SOCIAL CHANGE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR SOCIAL WORK

Stephen Opoku

Introduction:

The issue of social change has engaged the attention of social theorists and plannistrators for generations and continues so to do. Changes have been affecting every society whether or not people understand their origin and their direction. Though it will be difficult to adequately explain change by any theory we can neither believe the world stands still. Thus it will be difficult to believe in a world of total capriciousness. In spite of our personal experience of the world as unpredictable, one of the most deep-seated of our beliefs that it displays some describable pattern at any particular time and that the changes between patterns over time are also amenable to description. Social Change depends on what we take society to be, and we take society to be what our purpose and position dictate. Change is inevitable and universal and an element in every human situation. The modern world is a world of rapid change which affects people and the environment. Change has types such as natural change and planned change. A natural change may lead to growth such as population growth and a planned change which derives from a purposeful decision to effect improvements in a personality or social system may lead to development. Change agents may institute change in order to improve some area of personal, group or social affairs. Change forces and methods of change vary and change and culture are a big issue which change theorist cannot ignore since man lives, grows, and functions within a cultural context. The materials presented develop the theme that problems in meeting human needs and societal responses to human needs via the social welfare system increase during times of accelerated social change and pose serious challenges to social work methods of intervention.

The viewpoint here is that social control and the provision for human need are closely related to and have influenced the development of the contemporary social welfare system. Social change then depends first on what we define as the relevant system that is changing and second upon how long after the event we are examining it. As Cohen (1968) notes in an introduction to social change we can only know ex post facto whether a change was significant or not. On the other hand Kurt Lewin (1952) has drawn attention to democracy in bringing about change in the individual, group and community. Thus a crucial challenge to social work is how to define or interpret the relevance of change and what adaptations to make of its methods in dealing with human situations. This strongly underlies the need for professional help to people - individuals and /or groups - who must change in order to improve their level of functioning as well as enhance their adaptation to changing circumstances. Other consideratins include the task of searching out the common good between the client's perception of change and the aspects of social demand with which he is faced. In other words, the issue is the task of contributing ideas or facts which may prove

useful to the client in attempting to cope with the part of "social reality" generated by change as well as defining the requirements and the limits of the change situation in which the client-worker system is set.

The Concept Of Change

The concept of Social Change is vague and somewhat meaningless since social change must be changing something. The nature of society and social life, how it changes and how to change it has been of concern to philosophers of antiquity up to today. The concern of social scientists about social change is legitimate because it enables us to understand and interpret the world around us.

The idea of social change covers a wide range of phenomena.
It is not all of precisely the same kind and different authors take different views about its nature. Furthermore social scientists take up various positions about what it is that is crucial to social change, in particular abut what kinds of things which are in general most likely to initiate social change. Depending on their position on this question, they are likely to pick on different aspects of society to concentrate on as the most significant; for example, if one believes that the key factor in social change is the technology of production, then the one is more likely to focus on this aspect for discussion and treat other factors lightly. It will take probably a decade to review all the theories about social change and no one will dare to even attempt that. What needs to be done is to look at a few factors and extrapolate from them.

Beattie J.H.M. (1987) says that given that one cannot study society in general so also can one not study social change in general, what is given us for analysis are specific social institutions and what we have to do is to study the modifications of these through time, in the context of their relationship with other co-existing institutions.

Contemporary studies of Africa deal with such questions as law, land tenure, the impact of technology, juvenile delinquency, industrialization, the impact of technology, education, elites, culture contact and acculturation, religion, marriage, labour migration, communication, economic change, nationalism, political change, racism, ethnicity, colonialism and neo-colonialism, etc - all in an attempt to see the nature and the extent and direction of change going on in society.

SomeTheories
A good many philosophers in the past have defined social change as dependent on the untrammelled free initiative of individuals. So that social change, adapting society to circumstances, can take place, these philosophers stressed the role of the individual in society and warned against society's power over the individual. John Locke (1966) was the chief proponent of this view. Mill, J.S.(1966) attached supreme importance to the seminal influence of totally autonomous individual creativity. Hilter, A. (1940) claimed in his **Mein Kampt that all human** culture, all the results of art, science and technology that we see before us today are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan race. That it is no accident that cultures arose in many places, but the Aryan was able to subjugate them

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because of their superman nature. The consequence was the gas ovens at Dachan, Bachenwald, Anschwitz.

