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TOWARD THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF THE SOCIAL POLICY PROCESS

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What is it that the citizen buys each year when he pays his taxes?

He buys a set of promises from those who govern. The first promise is "to organize the common activities of the society for the good of the individual or the whole" (Webster, 1976, p. 497). The power rests in organization; where there is no organization there is no government. Second, the government promises "to exert a determining or guiding influence over expenditures and the availability of choices." Third, it promises to keep "a straight course, under proper control, or in smooth operation for the good of the individual or the whole." Finally, it promises "to exercise continuous sovereign authority, especially to control and direct the making and administration of policy."

Thus, what a citizen expects from his government, what he hopes he is buying with his taxes, are a set of public social policies that are benevolent, sound, and reasonable. And a public social policy may be defined as the promise that the government makes to its citizenry.

Throughout the years the taxpayer in the United States has become skeptical about what he is getting for his money. For example, in 1978, the average tax collected by the federal government from every four-person household was \$5,104, according to the statistics of Tax Foundation, Inc., reported in the Seattle Times of March 6, 1978 (Brandon, Rowe, and Stanton, 1978; W. Cohen, 1978). This does not include the high local and state taxes on food, property, and income. Taxes continue to go higher and higher each year, and the taxpayer--squeezed by price inflation which is rising more rapidly than his paycheck--is beginning to demand an accounting.

What is the money being spent for, and is there a sound reason for this? What the taxpayer wants to know is whether government social policies are benevolent, sound and reasonable?

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on the nature of social policies and the public policymaking process. It is demonstrated that public social policies tend to accrue an aura or ideology of benevolence that is only partially warranted, and that may be quite misleading to policy analysts and citizenry. The major thrust of the paper is to consider the social policy process as a strategy for public decision-making. As such, properly organized, it can provide an alternative and complementary strategy to electoral politics and protest movements. To be effective as a strategy, three major barriers must be overcome: the lack of openness in the public policy process, the active discouragement of citizen participation, and the failure to evaluate policy outcomes. Some notions are advanced about how social policy analysts and researchers can improve their work and thereby assist in the democratization of the process.

What is the Nature of the Public Social Policy Process?

There are seven general characteristics of the public policy process frequently identified by its analysts. These are presented in this section of the paper.

1. First of all, it should be noted that usual definitions of public policy do not stress the implied promise contained in government social policy. Thus a policy is considered as the formal statement of the guiding goals and acceptable procedures governing a plan of organized action. Unlike an impromptu command or suggestion, it represents a reasoned decision. It embodies "a definite course of method selected from among alternatives and in the light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions (Webster, 1976, p. 890).

According to Gil (1973, p. 12), policies lead to, but need not be codified in formal legal instruments. They are merely the "guiding principles or courses of action adopted and pursued by societies and their governments, as well as by various groups or units within society. . . . Specific policies govern, or are intended to govern, specified domains of society or its subunits."

2. Policies, however, are not simply the property of governmental units. They may be formulated by individuals or groups that are nongovernmental in character, and they may be implemented by any unit or subunit of society. In general, policies, whether formulated under private or government auspices, overtly or covertly, are public in character. They are intended to influence the activities of government, some sector of society, or the people as a whole. Thus, in a democracy, governmental policies are usually accorded a review, and are intended to be "of the people, by the people, and for the people." The extent to which this is a true statement is moot. Nevertheless, the public character of such policies is strongly sanctioned both by tradition and legislative mandate. No definition of policy was found by the author that does not embrace this assumption.
3. At its point of inception, the policy act represents an agreement or compromise among the individuals or parties engaging in the decision making. Moreover, it is shaped and compromised by subsequent interpretations given it, and through the activities required for its implementation. Thus a social policy is more than a formal statement per se; it is a normative process. The policy itself is not simply an inert instrument through which social changes flow. For example, an important social policy, such as the Social Security Act, has acquired an independent status of its own. While formally instituted in the legislative bureaucracy, it has become a part of the culture and tradition of the United States. In this way, policies over time, in general, exhibit both the characteristics of directed social change and growth. They are planned, negotiated and accumulated on the basis of the decisions with which an organization is confronted. The author makes the same distinction between social policy and social program as does Tropman et al. (1976, p. xiii): "Policy is seen as a source of action or intended action conceived as deliberately adopted, after a review of possible alternatives, and pursued or intended to be pursued,"

while a social program is adapted to achieve a certain set of limited objectives and goals. Social program relates only to a small part of the social system in which we live. Social policy is of a much broader nature. It relates to a series of programs aimed at achieving some objectives and goals. It relates to the social system in its entirety.

4. The establishment of a policy is a collective attempt to deliberately shape or guide the social changes that are taking place in the organization and the environment, and to assure that there will be a desired outcome. As such, the policy process is an attempt at directed social change. And all policies are developed within an organizational context which is dynamic and changing.

The policy attempts to shape subsequent action not only by specifying the ends towards which the efforts are directed. It also places restrictions on the means to be employed in the plan of organized action. The restrictions are specified in the statement of "acceptable" principles and procedures to be employed in affecting the outcomes.

5. Every policy embodies theories of problem formulation and solution. However, the policy is not simply a solution to a specified problem. The policy encompasses appropriate modifications in the key processes which transform a given condition into a social problem. Thus, the social changes induced and guided by policy are intended to modify the social conditions per se to assure that such social problems are ameliorated, removed or prevented (L. K. Northwood, 1966, pp. 8-9). Policy has a much broader objective than simple problem-solving. While most policy analysts would agree with the point of view expressed in this paragraph, many of them emphasize the latter three stages of the policy process which are described in the following section while they ignore the first stage. By downplaying the initial problem solution stage of the policy, analysts tend to discount the trial-error character of the process; they underplay the real social conflicts that are engendered around social policies. Therefore, it is safe to say that no significant social policy has been introduced and institutionalized without the support of a mass movement and in the teeth of important mass opposition.
6. Generally, every enduring policy becomes transformed and institutionalized during the processes of its formulation and implementation. It assumes a charter of its own, a social structure for its personnel, auxiliaries and beneficiaries, and a collective will to survive that resides in its culture and practices. And every enduring policy also helps to generate its opposition.

The four critical stages in the institutionalization process are (Gil, 1973, pp. 36-55; Gilbert and Specht, 1974, pp. 14-20):

- I. The problem/solution stage, which embodies questions of the following order: Which of the many domains of concern to a society constitutes the focus of the policy? What is the problem? Whose problem? What conditions require change? What is the solution?

