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SOCIAL POLICIES AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT -  
A HUMANISTIC-EGALITARIAN PERSPECTIVE

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This essay explores the relationship of social policies and of policy-relevant societal values to social development. Its thesis is that the scope, direction, and quality of the social development process are largely shaped by the social policies and the dominant value positions of societies.

Social scientists and others using the concepts social policies and social development, tend to attach different meanings to them. Hence, it is necessary to begin with an explication of my conceptions of these terms and of the societal processes to which they refer. Furthermore, since such explications are usually not value-neutral I will first specify the value position from which my conceptions derive.

This value position may be summarized as follows: All humans, everywhere, despite their manifold differences and their uniqueness as individuals, should be considered of equal intrinsic worth. Hence they should be deemed entitled to equal social, economic, civil, and political rights, liberties, and obligations. Societal institutions on local and translocal levels, should assure and facilitate the exercise of these equal rights, and the free, autonomous, and authentic development of all humans. All humans should be considered "subjects," none should be treated as "objects" or "means." Hence no human should dominate, control, and exploit other humans.

Socially structured equality should not be interpreted, vulgarly, as arithmetic equality or uniformity. Rather, it is to be understood as a guiding principle to be implemented creatively through flexible institutions, designed to assure to all humans throughout the life-cycle satisfaction of their unique needs, and actualization of their unique individuality, subject to constraints implicit in population size, aggregate wealth, and level of overall development.

## Social Policies\*

Social policies may be thought of as clusters of rules or as institutionalized guiding principles maintaining a social order. These rules and principles evolved throughout the history of human groups. They reflect choices and decisions made by successive generations striving to satisfy basic biological and emerging social and psychological needs as they pursued survival in the context of relative scarcities. Social policies reflect stages in human evolution beyond total dependence on instinctual dynamics and randomness in human behavior and relations. They represent significant steps beyond the trial-and-error stage of the struggle for survival. Social policies are products of the human capacity to reflect on experience and reality and on the existential imperatives encountered by all human groups, to devise systematic answers to these imperatives, and to pass these answers on from generation to generation. Eventually, social policies evolved into patterns or blueprints for societal existence, organization, and continuity.

With time, social policies, like other products of the human mind which are transmitted among generations and experienced in the course of socialization as social reality, tended to take on a life and dynamics of their own, and to exist independently of the humans whose choices created them. Consequently, social policies confront subsequent generations as powerful forces that shape life and reality and that act as constraining influences on the development of new approaches to the solution of existential problems. Their sources are no longer remembered, and the more independence they acquire with time, the more resistant to change they are likely to become. Frequently, they are not even identified as social policies but are referred to as "customs," and "traditions." Quite often, also, they are viewed as "laws of nature," as eternal and inevitable and not subject to critique and change by a present generation.

Yet humans in any generation ought to realize that behind any particular set of social policies are human choices at certain stages of history, choices which produced one possible model for organizing human existence and survival based on insights and knowledge available at the time. The choices made, and the patterns resulting from them may not have been the best possible answers even at the time they were made, nor are they necessarily the best pattern for sub-

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\*For a comprehensive discussion see: David G. Gil, Unravelling Social Policy, Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman Publishing Co., 1973; Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckman, The Social Construction of Reality, Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1966.

sequent generations including the present one. Hence, optimally, each generation should claim its right and responsibility to re-examine transmitted social policies in the light of present circumstances and knowledge, and in relation to currently held values which may differ from the value premises underlying past choices.

As for substance, social policies always represent solutions to the following fundamental, existential problems which any human group must resolve in some way:

1. What resources to select for development from the natural environment in order to assure survival and to enhance the quality of life?

2. How to organize the production of goods and services needed for survival and the enhancement of the quality of life; or, more specifically, how to design and maintain a division of labor, including preparation of individuals for, and their allocation to, specific sets of work tasks so as to assure a smooth performance of all the work necessary for generating the goods and services deemed needed by society?