Thomas Hobbes(1950) thought that the state of nature needed a strong ruler to save men from destruction-dictatorship.

Max Weber(1967) talked about ideas, attitude, religion, that it was the Calvinist religion that produced capitalism, for it preached hard work, postponement of pleasure and thereby accumulation of capital. That religious ideas determined economic systems.

Karl Marx(1974) thought that the economic system determined the way society was organized. That the economic system was what shaped social arrangements, that the superstructure could be understood in terms of the ownership of the means of production.

Evolutionary theories of social change greatly influenced the course of social events in the 18th and 19th centuries. Charles Darwin's (1859) origin of species and the ideas of his apologists like Herbert Spencer (1967) and Graham Summer (1950) as well as Emile Durkheim's (1949) **Division of Labour occasioned** by population growth, sought to offer an explanation for the kinds of changes going on in their day.

Recent theorists like Wilbert Moore(1963) and Neil Smelser (1959) have attributed much of the changes going on to the Industrial Revolution and Industrialization. It is contended that it was the scientific revolution that gave to man the conceptual tools which enabled him to master new sources of energy. In its widest meaning the industrial revolution is the technological component of what we now call economic development and cultural modernization, a set of mutually reinforcing structural transformations which are revolutionary in the extent to which personal, social and political as well as economic life are made to change.

Wilbert Moore (1963) states that industrialization brings about two kinds of Changes, First Order Changes and Second Order Changes. First Order Changes are changes which are universal as a consequence of industrialization such as the money system, market exchange, money economy, distribution, services etc. Second Order changes imply changes in social institutions consequent upon the factory system. There is increased occupational mobility as well as geographical mobility, and people specialize in jobs or skills. Industrialization may produce urbanization but urbanization does not have to follow industrialization. It is the type of industrialization which will determine whether or not urbanization goes on. Another feature of industrialization is the improvement in transport which facilitates migration. Some people migrate voluntarily in protest against the traditional set-up, others do so because they are forced to move to urban areas to earn wages.

With Urbanization comes a variety of sub-cultures as conglomeration of people takes place. The urban areas find it difficult to absorb all migrants in the social sense - housing,

hospital, water supply etc. Furthermore the situation may produce conflict of norms, values, prejudices, communication problems etc. Slums arise and there may be an army of unemployed, unemployable, or disguised unemployment, community identity has little sense in this conglomeration. New forms or mechanisms of social control evolve since traditional norms do not apply. People become secondarily related and alcoholism, prostitution, theft, crime and the like, may increase. The not-so-tough may suffer extreme alienation.

To control all these, formal governmental control becomes intensified and many informal ways of control either completely disappear or drastically diminish.

In the rural areas, position is ascribed but in urban-industrial situations, allocation of rewards and position is achieved. It is one's ability which determines one's income. Conflict may come between traditional role and industrial role. In the industrial-urban setting a new criterion of allocating wealth emerges. As occupations increase stratification also does for what occupation one pursues presupposes a certain level of education, what kind of life one leads, where one stays etc. Life styles then may reflect the class a person belongs as the people tend to coalesce together to form large groups for political, social and economic reasons.

Changes in Institutions
The institution that becomes most affected by industrialization is the family. Industrialization largely affects the family and kinship system. In the traditional society the family is self-sufficient but under conditions of industrial living, the extended family may suffer a crack. The internal authority structure cannot be continued and bureaucracy takes its place. People became more used to the independent life rather than dependent on the family. The authority of parents over children decreases, age no longer becomes the criterion for position in society and everything now depends on achievement.

Women become economically emancipated and bachelorhood and spinsterhood become rife because there are various means of interest, unlike the traditional where marriage is that which normally provides satisfaction . Divorce increases in the industrial area because choice is open to either partner. As women engage in labour, their traditional role wanes. Socialization of children is no longer domesticated. Independent agencies take over and there may be conflict of values for children.

Intergration

Emile Durheim (1949) has pointed out that as division of labour in society increases and there is heterogeneity, the interest of people become more varied, since structural differentiation causes fragmentation, it means that an entirely new means of integration ought to emerge to enable people to cope with each other - what he calls re-integration, which is manifested in voluntary and occupational associations.

