

1965

IFSW Statement by Nelson Jackson.
Secretary General to
International Conference of Ministers
Responsible for Social Welfare

On all Continents there is rapid urbanization. In Latin America the condition of rural structures and the aspirations of better living conditions elsewhere, have contributed to the massive migration from rural to urban areas.

This speed in population growth and the massive migration to cities, outstrips the creation of resources to meet the needs of the new urban populations. Persons who move into the centers of cities, quite often find themselves in situations where housing is poor, resources are limited, (fire, police, health and welfare services) and the aspirations of the people are dimmed.

Much of the explosion in recent years in the United States of America has occurred in the ghettos of American communities. Inhabitants who are ill-housed, ill-clothed and ill-fed have reacted violently to their condition, and thus severely challenge the development of new kinds of services to meet their needs. Studies made in the United States, of persons who have been involved in the riots, indicate that they are basically young people and are members of the Negro minority in the country.

It is interesting to note that in Latin America, an analysis of the demographic structure indicates that it is a population made up of young persons. Forty or forty-five percent of the inhabitants are less than 15 years of age.

In Asia it is reported that the very process of change, during the transition from rural to urban centers, results in the creation of problems of delinquency and destitution.

On all Continents, because of the problems of health, welfare, poor housing, uprooted populations and the limitation of natural resources to meet many of the problems, concentration of effort within the governments of all nations, to more adequately provide for the needs of citizens is required. Included, very high on this agenda, is the requirement for basic welfare services.

There is a greater awareness regarding the need of social welfare programs but the methods for approaching them are not so well understood. If one were to catalog the social welfare programs required, the list would include:

The development of better child welfare services, with special reference to nutrition, health and socialization services for the pre-school child and the educational and vocational facilities linked with job opportunities for youth.

Community development programs, rural and urban inter-related in object and content.

Manpower programs, giving particular attention to jobs for persons in the ghettos around the world and the recruitment, training and supervision of social welfare personnel, at all levels, to work with both advantaged and disadvantaged groups.

Because of the population explosion, family planning must be an internal part of the programs of family welfare and health development.

Programs must be developed which attempt to understand and approach the changing family pattern, with special reference to the needs of the vulnerable groups, the dependent, the delinquent and the handicapped.

In many of the developing countries, social welfare must be a part of the planning for land reform, involved in community development and a partner in the initiation and improvement of social insurance programs.

In this year of human rights observance of United Nations and other world bodies, it is especially important for social work to look within and without in an effort to correct some of the evils based upon ethnicity, politics and religion. No nation of the world is free from prejudice and discrimination. Social work programs must operate within a context of human dignity.

There are programs of family allowances and similar type services given as a matter of right in many countries. Social workers are involved also in the initiation of the concept of a guaranteed annual income i.e. producing and advancing a concept of a floor of decency and health below which no individual or family should fall.

Social welfare programs contribute basically to socio-economic reforms. Social welfare programs which deal directly with groups, through their workers, provide the basis for studies, development of legislation and reforms in practice because social workers deal with people, groups and communities, and therefore have some basic knowledge of what needs to be done. The success of these programs, in large measure depend upon the acceptance of social work as a basic ingredient to the nation's development in concert with economic educational and other developmental programs. Those in authority need to listen and also to give greater prestige to social work and social welfare by placing the responsibility for development of services in the hands of individuals who are in the highest positions of government in countries. Thus the Social Welfare Minister, to be effective with a knowledge gained through the social workers, should be of the highest rank in government. It is understandable that in many countries there are a network of public and voluntary social services, but increasingly there is more public responsibility for meeting needs of populations.

GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

Central government should be responsible for public welfare services in partnership with other political sub-divisions within a country. It is believed that a national, state, local network of services provides the best approach for uniformity in standards for services within a country. This assumes that the National government is going to pass laws prepared by the most knowledgeable persons within and without the administration, and will appropriate the funds to make them operational. In an effort to develop policy formulation, representatives of government, in the social welfare field, should provide the opportunity for public hearings on measures being proposed for passage so that the pros and cons of measures will have a full airing.

Social work groups and interested citizens' groups should provide the basic thinking for helping to form governmental policy.

Government social service bureaus should also enlist the support of knowledgeable social workers outside their departments, to consult with them in developing the rules and regulations to be prepared for the administration of programs. This is exceedingly important because laws can be interpreted in a variety of ways.

In Latin America, most countries, if not all, have accepted the responsibility of the government for social welfare.