3. How to divide or distribute among members of society the aggregate product of their aggregate labor, the goods and services generated for survival and for the enhancement of the quality of life; and, related to the distribution of concrete goods and services, how to distribute among members of society honor and prestige, civil liberties, and political rights?

As a society develops and, over time, institutionalizes specific solutions to these fundamental, existential issues, it determines, indirectly, the circumstances of living of every individual member, and of every group. For the circumstances of living of individuals and groups are largely a function of the activities they engage in, or the work roles they perform, the concrete goods and services they receive, and the honor, prestige, civil liberties and political rights they may claim. Furthermore, in shaping the circumstances of living of individual's and groups, social policies also determine the nature and quality of human relations in a society, since reciprocal relations among individuals and groups tend to be a function of their respective roles and rights. Finally, the overall quality of life, or the existential milieu prevailing in a society, is also shaped by its social policies since that quality may be understood as the aggregate of individual circumstances of living, the resulting quality of human relations, and the quality of the environment which, in turn, results from the interaction of humans with their natural habitat.

Summarizing then, social policies are conceived of here as rules or guiding principles for maintaining a social order, reflecting choices and decisions evolved over time concerning: the selection and development of life-sustaining and enhancing resources from the environment; the division of labor or allocation of work statuses and roles in a society's aggregate system of work and production; and the distribution of goods and services, honor and prestige, civil liberties and political rights. Together, through their interactions, these developmental, allocative, and distributive decisions and processes shape the circumstances of living of individuals and groups, the quality of human relations, and the overall quality of life or the existential milieu of a society.

### Values

A second concept which requires explication here is that of values. Theodorson's Modern Dictionary of Sociology defines a value as

An abstract, generalized principle of behavior to which the members of a group feel a strong, emotionally toned positive commitment and which provides a standard for judging specific acts and goals.....

.....they are often regarded as absolute, although the formation and apprehension of values evolve in the normal process of social interaction.....\*

Values may also be thought of as early layers of social policies. Their origin, evolution, and dynamics are nearly identical to those of all social policies. They differ, however, from other social policies in the level of generality and abstraction, and in the extent to which their origin in human choices is no longer realized. The sources of values are frequently projected onto non-human, supernatural powers.

Analysis of the substantive content of many values suggests that they derive from basic choices compatible with the perceived interests of entire societies, and/or the perceived interests of groups who gained influence, power, dominance, and control over the rest of society. Eventually, values evolve into powerful factors legitimating established interests and maintaining the status-quo of social orders which is shaped by these interests. Values are usually guarded and disseminated by priestly and other elites involved in processes of

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\*Theodorson & Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology, New York, N.Y.: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969.

socialization and social control. Over time clusters of related and mutually reinforcing values became integrated into internally coherent ideological systems, which constitute constraints on, and often insurmountable barriers to, the malleability of social policies and social orders. Social policies will generally conform to prevailing ideologies and to particular constructions of social reality implicit in such ideologies, and, in turn, will reinforce the ideologies as decisive forces in society.

#### Value Dimensions Relevant to Social Policies

In studying social policies and their relationship to social development one need not concern oneself with every possible value, but only with value dimensions which are likely to affect developmental, allocative, and distributive decisions, decisions which have been identified in the preceding discussion as the key-processes of social policies. Values influencing these key-processes may be appropriately referred to as social-policy-relevant value dimensions.

The most significant value dimension from a social policy perspective is that of equality-inequality. In developing resources, a society may assign equal or unequal importance to the needs of all its members and segments. It may design a system of division of labor, and may allocate work roles within that system on the basis of equal or unequal access and assignment. And finally, it may distribute goods and services, honor and prestige, and civil liberties and political rights on equal terms as universal entitlements to all, or, on unequal terms, as differential rewards for different role and status clusters, access to which is restricted differentially.