As the family gradually loses its cohesiveness (partly through out-migration) the only effective means of offering security is the state. The state increases in power to regulate wages and rights. Voluntary associations, trade unions, self-help organizations, spring up and develop a new kind of culture to absorb individual culture so as to offer a new measure of security . Some of these associations have stronger hold on members than families, and this situation may generate conflict with serious consequences on families. Examples abound in Ghana where some religious groups have exercised so much influence on their members (especially women) to such an extent that married women have had to leave their marital homes to sleep in church rooms resulting in unpleasant outcomes.

Social Disturbances

Some of the changes accompanying industrialization include social disturbances. Firstly, the norms, practices et cetera that arise pari passu with the industrial-urban phenomenon may conflict with the traditional ones and this can cause considerable friction in the relationships among people. Secondly, unevenness in changes in generative of heat which may end up in anomie or normlessness. Temporary disturbances such as uncertainty, fear, fantasy and anxiety are experienced alongside with the long term ones such as anomie, statuslessness and the like. Immigrant problems of discrimination in housing and other facilities - and it is here that the highly specialized skills of social workers, teachers and others will be required to deal with the subtle problems which beset particular individuals.

Other Sources of Change
1. *Conquest and Colonialism*
Drastic changes in social structures have come about as a result of conquest and colonialism. During the period of the European penetration of various parts of the world, there were confrontations with the local people resulting in drastic changes.

Andre' Gundar Frank (1971) has vividly documented the processes by which these changes occurred thus transforming the whole social dynamics of those cultures concerned.

a)   *Demographic Decline:* The Slave Trade in African accounted for loss of manpower of 10-15 million virile artisans, craftsmen. This collosal manpower was taken away. On the American continent it was not so much the trade in slaves as forced labour for gold-mining (brutality) which destroyed the social frame-work of those taken away. In Africa itself the slave trade replaced the diversification of internal economic activity.

b)   *Political Decline:* The warfare for slaves and resources stabilized political king-doms in many places. Some of the kingdoms are here listed:

South America	-	Aztec & Inca
India	-	Mogul
China	-	C'hing Dynasty

Africa	-	Songhai, Mali, Ghana, Hausa
North East Africa	-	Ethiopia and Nubian
East Africa	-	Great Zimbabwe

c)   *Colonialism:* The desire for controlled markets for European manufactures brought colonial administrative structures designed to adapt the socio-economic organization of the colony to the needs of the mother country. For easy relations colonial languager were made compulsory. Colonial laws were introduced, meaning that colonies had to adapt to the interpretation of the laws. The nature of some of these laws turned people into criminals over night while the real intent behind the institution of these laws was to ensure the convinience of the colonial masters. It is regrettable that most or all of these laws still remain in criminal code of many African countries like Ghana. Africans very much like outdoor life and when in bright moonlight one wanted to have a walk especially near European quarters, the chances of being arrested for loitering were very high indeed. A whiteman in a similar circumstance would be taken as one enjoying fresh air.

The exchange of gifts has been African from time immemorial irrespective of the context within which the exchange takes place. The interpretation given to it is another. I believe that it was the erroneous interpretation conferred on the act at the initial stage which changed a good intention into a criminal stance referred to as bribery.For example:

Public Nuisance	-	Shouting
Indecent Exposure	-	Urination in the view of others.
Loitering	-	Walking about (aimlessly?)
Exchange of Gifts in official places	-	Bribery.

As such many harmless and innocent people being thrown into prison or arrested who were not really criminals in the actual sense of the word.

d) *Labour:* Through the introduction of the tax system in order to maintain the colonial apparatus, local production became directed towards obtaining money to pay taxes, that is, wage labour. Wage labour meant that the producer no longer had control over his products but had to depend on market forces. With integration into the market system, production like cotton, coffee, bananas, etc were done with the intent to obtain money. Production for domestic consumption was therefore relegated to second place. Large scale mining was introduced not for the use of local craftsmen but for export to feed the colonial market. Labour migration and movement of people become a practice and young unattached people had to satisfy themselves with new unknown acquaintances - resulting in some cases in prostitution and illness.