Social policy and social legislation are not co-ordinated and do not reflect the needs of the countries. Virginia Pariaiso, writing on social service and social development, in 1966, stated that in the majority of the cases, legislative foundations are not functional. Many laws limit themselves to express aspirations without considering their application. Social laws are not co-ordinated and do not permit to synchronize their application with related disciplines.

In Asia, the responsibilities of the government for promoting social welfare services vary from country to country, depending on the nature of the governmental setup as well as historical development of social welfare. Where the government is unitary, the responsibilities rest directly in one level of administration. Where it is federal, responsibilities get divided among the central and state administration, depending on the constitutional requirements. Even where unitary governmental setup exists, it is observed that various aspects of social welfare remain divided among a number of ministries and departments.

One difficulty is noted in many of the countries of the world, and is especially true in Latin America, that while governmental planning is accepted in theory, there is fragmentation in different departments of programs which might be considered a part of the social welfare rubric. For example, some countries have plans regarding housing, health and education, but they are not considered as a part of a comprehensive program of social welfare but as isolated activities.

If the model of central governmental operations is considered as feasible and necessary for the development of the best social welfare institution, then it should also have major responsibility for planning, including

the determination of priorities, research and evaluation. These are necessary concomitants to a complete plan. There may be, however, the establishment of a Council on Social Welfare Advisers, as has been recommended in United States, similar to the Council on Economic Advisers, which would have a responsibility for assessing needs within a country and making recommendations to the highest level of government.

It should be noted that public and voluntary services form a partnership in the instance of development of research and demonstration, and it is in this arena the voluntary agencies, as is the case in Europe, may assist in a host of activities such as the suggestion of legislation and the development of the initiative of private sources which can be helpful. It is in the area of cost analysis, as well as service determination where government can benefit greatly.

In most countries in Europe, for example, financing is a great problem in providing the services for the private sector of welfare. Voluntary agencies often do not have a budget which permits the development of social action programs. It is often difficult to understand the importance of preventative and educational services, and to obtain the budget which would make them operable.

Voluntary agencies can, however, create favorable public opinion for standards of services. For example in the United States, the Child Welfare League of America and Family Service Association of America, have long been active in providing these kinds of standards. These are recognized as being basic for all such services.

In some countries of the world, voluntary agencies pioneer in new services and experiment with new techniques in bringing about changes in traditional attitudes.

Social welfare has to be so planned that it can find its roots in the life of the community and sustained by active cooperation and participation. The initiative for the development of new services has to be left to voluntary organizations, is the view in some Asian countries. The government assumes the responsibility of providing basic requirements of social welfare services in the form of social assistance and social security. It is in this balanced assignment of responsibility, among governmental and non-governmental organizations, including the professional membership associations, that development of social welfare can be insured in any of the developing countries.

This implies that there is a large input of citizen participation in both developed and developing countries. This participation includes the involvement of the recipients of service, as well as the support from a variety of publics.

MEETING MANPOWER NEEDS FOR SOCIAL WELFARE

It is the view in Asia that the establishment of welfare programs without providing for the training of workers, becomes a colossal waste of national resources. The training has to be related to manpower requirements in the field of social welfare. Identification and classification of jobs at all levels of social welfare services, determination of suitable contents of training and education in social work, vocational guidance, recruitment,

supervision and administrative co-ordination are essential components of manpower planning. The prevailing situation in manpower planning for social welfare becomes complicated. There is no dearth of available manpower if proper indication of the requirements of jobs and classification work situations, along with proper training facilities and suitable remuneration for work are made available. Unfortunately, the jobs in social work in most of the countries in Asia, remain unclassified and the training unevenly developed. The same can be said for many of the developing countries.

Some countries have provided social work education at the post graduate level, without starting with undergraduate training. This has resulted in a large number of field level jobs requiring undergraduate personnel to go without trained personnel and a number of post graduate qualified social workers without suitable jobs.

One of the problems noted in the recent Regional Conference, held under the auspices of the International Federation of Social Workers in Bangkok, Thailand, November 6 thru 10, 1967, was that in many countries in the region, many persons who have received their training in western countries found themselves too highly trained for the Asian positions which needed social welfare services.

In Latin America, there are a variety of schools of social work. Brazil has 36; Argentina, 30; and Colombia, 8. A very few of the smaller countries have one school of social work. More than 50 percent of the schools are under government auspices.