- II. The goals/objectives stage, which involves winning sufficient public support for the policy, and which answers questions such as: Who benefits and who does not? How would the policy affect this domain in substantive terms? How would society as a whole be affected by the substantive consequences of the policy?
- III. The Planning/implementation stage, which spells out how the benefits are to be provided and with what hypothesized effects. A key question is: What effects may be expected from the interaction of the policy with various forces within and without society?
- IV. The review and evaluation stage, which assesses both the policy's performance and achievements. Such questions are asked as: What alternative policies could be defined to achieve the same or different policy objectives concerning the specific domain? Was the planned change efficient and effective? Can it be accomplished more efficiently and effectively by another means?
7. A final characteristic of public social policies, and of social welfare policies in particular, is the aura of benevolence with which they are invested. This ideology of benevolence has many positive functions, but it also can be quite misleading and non-productive. The author is in accord with the commonly held belief that social welfare policies ought to be directed toward improving the human condition and with solving serious social problems. However, the stated intention of the policy is often at variance with its known effects and consequences (Northwood, 1977, 1978). Therefore, a policy should be characterized as benevolent only after careful analysis is made of the policy in action, and whether it achieves the desired outcome of improved social conditions for its designated beneficiaries and the society as a whole.

For these reasons, this section is devoted to an examination of the ideology of benevolence and the part it plays in the characterization of social policy. In particular, we will be concerned with the assumption that all policies of the political state, called the "welfare state" or the "welfare society," are benevolent social policies simply because of their auspices.

How does the ideology of benevolence come to permeate social policy?

First of all, this is a natural process. Most of the terminology employed in the discussion of social policies is already made up of words and concepts which are positively valued in the society such as: social, social welfare, beneficiaries, problem-solving, responsibility in planning, effectiveness, efficiency, user satisfaction, equity, equality, well-being, volunteerism, altruism, and so forth. Social planning is conceived of as an active effort to do something thoughtfully and rationally; and that is better than doing nothing. Social policies, ipso facto, are "social reforms" because they involve an alteration in "bad" existing conditions. Thus, the suggestion of beneficence is implied in the label "social reform."

Furthermore, to be enacted and implemented, social policies must win public support. They are frequently formulated in rhetoric that evokes traditional values, national pride and community solidarity. The policy objectives are

transformed into slogans for public consumption. These slogans may characterize a single social policy where no enabling legislation has come into existence, or they may characterize a single social program which is not guided by a comprehensive framework of social policy. Where there are both social programs and a comprehensive framework of policy, the nation with this implementing machinery is sometimes called a "welfare state" or a "welfare society."

For example, it is sometimes forgotten that "The Welfare State" had its origins in the times of war and, in fact, has been characterized as a "war strategy." The Parliament of Great Britain commissioned Sir William Beveridge to draw up a plan for the reform of social services in June, 1941, when the bombs were falling in the streets next to Westminster. The plan called for the maintenance of full employment, comprehensive free health care and rehabilitation services, and social insurance from the cradle to the grave. By 1945, the term "Welfare State" had achieved popular currency. Titmuss, the eminent welfare historian, characterizes this movement as "an imperative for war strategy . . . that the war could not be won unless millions of ordinary people, in Britain and overseas, were convinced that we had something better to offer than had our enemies--not only during but after the war (Titmuss, 1969, p. 82).

The outline of the "Welfare State" in the United States took shape somewhat earlier and for somewhat different reasons. Romanyshin (1971, p. 159) reports that the "New Deal" measures of the 1930's:

. . . were designed to preserve the capitalistic system from total collapse. Establishing measures of income security, social legislation in this period also served to bolster a badly shaken economy and to preserve rather than dismantle the market system. One may indeed say that social welfare is, in fact, the answer of liberal capitalism to the challenge of socialism.

These propagandistic uses of social policies impose an added imperative to mitigate possible conflict and opposition, and to present the policy in glowing and positive terms which testify as to its progressive character and benevolence.

By far the most frequently used strategy for incorporating an ideology of benevolence is the practice of social policy analysts to build into their definitions of the social policy process desirable procedures and desirable outcomes. Thus, for T. H. Marshall (1967, preface), social policy is "the policy of governments with regard to action having a direct impact on the welfare of citizens, by providing them with services of income." For both Titmuss (1968, p. 188-89) and Marshall, social policy flows from the state's right to interfere with individual freedom and economic liberty to promote the welfare of the whole population (Baumleier and Scholl, 1977, p. 1454). Pusic (1969) defines social policy as "the quest for equalization under conditions of growth," and Boulding thinks of it as "the sum total of public policies that underpin and strengthen the "integrative system" in any society (Rohrlich, 1977, p. 1465)." Where the nature of the desired outcome is assuring the happiness, prosperity or well-being of any society, the policy is called "social welfare policy." It is postulated that social welfare policies are intended to improve the conditions of life of the

public in general and to alleviate the distress of the poorest and most disadvantaged.

Moreover, for Gil (1973, p. 13):

Social policies are a special type of policies, namely, policies which deliberately pertain to the quality of life and to the circumstances of living in society, and to the intra-societal relationships among individuals, groups and society as a whole. And any specific social policy, irrespective of its unique content, objectives and scope, is thus one discrete instance of this type of policies.

It is a shared "common domain" that identifies a social policy and differs it from policies in general.

Another way of conferring benevolence on social policies involves the prior labeling of the political state as a "welfare state." Once having accorded this label, the social programs and policies are accorded benevolence without testing whether the designation is warranted or not. This dubious process is followed by Blanche Coll (1977, p. 1503) in her assessment of social welfare in the United States. The existing policy framework is cast in an image of benevolence, which ignores the reality described in the third part of this paper. For Coll:

The welfare state, which emerged in all western democracies after World War II, is characterized by a large complex of interlocking preventive and protective laws and organizations, designed to provide, at the least, universal access to the mainstream of society. . . . In affluent countries, such as the United States, social welfare includes considerably more than assuring the necessities to support life. Inherent in the philosophy of the welfare state is the ever present, active assistance to individuals and groups to facilitate their attaining and maintaining a respectable life style.

Whereas, Coll merely asserts the benevolence of the United States as a "welfare state," Miller and Clark (1977), following Wilensky (1975), have attempted to prove that the United States is not a "welfare state laggard" in comparison with other modern industrial nations. The authors start with a statement that (Ibid., p. 382) "it seems obvious that the United States is not meeting the welfare needs of all its citizens in an adequate and equitable manner." However, after an analysis of the trends in national spending for warfare and welfare, they conclude that "the United States actually spent more in welfare state programs than would be predicted for a country of its description, at least for 1966 (Ibid., p. 398)." Not a single word in the article questions the "benevolence" of the national priorities, and not a single comparison is made of the discrepancy of the "welfare state" objectives and the achievement of these objectives.

The easy way that certain policy analysts have conferred benevolence on almost every policy of "welfare states" located in the United States and Western Europe, and, in contrast, have denigrated almost every social policy in the countries of Eastern Europe, has led to much criticism and also to much misunderstanding about the nature of social welfare and social policies.

For example, the conservative "supporter" of the "welfare society" in Great Britain, William Robson, denies that a benevolent program of protections, entitlements and benefits can exist in countries of a socialist persuasion because they lack the "social freedom" which is an "essential ingredient of the welfare state" (Robson, 1976, p. 16). At the same time, he deplores that Great Britain has not yet achieved the status of a "welfare society" because of misguided interpretations of principles of equity and equality, economic redistribution, central planning, nationalization and public ownership, collective bargaining in the public sector, and so forth.