Nationalism- Nation Building - Africanization

The period of nationalism has also been a turning point in the history of nations. The sentiment that nations should manage their own affairs brought in its wake agitation for self-government in almost all continents. With the attainment of independence came the

need for nation-building in various countries. The African people, more especially replaced white and took up the norms of their past masters - exhibiting the type of life styles previously maintained by the colonial master. The institutions left have been adapted to promote political ends in many places - army, police, civil service and local government structures. Whether or not many nations have been able to change things can only be proved by more research, but certainly the general population still wonder why independence has not done much to change their conditions. Conflicts previously directed at foreign powers are now with the people. Whether the apathy in many places is due to disappointment, one cannot say.

3. Population Pressure

Population pressure in many areas such as India has resulted in migration and culture contact in various parts of the world. Such phenomena have brought about changes in legal, commercial, and political relations. Laws to protect new entrants became mandatory and reciprocal, consumption patterns of different people call for new or diversified merchandise, either locally produced or imported. New commercial activity is stimulated, restaurants etc. All these changes call for mutual adaptation on the part of host nations and the immigrants. In some educational institutions, multicultural studies have had to be introduced in their curricula to promote understanding between immigrant and host people.

4. Communication

As a result of changes in technology, communication has facilitated contact with people near and far. Road, air, visual, auditory, and print communication have brought home new life styles and new relationships. Family life, authority, music, dancing, attitudes, leisure etc. have been affected in various ways as a result of the ease of communication. It means that generally, peoples' outlook has undergone drastic changes, some with positive others with negative, consequences.

5. Natural and Artificial Disasters

Natural and artificial or man-made disasters have been factors of change in the world and the artificial ones have snowballed in recent times.

a) *Natural:* Situations like earthquakes, floods, (Monsoon etc) sea encroachment (reference Thailand also Keta in Ghana), typhoons or cyclones have affected man's living over years. Disablement has resulted in many places. In Thailand, sea encroachment has made people more inventive by adapting themselves to the phenomenon. Floating structures have been constructed in answer to the perennial sea encroachment instead of fleeing the parcels of land that belong to each family. In certain other places people have resigned themselves to fate where they have realized that dealing with the situation is not easy, an example is Bangladesh which has not been able to find an answer to the monsoon floods.

b) *Artificial:* Wars have claimed lives more than any other event known to man. They have not only destroyed the ecology in certain situations (Vietnam) and causing large scale migrations, they have also caused new one's, such as abandoned crises babies who are now living in the street. Wars, both international and intra-national (Civil wars) have created such a flood of refugees that now the psychology of refugeehood has become a new branch of knowledge seeking to go deeper into the management of refugees. Disablement, uncertainties, despair, are some of the consequences. The threat of war and insecurity has also created the need for new sources and forms of weapons to be explored. Water, air, the earth, have all been interfered with and their character has also been changed as a result. Science and technology, have, in the name of development produced so many new artefacts that apart from the dangers some pose to life, man's existence itself is virtually managed by these artefacts. Vehicles of all kinds, means of transportation on and under water, means of transportation in the air, domestic appliances for all kinds of household chores, machinery for prospecting minerals etc. all have their advantages and disadvantages. Changes are still going on as people seek to outdo one another in terms of modernization.

6. Education

Education has been a very influential factor in social change. Education has been the means of acquiring knowledge, sharpening people's intellect, making them rational and influencing attitude to phenomena around them. In this direction education is a very strong instrument of change. Education has changed people's beliefs about things they previously held in awe or reverence so also about things they previously dreaded out of ignorance. Education has changed people's beliefs about other cultures and promoted understanding among various races and people. Education has brought liberation to people eg. races. Because of education women's role has changed greatly. The human relations within the family have been influenced as a result of education.

Previous social science theory over-stressed the importance of the mother-child relationship, as a result child rearing and child welfare practices neglected the father-child relationship which affected the family bond in general for example some non-domestic activities of women were vetoed.

New information from family social psychology has shown that the father figure is as important as the mother figure. Now men are also assuming domestic functions which were previously regarded as feminine. Education has influenced life styles everywhere and has also changed the class system in almost all parts of the world.

7. Religion

Religion has brought mass changes all over the world and many of the previously accepted norms and values are no longer universally held. Right from the time of the reformation in the 16th Century and even earlier, Islam and Christianity had become forces

of rapid change. For example, it is due to Christian influence that many cultures now subscribe to monogamy.