The only graduate school in the region is in Puerto Rico. The pattern followed is that of North America which offers the Masters Degree, after two years of graduate training.

It is well to review "The Role Training and Status of Social Workers" Resolution (67) 16, adopted by the Ministers' Deputies on the 29th of June, 1967 in the Council of Europe. Under the general heading "The Training of Social Workers", there are 13 recommendations made. In summary, the recommendations call for acceptance of government to determine whether existing schools are adequately equipped to meet needs and calls for training at various levels; that there be the same standards of training in member countries, including a curriculum which covers the same body of knowledge i.e. the study of man, the study of society in social services, and theories and methods of social work; field work; an adequate teaching staff; curriculum planning and appraisal to be done in cooperation between schools of social work and agencies; the assumption of a general training period which would precede specialization; part time courses and complimentary training; facilities for advanced training; the establishment of study allowances and the opportunity for social workers to be given opportunities to participate in study groups.

This is basic and a further step probably needs to be considered which has been found so important in the United States, namely that there needs to be a study of all positions within the social work family, including those which require social workers and related personnel. The determination of a variety "mix" in other professions such as medicine and which has been determined as significant and workable through the office of economic opportunity programs in the United States, should suggest a course of action to be followed.

The latter point is stressed in Latin American countries. It is recognized there that in order to supplement the work of the professionals and to attend the increasing demands of the different programs, there is the need for auxiliary personnel. It is further felt that this type of personnel should work under the supervision of professionals. This is not necessarily true in other countries.

Pressed by the need of more social welfare personnel, some countries have formulated special laws, as in Latin America, by which women are obliged to carry some welfare responsibilities for a certain period of time at a certain age. In Argentina, this service was established under the regime of Peron. In Colombia, the law is on the last stage of congressional approval. By this "obligatory social service", as it is called, women from 18 to 30 years will have to serve for a year on different welfare programs. Unfortunately, this type of legislation does not solve the problem but creates a new one by attacking voluntary volunteer movements and lowering the standard of services provided. The cost of the training of this personnel will be higher than it would have cost to contract for personnel with some training.

In practically all countries of the world, in both the developed and developing nations, there is a greater recognition of the need for the training of volunteers.

If one reviews the present utilization of trained auxiliary and volunteer personnel, to satisfy the needs of programs, it would appear necessary to have the mounting of some basic research for the study of manpower needs in each of the countries; to analyze what present personnel does in each type of job; to determine the training required for each of the jobs so researched and to recommend a "mix" of personnel to meet basic social welfare needs.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF SOCIAL WELFARE

The International Federation of Social Workers maintains consultative status with the United Nations in the Social and Economic Council, UNICEF, at the U.N. in Geneva, and with the Council for Europe. Since all of the members of the International Federation of Social Workers, who represent the Federation at meetings of the United Nations, hold full time positions, it becomes increasingly difficult for this personnel to attend all of the meetings required and to maintain the production of the paper work often assigned by United Nations. It is believed that the International Federation of Social Workers, for example, might be able to make a greater contribution to the United Nations in the social welfare field at specific times and with specific programs which could fully utilize the resources within the membership.

From the point of view of impact, however, United Nations and its agencies have been playing a vital role in developing various fields of service in Asia from the very beginning. In point of fact, a great deal of success of the recently referred to Regional Meeting for Asia by the International Federation of Social Workers in Bangkok, can be attributed to the cooperation received from the ECAFE Office in Bangkok.

Since 1951, the expanded program of technical assistance in the special fund, which has recently been merged with the United Nations Development Program, has given assistance to a number of countries in promoting various development programs.

A study of the assistance given by UNICEF in one of the countries in the region, indicates an interesting evolution of developmental services from tuberculosis control and B.C.G. vaccine program in 1949; followed by health services of maternity and child health centers in 1950; milk conservation program in 1953; applied nutrition program in 1959; high protein food development and smallpox vaccine production in 1960; science education in 1965; to family and child welfare programs in 1967. These developments indicate the changing needs and requirements in the region.

UNICEF assistance to schools of social work in some other countries, helping them to extend child welfare services in the field, especially in rural areas, has proved very useful. The technical assistance in the field of social welfare has been provided to different countries in the region from a very early period. Besides providing services of consultants, the Social Development and Planning Division of ECAFE has been organizing a number of seminars in training institutes from time to time. During the last 5 years an intensive program of regional seminars in institutes for social work educators, planners and administrators has been made available. This has helped in bringing the workers in the field of social welfare together to share their experiences and to develop a common understanding in promoting the program both of training and field services in the region.

