and exchange and participation in planning improved if staffs in each Region select a few of their members to ensure that their views

reach Central Office and the lower ranking officers participate on a rotative basis in planning and programming sessions, together with senior officers.

This method of investigation is of course not the only one and needs to be complemented by other kinds of research for the purpose of overall planning and the evaluation of ongoing programmes and projects. It is advisable that evaluation research be carried out fairly independently, which would greatly enhance the scope for genuine feedback. A good example in this respect is the Social Survey Research Unit of the Bicol River Basin Development Programme. This is operated by a research team of the Ateneo University at Naga. The contract between Ateneo University and the River Basin Project stipulates that the Unit is free to publish the results of its survey on particular dimensions of the River Basin Programme. These studies on such issues as land consolidation, modes of agricultural cooperation, and the quality and coverage of agricultural services, can be useful in policy formulation and in correcting outgoing practices. A next and more difficult step would be to make the knowledge gained available to the peasant population through village meetings, etc. The people will then not only serve for the 'extraction of data' to be used by Government, but would apply the knowledge to the creation of which they have contributed and which vitally concerns them. They could thus be helped to become masters of their own lives, gaining an understanding of their own condition. At the central level, of course, the information should be used on a wider scale. The Social Welfare Department may well make use of information and data collected by specialized research centres and institutes (apart from the census data). This does not preclude the need for a team of qualified interpreters of such information and data within the department.

The method by which information gained in this way is interpreted is linked to the development of a new approach in theory and practice of Social Welfare in the direction of people's self-reliance, which is the declared aim of the Government and the Social Welfare Department of the Philippines.

#### FINAL REFLECTIONS

This paper has dealt only with a few dimensions of the complex issue under consideration. Specific proposals of a more restricted 'technical' nature such as techniques for motivation, organization and management, are closely and organically related to the direction in

which a society moves and which determines their significance and effects. Unless such techniques genuinely grow from within they are likely to block or retard a process towards self-reliance. The application of 'the principles and methods' of social work in the Philippines, assumed to be of universal validity, illustrates how ideological premises and values which are dominant in the industrial countries have been transferred to Third World countries in their dependency situation within the world's productive structure. Economic dependency tends also to generate dependency in consciousness and intellectual activity. But at the same time, it sows the seeds for a counter-movement to overcome dependency. Such a movement is now developing in the Philippines. It manifests itself in the crisis in social welfare and social work theory and practice as one dimension of a much wider quest to overcome political, economic, social, cultural and intellectual dependency, and to move towards national independence and autonomy. But the latter should not mean autarchy or isolation. It implies that a country acquires a position which enables it to adapt foreign interests and requirements to its domestic needs and requirements, and to mobilize its own resources in function of its own needs.

The approach taken in this paper is perhaps biased and controversial. This is unavoidable as problems are always approached from a particular angle and position, and neutrality in social practice and in social science as a particular form of social practice does not exist. Also, opting for neutrality implies taking a particular value position, creating the obligation to clarify the value premises which underlie one's approach and attempts to understand and interpret social reality. But the process of clarifying one's own value premises is never-ending and unceasing, and these premises change and grow. Also, premises are partly 'unconscious' and often remain so in view of the social contexts and conditions in which people live, which inhibit them from developing their consciousness and making their thinking explicit. The intention in this paper has been to analyze some of the interrelationships between structured societal processes, the formation of theory (on social welfare and social work), and social welfare policy and programmes and social work (as specific forms of practice).

Underlying this attempt was another one: to analyze the relationship and correspondence between stages of development and specific forms of social welfare. The premise behind this analysis is that in each stage of

development of a society as a social formation, composed of several modes of production, one mode is dominant and requires and engenders specific modes of perception and valuation of the world, rooted in a coherent organized interpretation of this world so as to legitimate the dominant mode of production. But the correspondence between the dominant mode of production and the valuations which people have in accordance with their specific insertion in the societal whole are never permanent or total. Contradictions always emerge, resulting from new transformations in the social and economic structure and changes in people's needs and aspirations. It is suggested that the growing emphasis on self-reliance has its source in two contradictory and even antagonistic movements. Firstly, the growing concentration of power, assets and wealth, which implies increased inequality and intensified deprivation and impoverishment. This requires the expansion of welfare functions by the State which, in view of its limited resources, is forced to devolve responsibility for welfare onto the population. This may lead to specific forms of self-reliance which are imposed upon the people and lead them to make yet greater use of the mechanisms of mutual aid and cooperation which were inherited from the past when they were necessary to ensure the people's survival and livelihood.

Secondly, a movement for self-reliance emerges from a new conception of life wherein the purpose of development is seen as the creation of conditions for man's self-realization and self-fulfilment. The actualization of man's potentialities can only be realized if he liberates himself from societal constraints and from those forms of consciousness which hold him down and perpetuate his dependency, impeding his growth towards self-reliance. But man does not exist in the abstract; all people form part of a structured whole of relations. It is the transformation of these relations which is necessary to liberate people's potential and to release their creativity as the foundation for raising productivity which, in turn, enables genuine self-reliance and social development.

This view of self-reliance is engendered by the changes in the conditions of the people with their decline in real income and the growing precariousness of their livelihood. It is strongly supported by the movement in the Catholic Church in the Philippines which is inspired by the 'theology of liberation'. A small but growing group of Christian religious and social practitioners claim that the Church should give up its traditional role as supporter of the *status quo* and inequality, and should unambiguously associate with and defend

the livelihood and rights of the poor and weak and help them in their struggle for self-realization. The emergence of this view on self-reliance promotes specific forms of social practice which involve a contest between the *status quo* and the mechanisms which engender dependency and poverty and also the concentration of power and wealth. The contradictions between specific forms of social welfare required by the dominant mode of production and those required by newly emerging values engendered by this process of concentration, which, it is suggested, anticipate the emergence of a new mode of production, are acutely manifest in the prevailing planning, programming and activities of the Social Welfare Department.

It is finally suggested that the social welfare orientation in support of the second approach to self-reliance requires a profound change in prevailing practices towards a transformational approach. At the same time, the advance of such an approach in the Department is dependent on the wider transformations within Filipino society, i.e. of the structure of external dependency that is necessary to ensure full national independence and autonomy and agrarian transformation that is indispensable for the release of the people's creative and productive potential.



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