Human relations have also been affected by religion for example an eye for an eye has now become the turning of the other cheek. "Someone wrongs me but because of God I forgive". It is because of religion that many people have become charitable or give to charity. (Remember the genesis of Social Work). It was religious bodies or charities which first established orphanages and gave assistance to the poor and the old as a mark of religious duty. Notable among the pioneers of the organized activities were Saint Francis of Assissi who founded the Franciscans, and Guy de Montpelliers who established the Hospitallers with a devotion to preaching, collecting and distributions of alms to the destitute (See Kathleen Woodroof 1971). Most churches nowadays have followed the earlier tradition but with a different emphasis, by instituting programmes of recreation, socialization, social welfare and community action.

Syncretic churches have or syncretic worship has now become a new phenomenon in many parts of Africa especially, with both good and bad sides. These churches have tremendous impact on the lives of their followers. Assurances are given to their members and this gives them hope to brave the hazards of life. Because of religion, some people have stopped libidinous lives, stopped smoking and drinking and in this direction it has become a therapeutic medium for people. On the other hand, religion has also promoted strife in many parts of the world and divided brothers and sisters e.g. Northern Ireland (Catholic vrs Protestant) Iraq (Orthodox Muslim vrs Sheite Muslims), Northern Nigeria (Muslim vrs Christians) Yugoslavia, India, Algeria etc. all have their religious conflicts. Religion as a force of change should therefore be taken seriously.

8. Politics

With the coming into force of state governments, as opposed to traditional forms of governance, people have been striving for power with the intention of influencing the direction of society. Some have visions (ideologies) about how their societies are to be ruled, what kind of relations should exist among people, the nature of deliberate intervention in almost all matters affecting humans living everywhere. The laws that govern societies have all depended on politics and even type of religion is prescribed by many states, eg. Arab states - only Islam must exist. It is the policy which allocates resources to various sectors of the economy, so the nature of welfare and other institutions depend on the vision of those who have power. The political situation is therefore a serious force of change which must be understood if anyone wants to influence change.

Apart from national dimensions there are the international ones. The attempt by Western capitalism to influence communism and to bring about one world economy is the result of what we see today in Russia and the whole of Eastern Europe. A massive wind of change in the scene is taking place and the dust has not yet settled.

The Dimensions of Change

Social Change has many dimensions and its impact on people varies according to climatic conditions, personality make-up, the social matrix to which they belong and indeed a whole gamut of factors which cannot be enumerated here for the sake of brevity. There are a few things that people must know about social change.

1. It has Micro and Macro Implications

By micro is meant the small institutions which change in society and change people who work in them, eg. schools, organizations - army, police, business etc.

In the macro sense we talk about the systems which have wider implications such as socialism, capitalism, islam, christianity, wars, pollution, epidemics etc. These bear upon wider ongoing social processes and affect their direction.

People's ideas can also be micro and macro depending upon the systems being influenced, for example the Head of an educational institution can initiate a move that can affect the life of the institution for a long time to come. On the other hand, the thought of certain people like Karl Marx, Buddha, Mohammed, Hitler etc. have produced wider systemic influences i.e. influencing the whole world.

2. Unevenness of Social Change

Note should be taken of the fact that social change is never even. Whether it is ideas, disasters, material things, change does not affect systems (either micro or macro) to the same degree. Economic, political or educational change may affect some more than others. Where it is individuals, personality factor like ego strength will be a crucial factor. Economic change like inflation, structural adjustment or retrenchment etc. may affect those with no skills more than those with skills. Many educated people are international "Civil Servants" and wherever they go they can fit in or plug a hole. The unskilled have nothing but their brute strength. Their bargaining power is weak and so they can easily be blown about by the wind. Eventually, these are those who become the concern of the social worker.

3. Positive and Negative Impact

Philosophically speaking, there is an inherent "conflict" or "contradiction" within any social change. It follows from this therefore, that whenever change occurs some will lose ground and others will gain ground. If change occurs in the family or if change affects the family, one will automatically notice the positive and negative sides. If it occurs in or affects institutions the same equation applies. If it is international in nature it is still the same.

Like being either micro or macro, change can be unidimentional or multidimentional.