On the other hand, David Gil, a progressive social welfare analyst, views all welfare state policies and services as characterized by "inequality, domination, competition and self-orientation" (1976, p. 147). That is, in essence they are non-benevolent. They are designed to "pacify, condition and control their populations, and defend and perpetuate their systems" (Ibid., p. 161). There is only one "real solution" to welfare: "to abolish its institutionalized version by liberating productive resources and assuring success to these resources to all humans on equal terms so that they may become free, independent, productive and self-reliant citizens of self-directing, democratic and cooperative communities." Is it too much to ask of Gil that he outline workable alternatives in other terms than a statement of basic values and philosophy?

What Robson and Gil have in common is a philosophic stance, albeit differing in content, which grows out of their own personal experiences and their assessments of the social conditions in which they are situated. However, it is hard reality in an imperfect world that requires a much more concrete and scheduled program of policies and practices if policies are to be made beneficial and if reform is to be consummated.

What Are the Criteria of Benevolence

How, then, can a test of the benevolence of a social policy be made empirically? As indicated earlier, it is not sufficient merely to have indicators of intention in the initial statement of goals, objectives and "acceptable" operating procedures for the policy; there must be tests of actual performance and actual outcome. A policy must be sound and reasonable in order to achieve its effectiveness. Furthermore, policies which are unsound and unreasonable cannot be benevolent for the society as a whole in the long run. Therefore, we incorporate criteria of social effectiveness and efficiency into the test of the benevolence of a policy.

Gilbert and Specht (1974, pp. 39-46) point out that there are three "core values" that shape the design of social welfare policy, and which provide some of the criteria by which it may be judged as benevolent or not. The three core values are equality, equity and adequacy.

Equality relates to the outcome of the benefit allocations proposed in the policy. Are the benefits allocated in such a way as to equalize the distribution of resources and opportunities available in the society?

Equity is the value which prescribes "that people receive that which they deserve based on their contributions to society, modified by considerations

for those whose inability to contribute is clearly not of their own making (Gilbert and Specht, p. 41). The question must be asked: Do the benefits actually go to beneficiaries designated by the policy? Of course, there are many "equitable inequalities" that are normatively sanctioned, according to Gilbert and Specht. For example, preferential treatment is accorded veterans, and in unemployment benefits that vary in proportion of prior earnings. There is always some debate over who should receive preferential treatment. Most social welfare policies single out the poorest and the most disadvantaged sectors of society for preferential treatment. In the case of the United States, however, the "iron rule" of the English Poor Law of 1834 still prevails, that is, that the benefits given the poor and the needy shall not exceed "the situation of the independent laborer of the lowest class." This provision is intended to assure that able-bodied recipients support themselves by their own work rather than depending on government welfare.

At the same time, the provision of limited or inadequate benefits to the poor directly contradicts the third core value listed by Gilbert and Specht, that of adequacy. Adequacy refers to "the belief that it is desirable to provide a decent standard of physical and spiritual well-being, quite apart from concerns of whether benefit allocations are equal or differential according to merit" (Ibid., pp. 41-42).

The three core values of equality, equity and adequacy provide some of the criteria for the evaluation of the benevolence of social policy. In essence, they answer the question: Does the social policy achieve distributive justice? A social policy that does not achieve distributive justice is hardly a benevolent policy.

There are three other important criteria that relate to benevolence of social policy. They refer to the "acceptable" principles and procedures for implementing the policy. They are the principles of social effectiveness, efficiency and democracy.

The simplest definition of effective is "capable of producing a result" (Webster, 1976, p. 362). A socially effective policy is one capable of producing the desired outcome with a minimum of undesirable side effects. Thus, a policy aimed at eliminating, preventing or mitigating a social problem condition must have at its disposal the resources necessary to produce the desired effects. The resources include manpower, finances, organization, social controls and the knowledge of how to combine these and other elements into workable strategies.

The validity of any measure of social effectiveness is affected by the scope assigned to social welfare practice. Some analysts conceive of social welfare practice as simply a "benefit-allocation mechanism functioning outside the market place" (Gilbert and Specht, 1974, p. 28). Thus, they restrict their analysis to the activities of social welfare agencies and organizations per se. Everything else, the economic, political and cultural activities of the broader society, are considered "externalities" which, to be sure, have an effect on social welfare practice, but which are not subject to the controls built into the policy.

The rationale for such a narrow definition of social policy is based on the assumption that social welfare practice typically involves a non-monetary, reciprocal exchange between recipients and society via the welfare agencies, whereas the market system operates on a much different basis--that of buyers and sellers, exchanging concrete goods and services, usually in direct cash transactions for private profit. While it is true that there is a marked difference between market transactions and those that occur in welfare programs, it is also true that the market activities vitally affect the social welfare. In reality, people and social services respond to the market conditions in many vital ways. As Marshall (1972, pp. 19-20) has observed:

The central function of welfare, in fact, is to supercede the market by taking goods and services out of it, or in some way to control and modify its operations so as to produce a result which it could not have produced itself. In contrast to the economic process, it is a fundamental principle of the Welfare State that the market value of an individual cannot be the measure of his right to welfare.

The claim of the individual to welfare is sacred and irrefutable and partakes of the character of a natural right . . . but the citizen of the Welfare State does not merely have the right to pursue welfare; he has the right to receive it, even if the pursuit has not been particularly hot (Marshall, 1965, p. 268).

Therefore, social policies should be constructed which have as their central focus the alteration of conditions that prevail in the private market. And these policies are sound welfare policies because they are designed to improve the social welfare for particular categories or the society as a whole. Policies which follow the narrow guidelines can only hope to shuffle services and programs within existing agency orbits, and their social effectiveness is limited. They depend on the dubious benevolence of private entrepreneurs to reform the economy and the society, while the agencies concentrate their focus on social programs that are allegedly responsive to human need and concentrate on building integration and a sense of community in an unjust society.

The second criterion refers to the efficiency of organization in the implementation of policy. Efficiency is a standard in which the performance of the organization is compared with its cost in time, money and energy (Webster, 1976, p. 465). In order to measure efficiency it is necessary to search out the underlying principles on which the system of services is rendered, to challenge their plausibility and validity, and to examine the consequences of pursuing programs based on these principles (Rein, 1970, p. 463). No new policy is proposed that does not promise improvements in the efficiency of the organization and cost effectiveness--these are highly regarded as beneficent societal values. Furthermore, where these principles are coupled with procedures that allow for freedom of choice, freedom of dissent and citizen participation in the provision, delivery and review of services, there is seldom disagreement among users, professional persons or the public in general. The ideology of benevolence is, then, incorporated into the means of execution of the policy.

The final criterion of the benevolence of a social policy is derived from an examination of how the policy is implemented. The criterion is called democracy. There are many meanings of the term in the context of social policy.