This practice of International exchange in the field of social welfare, has encouraged other international organizations, having consultative status, to organize meetings and conferences in the region. In addition to the great help mentioned to the International Federation of Social Workers' Regional Meeting, there has been the meeting on Manpower Requirements in Social Welfare under the auspices of the International Council of Social Welfare in Tokyo, during 1967, as well as the recent ECAFE Seminars of Social Work Educators, Administrators and Planners in the UNICEF Regional Seminar on Children and Youth in the National Development Plans. Each have provided guidelines for the effective promotion of social welfare programs in countries of the region.

A program of international cooperation has to be considered in the context of the needs for social welfare. The foremost requirement of social welfare in the Asian region is the study of the prevailing social problems and existing facilities of services to meet prevailing needs. Second is the necessity for a determination of manpower requirements and planning. This leads to the area of social work education and training suitable to indigenous requirements of services in various countries. The areas of supervision and evaluation of social work completes the list of requirements for international cooperation. This cooperation has to be related increasingly to national effort already in operation.

It, however, needs to be stated that the approach to meet these requirements may call for new efforts, experiments and innovations in providing technical assistance and financial aids. Past experience in methods found useful in other regions, may not necessarily acquire the desired results.

This may require change in the present policy of U.N. assistance. More exchange of experiences within the region through consultants and experts, may prove helpful. Strengthening the training and research program in national professional organizations, may be considered to enable an effective development of the field of social welfare. As in the field of economics, regional

development has to be promoted in the field of social welfare. The establishment of a Regional Institute of Social Research and Training could be of great value. The policy of assistance has to be related to the prevailing needs, viz. provision of country and regional specialists, having experience of allied culture and social development, and financial aids for the staff of research and training centers established in each country for a minimum of five years.

The services; both of consultants and aides, have to be based in harmony with the duration of planned development adopted by each country. Assistance to professional organizations for helping to promote social welfare planning in services, in agreement with the country government, could prove useful. International agencies, having consultative status, could also be enabled to further the cause of social welfare in the region. It is the combined effort and cooperation based on national regional and international support that could help in promoting social welfare services more effectively in the Asian countries.

In Latin America, a contrary note is expressed. It was stated that international cooperation creates certain problems quoting Virginia Pariaiso in *El Servicio Social in En America Latina Sus Funciones Y sus Relaciones con el Desarrollo* "The finance of international assistance binds the program to rigid international norms that do not always adapt to local conditions." The request for international assistance in most cases are formulated by certain groups for certain specializations without a previous analysis of a total situation and without comprehensive planning. As a result, the experts sent to the countries, in most cases, contribute to the concentration of interest and efforts in their own specialization stimulating, unconscious and uneven development.

Some programs require their country's main counterparts when experts are sent. These counterparts are financed by the countries and the U.N. experts by the United Nations. The difference in sources of sponsorship creates great differences in the salaries. In some cases the native personnel are paid one-tenth of what the expert received, which creates difficulties for the establishment of a working relationship.

There is a need for greater co-ordination among the different agencies of the U.N., not only on the international level but national as well. This lack of co-ordination at the national level is due partially to the absence of a single administrative structure in charge of social welfare programs in the countries. In this way, activities of one specialized agency are carried over through two or more ministries in the country.

In different international studies and meetings, some of the main conclusions referred to greater cooperation among the different countries in the region, interchange of personnel and writing materials, more opportunities for training of social welfare personnel at different levels and more emphasis on evaluation of the existing welfare program. International efforts could contribute greatly to the accomplishment of these recommendations by its technical assistant programs throughout the region.

CONCLUSION

The International Federation of Social Workers has attempted to give its views on the questions which have been posed for consideration by the Council of Ministers. The Federation is extremely well pleased that this first

meeting is being called. As early as a year ago, each of the member Associations was alerted to the meeting of the Ministers' Conference and suggestions made that Presidents of Associations meet with their social welfare ministers and bring to their attention the needs in social welfare in their countries as noted by those persons having direct responsibility for strengthening such programs. It was suggested, also, that since social work has a low status in many of the countries in the world, that considerable effort be made to help lift the prestige of the profession by having the Minister of Welfare in each country also elevated to the highest rank of government in each nation. In short, services to people which can help lift them economically and socially, should have as high priority in a nation as its concern for other needed services and programs, and there should be a partnership pointed toward progress among all Ministers of Government.