It can affect either one institution or phenomenon or many institutions or phenomena at the same time, in that case with wider social implications. Furthermore, social change can either be slow or dramatic. Attitudes, cultural implements or ornaments, prejudices (less perceptible) and so forth are very slow in changing but other phenomena like urban sprawl, fashion, political change etc. can become dramatic, and in many cases taking people unawares.

4. *Planned and Unplanned Change*

Planned change comes about with the presumption that one could consciously effect change in human affairs. We have already noted that social change, much of it, comes as a result of interactions and adaptations among systems-populations, stratification, urbanization etc. The significant characteristic of such changes is that they are not planned by any central authority. Changes that are not planned come about in many ways through man made events as well as natural disturbances. The largest source of unplanned change is found in people's day to day pursuits which for those involved are conscious and playful. People's individual actions have cumulative and unanticipated consequences that create imbalances and tensions in the functioning of social institutions.

A number of writers have held that deliberate change is a reaction to the consequences of unplanned change. Lloyed Warner (1937) points out that most purposive change at the community level is a response to problems arising from the unplanned aggregate of individual decisions by persons, families and organizations of one type or another as they pursue their interest and objectives. Wilbert Moore (1963) formulates a similar view in which imbalance in a social system triggers action to restore the former equilibrium. He sees the following as sources of imbalance:

> a) imperfections in the adaptation of man to his environment, which leads periodically to pain and discomfort and serves as a continuous stimulus to technological improvement.

> b) inconsistencies in the rate of growth and development among different parts of the social structure e.g. Population growth rate, development of economic resources, innovation in knowledge.

> c) disparities between expected behaviour as defined by prevailing value patterns and actual behaviour.

The last point calls either for adjustments in the values because they are found to be unrealistic or for control over the non-conforming behaviour. The logical question that might be posed at this juncture is, given the powerful forces outlined, can conscious efforts at change make any headway?

Planning is a deliberate, rational (well thought out) process that involves the choice

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of actions that are calculated to achieve specified objectives at some future time. Rational planning therefore means that there is a calculation between ends means. This also presumes a claim to control over processes. The weight of evidence in theory and research and practice indicates severe limitations in the ability of any central planning body to control complex processes.

On the basis of the foregoing, it must be clear that planned change is only experimental - for unpredicted consequences can result from the attempt to make sense out of life and also to adapt to our environment. If all change could be planned rationally, then there would be no problems, but this is usually not the case, hence planned change should be seen as dialectical (full of contradictions).

Implications for Social Work

Every change has implications for society, whether slow or fast, micro or macro, planned or unplanned, positive or negative, it affects social systems. All social change calls for new adaptations - adaptations in terms of behaviour, expectations, skills, knowledge and relationships. All adaptation requires resources, intellectual and material. Change brings about problems in meeting human needs and societal responses to human needs increase during times of accelerated social change. Contemporary welfare systems not only attempt to provide for unmet needs but also to provide for order and control. Examples abound regarding how change has brought issues to welfare - AIDS problem, farm crisis (drought), disputes, flood, teenage suicides and pregnancies, wars and refugee problems, street children, women's liberation, etc.

Questions relevant are:

i)   What human needs are caused by social change?
ii) How can these needs be met?
iii) What responses should be made within the societal social system to deal effectively with the social change?
iv) What responses should be made via the social welfare system to respond to the needs of individuals or families who will be affected by change?

To be able to answer these questions means that one can forecast change. But can one really assess what will happen in future? Of course attempts have been made to forecast some events, for instance, population change depends on food supply, disease control and fertility. However, generally, change is very unpredictable and can arise from any cause and therefore one cannot anticipate events with certainty.

Current social work knowledge entirely centres on human development, psychology of helping, ways in which people communicate with others, group processes, the relevance of beliefs, values, laws, nature of relationships, social services, the self and how it affects

the profession. This range of knowledge has arisen from known ، ، ls and skills available apply only to the known. However, the changeability of people and the environment shows how weak present knowledge is. To go into the future still makes this knowledge and all social science knowledge weaker. According to a social systems view as change takes place in society mechanisms that have been developed to maintain society also will change, thus change occurs in economic structures, societal expectations of individuals, families and groups.It is however believed that the strategy for social welfare to deal with change will be forecasting and prevention:

Primary Forecasting and Primary Prevention

The mode of thought is to project forward from current situations and trends to yield a primary forecast. It is an attempt to assess what will happen by a certain date if things continue as they seem likely to do. It attempts to identify existing trends in society and to see where society will go if no additional effort is exerted to direct change towards particular ends. Primary forecasting then enables primary prevention to anticipate future consequences of events and to use purposeful manipulation to achieve desired ends to prevent undesired ones. It means action taken prior to the onset of a problem to intercept its course or to modify its course before a person is involved.