Whether or not a society will employ equalitarian criteria in its developmental, allocative, and distributional decisions will depend on its concept of humans: Does it consider all individuals to be intrinsically of equal worth in spite of their uniqueness, and hence entitled to the same social, economic, civil, and political rights; or do individuals in the society consider themselves, and those close to themselves, of greater worth than anyone else, and hence entitled to more desirable or privileged circumstances. The former egalitarian philosophy would be reflected in institutional arrangements involving cooperative actions in pursuit of common existential interests. All individuals would be considered and treated as equally entitled subjects who could not be exploited and dominated by other individuals or groups, and whose rights to develop their individuality freely and fully would be assured and respected, subject to the same rights of all others. The latter, non-egali-

tarian philosophy, on the other hand, is reflected in institutional structures which encourage competitive behavior in pursuit of narrowly perceived, egotistical interests. All individuals and groups strive to get ahead of others, consider themselves entitled to privileged conditions and positions, and view and treat others as potential means to be used, exploited, and dominated in pursuit of egotistical goals.

It should be noted here that the value dimension equality-inequality is not a continuous one, for while there are degrees of inequality which may be increased or decreased, there are no degrees of equality. A distribution or allocation is either equal or unequal, and humans may be deemed equal or unequal in intrinsic worth. Therefore, the notion of "more equality" which is used frequently in political discourse by reform-minded persons is intrinsically self-contradictory. Inequality, on the other hand, is a continuous dimension and it is, therefore, appropriate to speak of increases or decreases in inequality. This distinction is important in order to avoid confusion in political thought and action, and in order not to interpret the advocacy of "more equality" as commitment to equality. More equality merely means a different level of inequality: it is thus a veiled commitment to the perpetuation of the guiding principles of inequality and privilege.

Two additional value dimensions need to be considered here because of their relevance to developmental, allocative, and distributional processes:

Cooperation -- competition; and  
Collectivity-orientation -- self-orientation.

These two dimensions are related to, and interact with each other. They are also related to, and interact with the earlier discussed value dimension, equality-inequality. However, the relations among these three dimensions are not fixed. They vary in different societies and at different times in the same society.

The dimensions cooperation - competition and collectivity-orientation - self-orientation are continuous variables, which means that societies may be located at extreme or intermediate positions with reference to these dimensions. The dominant value orientations of specific societies usually involve unique combinations of cooperation and competition, and of collectivity-orientation and self-orientation in the context of equality or different levels of inequality. Different societies may thus be visualized as located at different positions in a three-dimensional value space.

Collectivity-orientation, it should be noted, is not a negation of individuality and self-actualization. It is however, a negation of "rugged individualism," which is a value orientation that disregards the rights of others to self-actualization. Collectivity-orientation may, in fact, be a necessary, though not sufficient, condition for the full and free development of everyone's individuality.\*

### Social Development

Based on the conceptions of social policies and of social-policy-relevant value dimensions presented here, social development may be thought of as a specific configuration of social policies, chosen consciously by a population in accordance with egalitarian, cooperative, and collectivity-oriented value premises, aimed at enhancing systematically:

- The overall quality of life or the existential milieu of the entire society;
- the circumstances of living of all individual members and segments of the society; and
- the quality of all human relations.

Understood in this way, social development involves philosophical, biological, ecological, psychological, social, economic, and political dimensions. In contradistinction to conventional, yet by now outdated, notions of economic growth and development, the central criterion for evaluating social development is evenly shared, balanced progress of the entire population of a region, or of the globe, towards enhanced collective, segmental, and individual wellbeing. Genuine social development seems, therefore, predicated upon the conscious acceptance, and systematic implementation, of a configuration of developmental, allocative, and distributive social policies, the interaction and combined effects of which would be conducive to the comprehensive objectives specified here.