First of all, democracy means that there will be provisions for effective citizen participation in all phases of the social policy process. Representative democracy is a form of organization which provides the mandate and the procedures for formally involving the people and their representatives in the policy process. But as organizations grow in size and complexity, the day-to-day participation in the process of governing becomes more attenuated, and special forms and procedures need to be instituted. These vary greatly depending on whether the primary purpose of participation is to give or get information; to facilitate conjoint planning or decision making; to permit review or sanction; or to mobilize the people in the organization and delivery of services. A democratic social policy process involves all these strategies.

Second, democracy refers to the openness of the policy process. Too many policies, too often, are formulated behind closed doors. The information on which policy is based is not often easily available to the public; or it is shrouded in secrecy; or it is scheduled for release in insufficient time and quantity to permit careful study; or it is released after the fact when the initial guiding decisions have already been formulated. Since policies, and governmental social policies in particular, are essentially a public process, it is essential that the information processes be organized in such a way that they are open to the general public and their representatives, easily accessible, and presented in a scheduled way so that the policy choices and procedures are real and understandable.

Third, social policies affect human life. There are many considerations of choice which affect the manner in which the policy is implemented. For instance, the values of privacy, dignity, work, independence and participation influence the criteria of eligibility, the forms of social provision, the design of delivery, and financial arrangements. If all individuals are to be treated as equal members of society, the allocation of benefits should avoid shame, stigma or excessive bureaucratic rigamarole. Where provisions are offered in forms which, necessarily, must restrict the individual's choice, these must be weighed carefully in scale of the public welfare. The freedom to dissent and to advocate must be preserved. Furthermore, on issues concerning local autonomy vs. centralized control, the values inherent in local autonomy should be carefully considered. During the policy process it may become necessary to sacrifice some aspects of cost effectiveness and efficiency in order to achieve the beneficent practice of democratic participation and social effectiveness.

In summary, all six criteria should be observed in the assessment of social policies, and together they form the basis on which a policy can be adjudged as benevolent, sound and reasonable. The leading questions that should be asked of a social policy are as follows. Questions 1 and 2 pertain particularly to the benevolent character of the policy; question 3 to its soundness; and question 4 to its reasonable character.

1. Does the policy achieve distributive justice as measured in terms of equality, equity and adequacy? Does the policy improve the social conditions of the designated beneficiaries?
2. Does the policy allow for the broadest form of democratic participation consistent with the achievement of the desired outcome? Does the policy conflict with or render void an essential principle of democratic government?
3. Is the policy socially effective; does it facilitate the desired outcome? If not, why not? Are sufficient resources allocated to the implementation of the policy so that it can be socially effective? Are sufficient controls placed on the problem producing conditions such that the desired outcome can not be obtained? Does the achievement of the desired outcome also result in producing effects that are worse than the original problem conditions? What can be done about this?
4. Is the policy efficiently organized, administered and financed?

The United States as a Welfare State

It is instructive to identify a few of the areas in which the United States has developed ameliorative social programs during the recent years, but, as yet, has failed to construct comprehensive social policies to guide their activity.

Some typical welfare state goals are to provide "full employment" without discrimination for all members of the society who are willing and able to work, and to regulate the economic system in ways that will assure a "decent" standard of living with social security "from the cradle to the grave." To what extent has the United States--the most affluent "welfare state"--assessed the need for, and formulated comprehensive social policies to achieve these goals? The following assessments are drawn in large part from official government documents and the analysis of "experts" published in the Encyclopedia of Social Work (1977), the authoritative sourcebook of the National Association of Social Workers in the U. S.

Child Welfare Policy. There is no comprehensive national policy concerning child welfare (Kahn, 1977, pp. 104-105).

No comprehensive survey of the status of American children exists. . . . There are no reliable data about child abuse and neglect, despite widespread publication of alleged rates by advocates of expanded programs to correct abuse.

U. S. social policy, based on free-market and minimalist intervention ethic, lacks general family allowances, which are common in most industrialized countries. . . . In the U. S., some working women may have modest paid maternity leaves and others have none. In Western and Eastern European countries, generous paid maternity leaves are common. . . . This country lacks the universal public health monitoring and medical care coverage for children that most other industrialized countries have. . . . Public housing programs are fewer than in most

other industrialized countries. One compensating factor for the less adequate services in this country is that Americans have a higher level of personal disposable income, which allows those with an adequate income (underline added) to purchase the goods and services they need.

Family Policy. There is no comprehensive national policy concerning families. "In spite of the lip service given to the sanctity of the family as the basic and most important social unit, there is no national policy or commitment to substantiate that value" (Giavannoni and Billingsley, 1977, p. 407).

"The United States has the reputation of having the highest divorce rate in the civilized world, and, with a few partial exceptions this appears to be true" (Leslie, 1977, p. 378). One out of six children under age 18 lived in one-parent families in 1974, and Paul Glick (1978, p. 53), Senior Demographer of the U. S. Bureau of Census, estimates that, given the current trends in divorce and separation, "45 percent of all children born in 1977 will spend a significant length of time as members of a one-parent family before they reach the age of 18."

More mothers in one-parent families worked in March 1978 than in two-parent families, 58.6 percent as compared with 47.8 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics Report 531). Furthermore, a Special Labor Force Report (Hayghe, 1976, pp. 13, 18) demonstrated that women had to work in order to survive, and to help their family "ameliorate the impact of the combination of inflation and recession on family income. . . . Wives contributed an average of 26 percent of their families' wage and salary income . . . in March 1975."

Welfare of the Aging. "While scientific advances in the twentieth century have enabled more human beings to reach old age, there has been a severe lag in meeting their social, health and economic needs. In effect, longer physical life too often (in the U. S.) is accompanied by loss of dignity and social death" (Brody, 1977, p. 74).

Life expectancy at birth increased from about 47 years in 1900 to 71.9 years in 1974. At the turn of the century the over-65's represented about 4 percent of the total U.S. population; today they comprise about 10 percent. By the year 2000 it is estimated that there will be about 30.6 million people over 65 in the U.S. This is a phenomenal growth in the aging population.

However, "older persons have half the income of their younger counterparts. . . . In 1974 about 43 percent of the aged couples could not afford the costs of the theoretical budget for retired couples prepared by the Bureau of Labor Standards for a modest but intermediate standard of living" (Brody, 1977, p. 57).

"American values such as achievement and success, activity and work, efficiency, practicality and progress are antithetical to old age in that the social roles assigned to the elderly do not mesh. . . . Existing social service systems are mostly inadequate and inappropriate to the needs of the elderly. . . . Advances have been made in . . . (the) coordination of practice, research, education, policy and planning, but there is still a lag

in accumulation of knowledge about aging, in its communication to practitioners, and in its translation into policy and planning" (Brody, 1977, p. 58, 76-77).

Health Policy. "The hazard of income loss because of sickness or injury, the problems of families with overwhelming medical debts, and the tragedy of medical care postponed or neglected because of ignorance or because of prohibitive costs in money or time lost from work have long been a central concern of social welfare policy" (Piore, 1977, p. 526).