Secondary Forecasting and Secondary Prevention

Secondary or normative forecasting is concerned with what ought to be and with the establishment of policies which will guide society from its present state to the desired future state. It is a mode of thought or forecasting which often lacks the impression of scientific legitimacy that attaches to primary forecasting but which involves a much more practical conception of reality. With secondary forecasting, secondary prevention can take prompt action to curtail and stop the disease in the affected persons and the spreading of the disease to others. In other words.prompt action can be taken to stop any tendency to deviation from the normative behaviour and to insulate others from contracting it.

Tertiary Forecasting and Tertiary Prevention

A tertiary forecast is an attempt to predict which of the many possible futures will actually occur. It is closer to the everyday concept of forecasting than are primary and secondary forecasting.It also allows the social scientist to adopt an objective view in which he is called upon to observe the forces at work and to assess what will be the result, without actively seeking to influence that result. It follows from here then that teriary prevention will be involved in rehabilitation efforts to reduce the residual effects of the illness, that is, reducing the duration and disabling severity of the disease or dis-ease. In other words, the scientist will passively observe the forces at play and eventually come into address the consequences of the interaction. This course of action, however, can be done only to limited human situations but not natural ones.

We know that when there is drastic change, mental illness increases, deviance increases, law and order are affected, economic, political and society expectations are all affected. Social work can prepare for these phenomena but cannot influence the direction of change. We know that welfare arrangements like institutional care, settlement houses, social security etc. have come as a result of change. But the events happened before the strategies were found to deal with them. Existing knowledge of social work on reconciling potential problems between the person and the environment is not adequate (so also are all professions).

However the existence of social work as a primary profession for dealing with problems in social functioning is critical. Change will increase problems and issues for social work but the fear is that social work will lack the capacity to meet the enormous challenges of change. Change has affected the response to human need via social welfare arrangements e.g. population shifts relative to size, and rural to urban residence, age distribution, dependence, changes in family structure and functioning, issues of poverty, inequality and agitation for empowerment among various social groups etc.

Indeed Social Change poses a tremendous challenge to social work theory and methodology. Change will further affect the credibility and competence of the profession as its focus will further become general or diffuse.

Above all, there is the intractable and perennial problem of resources. Inadequacy of resources at present poses a problem and imposes a serious restraint on what is achievable. Change will make resources even more scarce, thus reducing the capacity of social workers to operate. Lastly, the size of problems will be more complex and problems will also be more numerous. In anticipation of the tasks ahead, it might be recommended that more manpower needs to be trained if the challenges ahead are to be contained. Currently there is a gross disproportion between social work manpower supply and the enormity of the tasks to be performed. Above all there is a crucial need for a revision of existing knowledge as a way of transforming the traditional role of social work in the face of the task and ever-changing world.

It is arguable whether more work should be devoted to consideration of possible and desirable social changes in the future rather than to respond to current and past problems. Those who believe in focussing on the future base their recommendations on two beliefs, firstly, that an increasingly pace of technological change means that it is increasingly necessary to anticipate problems if they are not to be very damaging and, secondly, that many problems are inter-related for example homelessness, crime, traffic congestion, air pollution and stress diseases are all related to the nature of modern cities. In fact, there is often little agreement on what is a problem and even if there is, to treat each problem separately is to deal with symptoms and overlook the fundamental malaise. It means then that the more open approach to the future must recognize explicitly that different people have different objectives and one wonders whether the future can be negotiated to make it more predictable. Conditions prevailing now point to the fact that negotiation is not the answer to stem the forces or change. The challenge to social work is the extent to which a society can turn

itself into a "service society" to enable the necessary support to be forthcoming in tackling the callosal task of containing the present and facing the future.

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