### Social Policies for Social Development: General Considerations

First among social policy clusters essential for social development is the identification, selection, and development of an appro-

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\*Erich Fromm, Man For Himself, New York, Toronto: Rinehart and Company, 1947.



priate range and mix of resources, sufficient in quantity and suitable in quality, to satisfy the basic biological and the social and psychological needs of the entire population. Policies for resource selection and development should preclude greedy, exploitative relations to the habitat of a population, as well as all forms of waste and destruction of real wealth which consists of land, water, wildlife, vegetation, natural raw materials, humans and human products. Such policies would involve effective measures for conservation and recycling of the natural resource basis of life while deriving sustenance from that base. Related to these policies would also be measures aimed at achieving and maintaining a dynamic balance of natural resources, the prevailing scientific and technological capacity to produce life-sustaining and enhancing goods from these resources, and the size of the population.

Next, social development is predicated upon policies conducive to effective and efficient organization of productive processes for the transformation of natural resources by means of human creativity and labor into the goods and services required to sustain and enhance the life of the population. Policies organizing the productive processes include also policies dealing with the education and preparation of society's "human capital," the release and development of the available creative physical and intellectual potential of people of all ages. Policies in this domain must also deal with the conservation, maintenance, and renewal of means of production, and with the allocation and investment of human resources and capital to the various branches of production. There is also need for policies concerning the size and location of productive units, the scope of production in various branches and units, the manner in which production and production units are controlled, and production decisions are made by those working in the units and by various local, regional, and transregional groups and institutions. Finally, in this domain, policies are needed to facilitate cooperation, coordination, integration, exchange, and joint planning among the separate production units, branches of production, the aggregate productive enterprise in a region, and units, branches, and aggregate economies in other regions all over the globe.

Since, by definition, social development is concerned with enhancing qualitative aspects of human existence, as much as it is concerned with quantitative aspects of production, it is predicated also on policies resulting in a division of labor that is cooperative rather than competitive, psychologically enriching rather than alienating, non-exploitative, flexible, and fair. Such a division of labor would also involve equal recognition and equal rewards for every type of work, and whenever feasible, rotation of workers among roles which differ in intrinsic rewards. Finally, such a division of

labor would involve equal rights for all to participate in the productive enterprise of society, and hence would eliminate the absurdity, so prevalent in competitive, profit-motivated societies, of unemployment of workers, land, and plants while human needs remain unmet, and production is out of step with these needs.

Needless to say, social development, as conceived here, is also predicated upon flexible, egalitarian distribution to all members and segments of society of the concrete wealth produced by their labor, upon equal access to the human services it administers, upon equal civil liberties and political rights, and upon according to all equal recognition, honor, and prestige. It follows that implicit in genuine social development are patterns of role allocation and rights distribution which conform to the notion "to each according to need, from each according to capacity."

Finally, social development is predicated upon avoidance of exploitation and domination of humans and natural resources in other parts of the globe. All forms of exploitation and domination beyond a given society's boundaries inevitably negate and destroy internal processes of social development since foreign exploitation and domination always involve exploitative and domineering human relations within a society by powerful, ruling elites toward large segments of their own people. Internal and external exploitation and oppression complement and reinforce each other. They are manifestations of the same underlying principles and dynamics, to wit: a commitment to inequality, and hence, a readiness to use other humans as means or objects in the greedy pursuit of hegemony, privilege, and profit for oneself, one's tribe, or one's nation. Genuine social development can never result from such attitudes and actions, only imbalanced pseudo-development -- illusions or caricatures of true social development. The alienating and oppressive internal milieu of societies who were, or are, practicing colonial or neo-colonial exploitation and oppression, reflects these contradictions. It demonstrates the incompatibility between social development, understood as equalitarian enhancement of the quality of life for all, and the practice of exploitation at home and abroad in pursuit of mal-distributed, imbalanced economic growth.

It should be noted here, that while foreign exploitation and domination in any form are incompatible with genuine social development, foreign trade among societies living in different parts of the globe is not, as long as such trade involves voluntary exchanges of different types of resources on the basis of equality among trading partners. Such exchanges as well as all forms of mutual aid among neighboring and distant peoples are apt to promote the social development of all participants.