"By 1976, expenditures for medical care . . . amounted to more than \$118.5 billion. . . . Between 1959 and 1974 personal health care expenditures rose from \$10.1 billion to \$90.3 billion. About 46 percent of the total rise is attributed to price increases" (Piore, 1977, p. 529, 530). From 1977 to 1978, in one year, the costs rose by about 15 percent. Although "two-thirds of these costs are met by third parties--government, private health insurance and philanthropy," it is estimated that "40 million Americans remain outside both the public and voluntary health benefit coverage programs" (Ibid., p. 539).

There is growing consensus on the need for a national health insurance system, but neither Congress nor the medical profession have taken the necessary steps in that direction. "Currently the U.S. ranks 14th among the nations of the world in infant mortality, which is widely considered a proxy measure of the health status of a nation" (Ibid., p. 535). "Despite the common view of the U.S. as progressive, countries such as France, England and Wales and Sweden have longer life expectancy at birth for both sexes" (Brody, 1977, p. 56). And there are clear health differences by race in the U. S. In 1973, for example, the average life expectancy of non-whites was 65.8 years as contrasted with 72.2 years for the white population in the country as a whole (Piore, 1977, p. 535).

Income Maintenance and Redistribution. The evidence of persistent, enduring poverty in the United States is indisputable. According to the U. S. Bureau of the Census (1977, pp. 1-2):

There were 25.9 million persons below the poverty level in 1975, comprising 12 percent of all persons. Between 1974 and 1975 the number of persons below the low-income level increased by 2.5 million or 10.7 percent, reflecting the continued inflation and sluggishness in the economy. For example, during this period the poverty thresholds increased 9.1 percent reflecting the changes in consumer prices, whereas personal income per capita increased only 7.5 percent. In addition, the average annual unemployment rate rose from 5.6 percent to 8.5 percent and the number of persons who exhausted their unemployment benefits increased from 2.0 million in 1974 to 4.3 million in 1975. The increase of 2.5 million low-income persons during the 1974-1975 period was the largest single year increase observed since 1959, the first year for which poverty data were available. . . .

Between 1974 and 1975, the increase in the number of persons below the poverty level was quite pervasive, occurring for both Black and White persons, for persons of Spanish origin, and for the young as well as the elderly. Particularly large percentage increases were observed for Whites, persons under 65 years, and husband-wife families.

While changes have been effected in "absolute poverty" as measured by the poverty threshold, very little has been accomplished by further income equality in the nation. Using the simplest measure of income distribution--the share of the annual income received by portions of the population ranked by income--the lowest 20 percent of the population has never varied from a 3-4 percent share, while the highest 20 percent has always received about 44 percent (U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1977). The economic conditions which produced this situation shortly after World War II have persisted up until the present time. Despite the War on Poverty and other governmental efforts of the past decades, there has been no general reduction in income equality from 1947 to 1975. Apparently, there will be no economic "welfare reform," promised by Presidents Johnson, Nixon, Ford and Carter, without a substantial restructuring of the American economy (Northwood, 1978).

A similar assessment could readily be constructed in the social policy areas pertaining to housing, education, nutrition, community services, transportation, environmental protection, legal services, the criminal justice system, and in almost every facet of the life of the society.

The formulation of social policy and the choosing of goals involves making priority choices. It is myopic not to consider military expenditures as a social policy choice. As history has proved, the selection of military policies has many damaging effects for social development, not the least of which is the reduction of resources available to fund social programs and implement social policies (Northwood, 1977). Such a political perspective leads to a key question about the policy process. One may ask: "Who is winning and who is losing, and what goods (money, status, power) are they winning or losing by this or that policy decision?" (Tropman et al., 1976, p. 10). This political question is central and should be used to analyze any policy proposal (Boulding, 1967; Hillsman, 1976).

In 1976, U.S. Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman commented that military spending in the proposed budget for 1977 "accounted for one-quarter of all spending, almost 50 percent of all Federal revenues not earmarked for trust funds, and 70 percent of all 'controllable outlays'" (Holtzman, 1977). She proposed that military spending be reduced by \$10 billion and the funds be diverted to a variety of social programs to relieve the effects of inflation and unemployment, and to provide support for health, education and welfare; services to the youth and the aging; mass transit construction; and crime prevention. Her proposal failed to receive enough votes for passage. Similar attempts were rejected by Congress in 1977 and 1978. However, the campaign to shift national priorities continues to receive popular and legislative support. At the same time military budgets grow steadily. And as the U. S. continues to arm itself, it has also become the leading arms exporter in the world. According to the U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the United States delivered a total of \$31.6 billion worth of arms to foreign countries between 1965 and 1974, or just under 50 percent of all arms traded on the international market (U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1976, p. 73).

In 1954 the New York Times called the United States a "reluctant welfare state." Twenty-five years later a more appropriate designation would be the "Warfare-Welfare State."

Toward the Democratization of the Social Policy Process

There are many legal and quasi-legal means of affecting how the government is run in a democracy. Among the quasi-legal means frequently employed by most people at some times in their lives are tax evasion and bending or breaking the law. But most people engage in government legally by observing the spirit of the law, exercising the vote, or serving in office. In addition, they may protest what they consider to be an injustice, petition their elected representatives or other governmental functionaries, or otherwise enter the social policy process either directly through some form of government sponsored citizen participation, or indirectly through their activity with political parties, civic organizations, and social movements. All of these latter, legally sanctioned activities, make up the social policy process.

In this paper we have emphasized the thesis that the public social policy process, in essence, is a vehicle through which government can, and should be, democratized if it is conducted appropriately and toward that end. The social policy process has the potential for focusing attention on the major social problems and the serious shortcomings of the society. Through it, ameliorative programs can be proposed in the context of alternatives which can be assessed in terms of the available resources and the desired outcomes. It has the capacity of generating information about the success or failure of a particular program, why this is so, and how it can be altered to be more effective. Thus, the policy process provides one basis for evaluating the general effectiveness of government. This is much different than choosing among candidates or officeholders merely on the basis of their promises, the usual practice in a representative democracy.

Properly organized, the social policy process can facilitate democratic government. The electoral process, on the one hand, allows the citizenry at fixed periods of time--the time of elections--to select the men and women who occupy the formal positions in elective bodies, and who enjoy the rights and responsibilities for guiding the policy process. In contrast, social policy process is continuous and ongoing. It provides a channel of immediate access of the citizenry to the machinery of government. It involves the direct participation of the citizen, not his representative. Furthermore, it allows the specialized expertise of the participant to be brought to bear on the policy. The specialized expertise may derive from participating in the program, such as a welfare recipient or a service professional.

As pointed out in the paper, the social policy process is not conducted in this democratic way in today's modern "warfare-welfare state," the United States. The purpose of this section of the paper is to identify some of the barriers to the democratization of the social policy process. Three barriers are identified. They pertain to (1) the openness of the social policy process; (2) the relative uninvolvedness of the citizenry in the process, especially of the primary users and social professionals; and (3) the absence or near-absence of systematic, comprehensive evaluation of social policies.

The Openness of the Social Policy Process

As the third section of the paper demonstrated, there are few, if any, comprehensive guiding social policies of relevance to the type of issues with which the "welfare state" is supposed to be concerned: employment, inflation, health, education, welfare, housing, the social security of children, families, and the aging.