## Social Policy Strategies Towards Social Development

Considering the conceptions of social policies, social policy relevant value dimension, and social development articulated so far in this essay, what specific social policies can be expected to set in motion, and maintain the momentum, of processes of social development? When social development means evenly shared, balanced progress of entire populations towards enhancement of the circumstances of living, the quality of life, and the quality of all human relations, it is predicated upon social policies shaped by a humanistic, egalitarian, and democratic philosophy. For evenly shared progress can materialize only when social policies are designed, consciously, to treat every human as a subject of intrinsically equal worth, entitled to equal social, economic, civil, and political rights, liberties, responsibilities, and recognition. Hence, whenever institutional structures and dynamics of a society are in conflict with such a philosophy, initiating, and maintaining the momentum of social development requires fundamental transformations of the institutional order and of the value premises that sustain and reinforce that order.

Productive resources as a public trust: What then, is the meaning, in terms of specific social policies, of such fundamental transformations of the institutional order that would be conducive to genuine social development? It means, above all else, that the productive resources of a society, its land, water, and other natural resources, its machinery and factories, as well as its accumulated stock of scientific knowledge and technology must not be owned or controlled by individuals or by small segments of the population, and must not be used to secure privileged circumstances of living for propertied classes or other powerful groups such as bureaucratic elites, intellectual elites, etc. These sources of all wealth must be transformed into, and maintained in perpetuity as, a collectively owned and democratically controlled public trust or "common-wealth," appropriate shares of which would be allocated for use, not for ownership, to people working and living by themselves or in groups. The public trust of productive resources would be administered and preserved in a manner that would assure everyone's participation throughout life as equally entitled decision maker, producer, and consumer, using everyone's capacities, and satisfying everyone's needs for goods and services. Privately owned property would be limited to goods destined for personal use, such as clothing, homes, household appliances, etc., and for personal consumption, such as food.

Allocation of productive resources: Next, social policies, conducive to social development, should establish priority rules concerning the allocation of productive resources, to assure that goods

and services which meet the basic needs of the entire population for food, homes, clothing, health, education, communication, etc., are produced in appropriate quantities and quality before less essential goods and services are produced. Policies should also promote balance among population size and needs, ecological considerations, and the reality of ultimate limits of natural resources, by prudently adjusting birth rates, and by precluding all avoidable waste and destruction of natural resources and human capacities. Such waste and destruction may be inevitable when processes of production are shaped by dynamics intrinsic to the drive for profit and the accumulation of privately controlled wealth. When production will be geared systematically to meeting the needs of a population through a stable and balanced supply of high quality, long lasting goods and services, producers would no longer need to engage in economically irrational practices, induced now by the competitive scramble for market shares and profits, such as artificially inflated and manipulated levels and patterns of consumption, model changes involving, not improvements, but meaningless, marginal variations, transitional and arbitrary fashions, built-in obsolescence, deceptive advertising and image building aimed at generating artificial, and often harmful, needs and status symbols, etc.

Harmonizing agricultural and industrial production: Another policy strategy essential to social development is the promotion of balanced integration of agricultural and industrial production. A steady and reliable supply of nutritious food is obviously a sine-qua-non of social development. Accordingly, policies that sacrifice the production and supply of food and the quality of village life by shifting humans and natural resources from rural-agricultural toward urban-industrial development which primarily benefits the perceived interests of established, powerful, wealth-holding elites, are clearly counter-indicated. Such policies usually result in mass migration from potentially healthy rural environments into urban slums, traditional breeding grounds for human misery, exploitation, and manifold human and social pathology. While conventional economists tend to argue that the benefits of concentrated and accelerated industrialization, in accordance with capitalist principles, would, in time, trickle down to all segments of a population, history, since the industrial revolution in Europe and North America, as well as over recent decades in Asia, Africa, and South America, suggests that this theory has never really worked, and that whatever benefits result from such industrialization, tend to flow away from working people who produce them and who bear a heavy cost/upward, towards privileged, and frequently unproductive, segments of societies.

Industry: servant or master? To assure compatibility between industrial and social development, industry must never be considered an end in itself, nor a means toward the generation and accumulation of privately controlled wealth. Instead, industry would have to be designed as a powerful instrument to serve the well-being of the entire population, rather than people being used as tools to serve the well-being of profit-oriented industry. Accordingly, social development oriented policies should facilitate geographic dispersion of industry throughout a country to where people live, and to where raw materials and sources of natural energy are easily available. Furthermore, policies should steer industrial production primarily toward the high priority needs of the population, food, homes, clothing, health, education, communication, etc., and away from wasteful production of non-essentials. Locating industry in villages, small towns, and regional centers, and relating it to the needs of such communities, rather than exclusively locating it in, and relating it to, major metropolitan centers and their distorted needs; transforming the function of industry from serving the interests of privileged groups to serving the interests of all people; and finally, transferring responsibilities for directing industry from private, absentee owners and their representatives to workers, consumers, local communities, and the democratic institutions of society, can be expected to facilitate the harmonious integration of industrial enterprises into the agricultural base of the population, into both rural and urban life, and thus into processes of genuine social development.

Related to industrialization is also the question whether productive enterprises should be organized along labor-intensive or capital-intensive principles. This policy choice would have to depend in any particular instance on the relative availability of human and other resources at given stages of social and technological development. As with all other policy issues, the decision criterion should be the common interests of society, broadly conceived, rather than narrowly defined criteria of profitability. Hence, the optimal solution, to be promoted through appropriate social policies, should involve full employment of all available human resources in constructive, meaningful, and intrinsically rewarding productive activities, supported by tools, machinery, science, and technology to enhance effectiveness and efficiency, to eliminate unhealthy and damaging aspects of production, and to reduce hard and unpleasant labor as far as is compatible with prudent conservation of the environment and its natural resources.

Restructuring work: employing human resources to meet human needs: Some further observations seem indicated here concerning policies which would shape the organization and the quality of work

and the division of labor in a manner conducive to social development. The most fundamental principle in this context ought to be that everyone is entitled, and has a responsibility, to participate in the aggregate labor of society. This means that whatever the total amount of labor which society requires to sustain and enhance its way of life, be that amount large or small, it is to be shared evenly among all members of society. Human unemployment and the waste and alienation resulting from it would thus be abolished.

Another important principle in this context is that all occupations within a rationally designed system of production and services ought to entitle individuals engaging in them to roughly equal rewards in terms of claims against society's aggregate product, as well as in terms of social recognition or prestige. Such equal shares of returns to all workers would reflect the premise that all work is necessary in generating the aggregate social product, that it consequently represents a necessary service to society, ought to be considered of equal intrinsic worth to society's well-being, and should entitle workers to equal circumstances of living.

While, then, all work roles of a rationally designed system of production and services would be deemed equally important, and hence equal in worth, the experience of individuals engaging in different occupations would, nevertheless, vary widely in quality. Moreover, different individuals are also likely to develop preferences and talents for different types of work. All this means that different levels of intrinsic satisfaction would result from different occupations for individuals of like capacities and inclinations, and that differences in talents and taste among individuals would be additional sources of variation in experience. Since work roles ought to be allocated in a manner providing roughly equal returns and satisfaction, these differences inherent in occupations and people ought to be considered and compensated for through social policies that structure the division of labor in society, including the choices of, the preparation for, and the access to different work roles.

These considerations of work in relation to social development reveal a multiplicity of potentially conflicting objectives which need to be reconciled through appropriate social policies. Before suggesting such policies, the objectives will be briefly restated:

- all tasks a society considers necessary to sustain and enhance its way of life must be carried out by, and hence allocated to, some individuals;

- all members of a society are entitled to, and responsible for, a share of society's total work load;
- all occupations necessary to sustain and enhance a society's way of life are to be deemed of equal intrinsic worth, and should entitle individuals engaging in them to equal claims against the aggregate social product, and to equal social recognition;
- work ought to be directed by the workers themselves, and ought to be meaningful, constructive and a medium for self-actualization, while always serving also the interests of the community; individuals should be free, as far as possible, to choose occupational roles in accordance with their capacities, talents, tastes, and interests.