In the absence of such policy and for other reasons, the government engages in endless committee activity devoted to fact-finding about social problem conditions. Thus, it is safe to say that no nation is as well equipped as the United States with information about the prevailing problems of the society. However, this information is not brought to bear in effective programs to remove or prevent the society from suffering the consequences of the problems. Occasionally, a committee report may lead to the establishment and/or funding of an ameliorative social program. However, the history of such efforts demonstrate conclusively that such programs have attained a modicum of effectiveness only when they have been accompanied by the insistence of mass movements. These movements largely have exerted their influence through mass protest and through the ballot box rather than through the internal workings of the social policy process.

The most successful social policies in terms of their effectiveness have been concerned with military and economic development. The federal government has consistently and regularly allocated some \$1.5 trillion to military expenditures during the past three decades (Sivard, 1977). With the allocation it has achieved, not without tremendous waste of funds and resources, the greatest military power that the world has ever known. Whether this great military power provides adequately for the nation's security is a debatable point.

The economic development has been furthered and fostered through the military and other programs, particularly through fiscal policy which provides subsidies to business and industry, and which exempts them from the payment of tens of billions of dollars in taxes each year. For example, corporate income taxes in 1944 provided 33.6 percent of the total federal income in tax revenues, whereas, by 1974, it was only 14.6 percent (Brandon, Rowe and Stanton, 1976, p. 22). Economists Joseph Pechman and Benjamin Okner (1974) calculate that if all the special tax breaks were eliminated, we could cut the income tax rates by an average of 43 percent. Wealthy individuals who now effectively reduce their tax bills by more than 43 percent would then actually pay more, while the majority would pay less. Moreover, net interest payments on the national debt of \$650 billion accounted for 14 percent of the domestic baseline expenditures in the U.S. in 1977 (Schultze, 1976, p. 345). This may be considered as a direct subsidy to individuals and corporations who own most of the government bonds.

In making its budget decisions and in the review of its operating procedures, the federal government has understandably been reluctant to expose its policy making machinery to the public view, or even to the scrutiny of Congress in general. Much of the information which guides social policy is secret or accessible to only a few highly placed individuals. For years the military budgets were simply rubber stamped by

an acquiescent Congress while almost every social program, which issued out of committee after prolonged debate, was subjected to further detailed examination and criticism. For example, during the Nixon "imperial presidency" dozens of social programs were vetoed, and when they were repassed by Congress over the presidential veto, the enabling funds were diverted or impounded. This situation came to a head in the Watergate Era when Congress passed legislation to enable its review of budgetary matters and to restrict the scope of the presidential veto (Gartner, Greer, and Riessman, 1973; Northwood, 1977, unpublished). Subsequently, President Carter has challenged some of these Congressional restrictions as excessive and unconstitutional. Meanwhile, Congress attempts through the courts to secure access to information about the covert activities of the CIA and the FBI in order that they can perform adequate budgetary review as to the nature and effectiveness of these activities.

But much of the policy activity of Congress is not of such a sensitive nature that it must be protected from the public. However, the ordinary procedures of Congress preclude widespread public participation. On many issues, the body simply goes into "executive session" which forbids participation by outsiders. Moreover, hearings on proposed policy changes are held at the whim of the committee chairman to which proposals are submitted. The committee hearings often occur in Washington, and at times that are convenient to its members, not the public. Furthermore, the legislative processes by which a bill is enacted are complicated, and not understood by many of those who wish to be heard. There is not time enough for everybody to participate who wants to.

The volume of legislation is massive, too much for any congressman to absorb by himself. Furthermore, Congress has "disabled itself" by the way control is exercised over expenditures: revolving funds are established; government corporations are created; the refusal to prohibit transfers between appropriations; the authorization of the use of departmental receipts without the limitation of amount; the voting of lump sum appropriations (O'Connor, 1974, p. 114).

As a result of these and other complicating procedures, the process of governing becomes more and more indirect. Congressmen become more dependent on the polling process as a source of information. They hold informal meetings with organized constituencies which are far removed from the decision making process. They come to rely on the people who are close to them for advice. Among these are the paid legislative representatives of special interest groups, who can afford to maintain offices near the action, who are more-or-less skilled in legislative and political persuasion, and who have the resources to perform personal favors or offer other incentives in return for the legislator's vote. There are probably hundreds of effective lobbyists representing business, military and economic interests for every advocate of consumers and health, education and welfare agencies. Even the latter are often more sensitive to the issues and concerns of the professionals than they are to the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged.

In the discussion so far, the reference has been to the social policy process at the national governmental level. A similar account could be constructed of the state and local levels--with a similar result. To be sure, there are ways in which the policy process differs at these levels. In general, legislators are more accessible, more informed about local

problem conditions, and more responsive to mass persuasion which can be organized more easily in the local area. Furthermore, most officeholders depend upon a home area for their election, and they tend to listen to home town voters more than others. However, local and state governments do not have at their disposal massive national resources often required for the solution of serious social problems. Consequently, there has grown up a traditional division of labor among governmental units in which issues of the social welfare are usually considered to rest in the domain of national government. Thus, they may be ignored by local governmental units.

The Discouragement of Citizen Participation

One of the unfortunate consequences of this relatively closed system of policy making has been the discouragement of citizen participation both in the electoral and social policy processes. For example, Walter Dean Burnham (1970) conducted a survey of the voting turnout in 20 leading "western" nations between the years of 1945-1969. He found that an average of less than 60 percent of the eligible voters participated in elections in the United States as compared with an average of 83.3 percent in the balance of the nations. While it is said that a large proportion of Americans belong to at least one voluntary association, perhaps half the adult population of the United States, very few are "active" in organizations that involve themselves in "politics," perhaps one in seven persons (Smith and Freedman, 1972, Chapter 4). Labor unions are frequently considered as effective channels for influencing social policy. However, in the United States during the period 1950-1970, the labor force increased by 20 million persons, but unions enrolled barely one-quarter of that number, a very low proportion in comparison with trade union membership in the industrialized nations of the world (Anderson, 1974, p. 164).

Thus, the great majority of the people are not affiliated with voluntary associations with a particular interest in the policy process. At the same time, in every city, town and hamlet of the nation a small proportion of the population is actively engaged in such efforts, and in many organizational forms. Perhaps the most influential are the political parties and associations, the organized trade unions, business, commercial and professional associations, the churches, the single and multiple issue movements that emerge around particular sectors of the population (women, minorities, the aging); particular issues (taxation, peace, protection of the consumer or the ecology), or particular activities (sports, religious culture, hobbies). All of these are more or less active when the social policy affects their area of interest. In other words, with a few notable exceptions, they do not have a sustained and scheduled relationship with respect to the public policy process.

In fact, the political participation by voluntary associations and their members is actively discouraged by the government in several effective ways. First, there are restrictions on the political activities in which government workers may engage imposed by many governmental units. In addition, associations which are politically active may have their tax exempt status cancelled; and they are required to pay higher postal rates. Furthermore, political surveillance and other forms of harrassment have been used by the government during recent years

activities that run counter to the prevailing administration. The ambiguous definition and uneven enforcement of such provisions does not mitigate their chilling effect.

The voluntary associations which are involved in public policy making and administration have a particular relationship to the government agencies with which they are associated. Some are given access to the means of policy making and administration, and some are not. Warner (1973, pp. 253-254), who has reviewed the empirical literature on the subject, comments: "Both policy and administration are essentially political processes, and therefore mediation by voluntary associations requires competition in political struggle." Some voluntary associations are "captured" or "coopted" by the administrative agency; in some instances, the reverse occurs. In any case, the special working relationships "differ markedly from the general image of voluntary associations as 'free standing' units of society that appeal to public agencies for consideration of particular points of view, as well as to mobilize public opinion and 'educate the public'." Where voluntary associations take on a public or quasi-public character, few of them have adequate machinery for public accountability when they take on public functions. For example, business and professional associations may be accorded the right to accredit or police the activities in their area of expertise, yet turn out to be more responsive to their colleagues than to the society.

Although federal regulations are more cognizant of, more numerous, more developed, and more consequential toward citizen participation than they were a decade ago, "a single, explicated uniform and consistent federal policy concerning citizen participation has neither been established legislatively or administratively." That is the conclusion of Hans Spiegel, who reviewed the subject in 1971. Furthermore, he points out that:

The federal administration at its highest levels favors citizen participation that is congruent with and not disruptive of municipal and federal program management, (and it) opposes citizen participation that results in citizen control over, as contrasted with citizen involvement in, any key aspects of programs. (Spiegel, 1971, p. 14)

The federal record of support for citizen participation is in accord with this conclusion. As a case in point, Pivin and Cloward have been leading advocates of "disruptive strategies" to force bureaucratic agencies to meet the needs of the poor and the disadvantaged. An agency following this strategy instituted "massive rent strikes" and "mass claims for welfare benefits" (Pivin and Cloward, 1971). For a time, the agency was supported by federal grants and a large national foundation. These funds gradually disappeared. This example is not atypical; it is a general rule. Therefore we conclude that it is unlikely that the federal government will finance any significant reform unless the class composition of the governing bodies change.

Pivin writes (Pivin and Cloward, 1974, p. 340): "As localities lose their political autonomy, the forces that remain viable will be those capable of exerting national influence." And that influence will be exerted through organizing citizen participation around progressive social policies with or without government support and funding.

Failure to Evaluate Policy Outcome

The effectiveness of social policy can only be measured with certainty if there is a systematic evaluation of the outcome of the process. Without this evidence one cannot be sure of what effects and consequences were actually produced by the policy, and whether these were the desired ones. Even where the outcome is thoroughly and systematically assessed, there is room for doubt and uncertainty, given the level of development of the research technology in social evaluation. But without the application of the science that exists, speculation remains rampant, and the hope of the society to be guided by social policies that are benevolent, sound and reasonable is a pipedream and a narcotic.

What the measurement of the outcome can produce is reasonable information whether the policy actually affected the lives of the designed beneficiaries and whether the designated problem conditions were somewhat ameliorated. Outcome measurement can tell us whether the policy had little or no desired effects, or, instead, contributed to worsening conditions. Finally, it can provide useful evidence to indicate a different line of social intervention.

It should be remembered that the evaluation of outcome differs from the evaluation of performance, which is concerned with efficiency in the organization and administration of policy. Thus, it is entirely possible to be very efficient in performing activities that may satisfy the consumer and the producer, but be worthless in producing the desired effects.

There are very serious questions about whether any social program, let alone a social policy, has ever been evaluated systematically in terms of its efficiency and effectiveness in the United States. The reasons for this are many.

In the first place, social programs are primarily considered by congressmen as a vehicle for distributing money or services to designated persons or districts rather than a way of testing the soundness of a social policy (D. Cohen, 1972). While lip service is given to the policy, and it may provide a persuasive rationale for the passage of legislation, many congressmen are more concerned with getting something done immediately for the electorate than with the evaluation of long term effectiveness. Thus, where evaluation is required by the enabling legislation, usually this pertains to the efficiency in costs and administration, which can be measured immediately.

Second, social programs are frequently drafted in terms that stress legal, administrative and fiscal restrictions while the plan of organization and intervention is expressed more generally in order to allow for innovation. Moreover, since programs may be instituted simultaneously in many areas and under widely differing auspices, it is difficult to manage their evaluation, even where responsibility for this is kept in federal hands. Although the research evaluation may be centrally administered, the data are collected locally where the action takes place. There are dozens of sources of variation and error that exist where there is no standardized design and methodology, and the data are collected and analyzed by persons with insufficient knowledge, skill and motivation. All of these variations and errors will occur in the implementation of broadscale social programs.

The complex problems of evaluation have been discussed by Alice Rivlin (1971) and others (Haveman, 1977; Rossi and Williams, 1972; Caro, 1977; Weiss, 1972). Her conclusion is that:

Neither social service systems nor government programs are organized to generate information about their effectiveness. Furthermore, new techniques or combinations of resources are not tried out systematically so that their effectiveness can be evaluated. Until programs are organized so that analysts can learn from them and systematic experimentation is undertaken on a significant scale, prospects seem dim for learning how to produce better social services.

Furthermore, she doubts that systematic experimentation can be devised, organized and funded by the federal government for reasons such as the following: First of all is the large dollar cost of experimentation. Besides costliness, there are many ethical questions such as: Does society have the right to take risks with the lives and well-being of individuals in the name of experimentation? Can services be provided to some people and not to others in the name of experimentation? If legal and moral questions can be answered satisfactorily, there are many technical research problems to be solved, such as appropriate sampling, replication and the control of extraneous variables. A major barrier is the long time it takes from the initiation of the study to the production of usable results in policy-relevant forms. Rivlin notes that "experiments may become substitutes for action or excuses for inaction" (p. 118).

Despite these disadvantages, Rivlin believes that, "the federal government should follow a systematic experimentation strategy in seeking to improve the effectiveness of social action programs." Her approach is to decentralize the authority for making evaluations of effectiveness. First of all, the local community should be held accountable for how federal dollars are spent with rewards being bestowed on local agencies which produce more efficiently. To be sure, there are difficulties in this strategy because local sponsors might be influenced to bias their research methodology and findings to assure a steady flow of federal investment. However, this might be partially overcome by the federal government developing and refining performance measures, defined in terms of the program outcomes, which would be instituted and monitored at the federal level.

Moreover, Rivlin advocates experimenting with mechanisms prevalent in the private market economy for certain programs. For example, instead of federal support to public education in general, vouchers might be provided to parents who could choose the school in which they would enroll their children. Such a voucher system would "accentuate existing problems of income equality" if the parents chose to pay the premium required in addition to the government voucher to send their children to more expensive schools, offering richer curricula, smaller classes and more elaborate facilities. But this outcome might be controlled through providing larger vouchers to poor children, and in other ways.