Policies to organize work and distribute rights: Appropriate combinations of the following policy measures should overcome the conflicts and contradictions implicit in these objectives. Firstly, production should be directed by the workers performing it, and the production processes should not be split into minute, repetitive, and meaningless units, so as not to destroy opportunities for expressing individual craftsmanship and creativity, and for deriving a sense of pride and accomplishment while producing goods or services of high quality and aesthetic value. Secondly, unhealthy, dangerous, heavy, unpleasant, and routine work should be performed by machines before other, more desirable work is mechanized. Thirdly, work considered less desirable, or undesirable, which cannot be mechanized for various reasons, ought to be shared evenly by all. This could be accomplished by allocating specified stages of the life cycle to the performance of such less desirable tasks, or by taking turns in undertaking these tasks throughout life. Fourthly, opportunities ought to be provided to change one's occupation at various stages of life, to engage in different occupations at the same time, or to rotate among different roles over time. Special efforts ought to be made to overcome the prevailing, nearly absolute separation between physical and mental work, and the differential social valuation of these work domains. Next, access to preparatory channels for all occupations ought to be completely open to all, and all vestiges of role allocation by way of caste or class channels or by sex must be eliminated.

Finally, the distribution of rights, or of claims to shares of society's aggregate wealth and product ought to be completely separated from the division of labor. Rights and claims ought to be distributed as universal, equal entitlements rather than as task-specific, differential rewards. Everyone ought to be entitled to a roughly equal share to satisfy all socially sanctioned needs through-

out life by virtue of being a contributing member of one's community and society, irrespective of the type of work one engages in.

Conducting public affairs: Another essential component of a strategy for social development, the last to be discussed here, though its role is crucial, is policies that shape the conduct of public affairs, the patterns of governance, leadership, and decision-making. As conceived in this essay, social development implies that choices and decisions affecting the circumstances of living of people be arrived at in a thoroughly democratic fashion, with everyone who may be affected by a decision being informed about all relevant aspects, and having an "equal voice," that is equal rights, opportunities, and power in determining the outcome. Representative democracy, when practiced in an essentially inegalitarian context of interest group competition, falls, inevitably, short of these criteria. Hence it needs to be transcended, and replaced by political institutions conducive to participatory democracy. The basic units of such political institutions would not be isolated individuals, but self-governing community groups, small enough to permit close personal relations, yet large enough to assure economic viability and social continuity. They could be producer-consumer collectives or merely neighborhood groups. They would share social, economic, cultural, child-rearing, educational and recreational functions and concerns. These groups would vary in size and in internal patterns and life styles. They would be linked in local and translocal networks or federations which, in turn, might form more encompassing, democratic macro-structures. Coordination and integration among these many entities would be achieved through local, regional, and trans-regional representative assemblies. These assemblies would have to be designed in a manner that would assure full and informed participation of all units and levels in decisions shaping their existence. Issues for deliberation and decision could originate at any level, but would always have to be examined on all levels so that local and trans-local perspectives would be taken into consideration and reconciled before decisions are reached.

Such a multi-level, political system of decentralized, yet coordinated and integrated, self-governing groups could not function effectively, unless every unit accepted egalitarian and collectivity-oriented value premises as primary decision criteria for all issues, and refrained from competitive interactions derived from a scarcity mentality and a zero-sum model. Commitment to egalitarian values, and the emergence of non-competitive attitudes would lead to co-operative approaches in sharing and allocating productive resources, and in producing and distributing goods and services, setting thus in motion a process of plus-sum dynamics towards a reality and mentality of evenly shared adequacy and well-being.