Even though economists know that the private market "does not work perfectly in the private sector," Rivlin (p. 134, 138-139) notes that there are offsetting benefits:

Perhaps major national manufacturers would invest considerable sums in new educational techniques, hoping that they could be proved more effective and then sold to schools seeking to enhance their attractiveness to students. These companies, however, would tend to invest in hardware and materials on which they could retain exclusive rights through patents and copyrights. There might be serious neglect of methods and approaches that, while conceivably more effective than hardware, could be easily copied without compensation to the original developer.

Rivlin's comments are not atypical. They characterize the orientation of the government analysts toward social programs and social policies. First, they recognize the essential need for outcome evaluation if any adequate measure of effectiveness is to be obtained. Then they raise a host of technical, moral and political problems that explain why such measures have not been instituted in the United States, and which render them unlikely in the future. Third, they tend to shift the responsibility for systematic evaluation from federal to local authorities. Finally, they reaffirm their faith, albeit with reservations, in the efficacy and the benevolence of private market mechanisms as the best way to do the job.

Critics of this line of reasoning are quick to note that the failure to evaluate the effectiveness of social programs and social policies is closely related to the reluctance of the government to open up its policy machinery to critical inspection and with its efforts to discourage citizen participation in the policy process. The three factors are intertwined and interrelated. Therefore, any realistic program to democratize the social policy process in America will have to engage in political reform to be successful. This does not mean that small measures cannot be taken now to improve every facet of the process, but that, in so doing, attention must also be directed to improving the social policies that govern the policy making machinery.

A Modest Agenda for Social Policy Researchers

Researchers and scholars, no matter what their field of inquiry, are expected to be guided by the standards and ethics which pertain to scientific inquiry and its conduct. This means, among other things, that they work to assure the validity and reliability of their research, and that they share the methodology and findings in ways that promote the growth and development of science and scientifically guided practice. Furthermore, when working with human subjects, they are required to employ a variety of safeguards which protect people from unfair manipulation, exploitation, embarrassment, or harm.

In addition to these standards, researchers and scholars have an increased responsibility when they deal with social policy issues. We have stressed the functions of social policy for achieving benevolent, sound and reasonable changes in the society through the enhancement of the democratic problem solving process. It is the responsibility of the social policy

analyst to conduct his work in such a way that these democratic potentials are maximized.

Donald N. Mitchell (1970, p. 3) has posed this issue nicely in the question: "Who has the right to do what to whom, on what grounds?" Thus, there must continue to be an ever-present challenge to sources of legitimacy and authority in society. Mitchell sees this as one of the important roles of the voluntary association in society. In this paper we postulate that it is the responsibility of every worker in social welfare organization to review his/her activities from time to time in the perspective of the issues raised by this question, including especially the social policy researcher. To meet this added responsibility, the following modest program is proposed for social policy researchers and scholars:

1. Understand the nature of the public social policy process and its potential for democratizing government.
2. Conduct research in ways: that maintain the openness of the public policy system with respect to quantity, quality, accessibility and timing of information relevant to policy formulation and decision-making; that facilitate the organization and scheduling of citizen participation in all activities of the process; that require the clear specification and measurement of the desired outcomes for all policies.
3. Identify the implicit and explicit value assumptions that underlie social policies, and elaborate both the positive and negative effects and consequences of a policy and its implementation.
4. Explore the potentials of working with non-governmental organizations, voluntary associations, and social movements interested in improving the distributive justice for the user and the consumer.

This paper has begun the analysis of the nature of the social policy process and its potential for democratization. But much remains to be done. To begin with, it is necessary to root out the conservative ideology that automatically accords benevolence to government social policies and to the policies of the "welfare state." The works of Galper (1975), Gil (1973, 1976), O'Connor (1973, 1974), Romanyshin (1971, 1974), Bailey and Brake (1975), Roby (1974) Cloward and Pivin (1971, 1974), Mandell (1975), Castells (1977) and Titmuss (1962, 1969, 1974) are helpful in this respect, among others. However, there are many themes in this body of writing which belittle the importance of social planning and the social policy process as necessary vehicles for democratization, with which the author does not agree. Time does not allow a detailed analysis of this important subject.

Furthermore, there are many small reforms that can be made in the practice of policy and the policy making machinery which can facilitate major reform if this is not lost sight of in the tinkering process. Policy researchers can enter the struggle right now by improving their current research and organizational techniques.

For example, where data are collected firsthand as in social surveys and systematic observation, the process can be scheduled in ways that information is given to the respondent as well as information obtained from the

respondent, if not prior to data collection then immediately following. It is possible to use citizen review panels before, during and after the data collection. These have relevance both to improving the research and informing the public. Where data are gathered strictly from secondary sources, the same potential exists for citizen review and interpretation. Furthermore, the information process should be organized and scheduled so as to promote conjoint planning and decision making.

Policy related research typically has been associated with the management echelon of organization. However, there is no inevitable reason why this needs to be so. Of course, management frequently is the sponsor or funder of such research and often controls access to the data. Therefore, it may be difficult, or seemingly difficult, for the researcher to institute an open policy stance. Thus, it would seem that the researcher is faced with a moral problem when he opposes management policy. There are many alternatives available to the researcher in such cases. What the author is arguing for is that the researcher take the moral stance that public policy is an open process and that he guide his behavior accordingly. The resourceful researcher can usually devise procedures for circumventing onerous restrictions. The motivated researcher can usually manage, over time, to organize his research activities in ways and in settings which are conducive to his interests and amenable to the open policy (Kim and Wellons, 1976).

It should be recognized, however, that with growing specialization and bureaucratization of research and the settings in which it is done, the work is so fragmented that many of the personnel are not even aware of the policy implications and the policy uses to which data are amenable. Furthermore, the difficulties of organizing and scheduling citizen participation in the research process may seem like an obstacle or barrier to productivity, unnecessary work for meager results, or a task beyond the scope of the researcher or for which he is ill-prepared to manage effectively. In addition, he may never have questioned the utility or benevolence of his work--that is what he is paid to do. These many reasons underscore the necessity for raising the consciousness of those engaged in social welfare work, and especially the researchers engaged in evaluation of social programs or social policy.

One way of doing this is to clearly spell out the desired outcomes and beneficiaries of the research. Another, more preferable way is for the researcher and the scholar to put their skills and talents to use with organizations which are clearly directed toward achieving distributive justice for the consumers and the users of social policy. By association with the disadvantaged sectors of society, the researcher and the scholar can acquire a better understanding of the problem conditions and a realistic knowledge of what is required for their amelioration. Too many professionals forget whatever experiences they may have had in the past that impelled them to seek ameliorative change, and they begin to shape their work according to the status quo expectations of their sponsors.

But it need not be this way! Of course, it will require a political struggle to realize the democratic potentials of the social policy process, just as it requires a political struggle to elect good men and women to office and to keep them oriented toward distributive justice. The current high cost of running for public office effectively places this option beyond

the means of most people. This makes it imperative that the social policy process be kept open and democratic in its means and ends. In this, social policy analysts, at least, can play their part in helping bring about a better tomorrow.

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