Egalitarian-democratic institutions will not endure without widespread political awareness and conscientious involvement in public affairs, facilitated by an unobstructed flow of relevant information. Such political institutions could, therefore, not sanction claims for secrecy and confidential, privileged communications concerning public issues. For if people are to be free and their own masters, and if they are to share equally the responsibilities and entitlements of citizenship, then individuals assigned to public service roles for a specified time, must under no circumstances be permitted to withhold information from the sovereign people. It should be realized in this context that behind all claims for secrecy and privileged communications lurks, usually, an evil purpose involving either the defense of existing, unfair and unjust conditions, or the intent to create, and benefit from, such conditions. Just and fair objectives and purposes, on the other hand, can always be discussed and confronted openly among equals.

Leadership in an egalitarian-democratic commonwealth means service to people, not control and rule over people. It involves performance of a set of tasks deemed necessary by society to maintain and enhance its way of life. The social value of these tasks is equal to that of all other tasks deemed necessary by society. Hence individuals assigned for a time to the performance of leadership functions should not be entitled to privileged circumstances of living, but should share the same life style and the same rights to goods and services as all other members of society. If leadership roles are defined as service functions not entitling individuals performing them to special rewards in the form of additional goods, services, and prestige, people will be less eager to assume these roles and to hold on to them. It may, in fact, become difficult to recruit volunteers for leadership roles, as their performance would require commitment of much extra time and effort. Hence, these roles may eventually have to be filled by assigning everyone to take a turn.

It remains to be noted that qualifications for leadership roles are not as extraordinary and as rare as people in inequalitarian, competitive societies assume, and as leaders and their promoters pretend. In such societies, leaders, invariably, come from or are selected by and represent the interests of, wealthy and powerful population segments. Furthermore, leadership roles in such societies entitle those who perform them to considerable privileges. Finally, these roles are also a source of patronage and corruption. Once secrecy and confidential, privileged communications are abolished, and with them the monopoly on information about public affairs, which political and economic elites now maintain, individuals who keep informed on public affairs, and will participate in their community

groups in the study and disposition of public issues, will soon develop the skills necessary for dealing with such issues, for representing their groups, and for assuming leadership positions. As with many other tasks that are monopolized in the prevailing social order by various powerful groups, the real issue concerning leadership roles seems to be access and opportunity rather than unique qualifications and abilities. It should also be emphasized that in an egalitarian-democratic system the nature of leadership roles will be different, and less complex than in the context of centralized, manipulative executive power. The political institutions of egalitarian, participatory democracy will be designed in a manner that will preserve the right and responsibility of the people to make all decisions on policy in their community groups, and in their representative assemblies on local and trans-local levels. Accordingly, the primary responsibility of leaders will be the faithful execution of the people's decisions. They will be administrators, not powerful rulers.

### Summary

The specific policies which have been presented here as necessary components of a strategy toward social development are not isolated fragments. They are not independent of, but complement, one another. Their combined impact should bring about the fundamental transformations of social values, structures, and dynamics implicit in the notion of social development. What unifies these policies is the underlying humanistic, egalitarian, democratic philosophy, according to which all humans are intrinsically of equal worth, are entitled to equal rights in every sphere of life, and may not be exploited or dominated by other humans. The policies were developed by consistently applying these values and principles to the major domains of human existence and social organization, namely, the control and allocation of all productive resources, the design of productive processes and criteria for production priorities, the division of labor and the organization and valuation of work, the distribution of rights and claims to shares of the aggregate social product, and, finally, the design of political institutions.

There are, of course, conceptions of social development which differ fundamentally in underlying assumptions and values from a humanistic, egalitarian, and democratic conception. Adherents of such alternative conceptions will often acknowledge humanistic, egalitarian, and democratic values as ultimate goals, but will not use these values as guiding principles and evaluative criteria when formulating policies in the present. This avoidance tends to be rationalized as being "realistic and practical," while insisting on

social justice here and now is being labeled as "utopian, naive, and impractical." Such realistic and practical approaches to social development mean that, while humans would be treated as equals some time in the future, socially structured and defined inequalities are to be accepted as a given aspect of present reality. They must not be questioned or challenged on a fundamental level, but must be reckoned with, adjusted to, and incorporated into policy formulation for social development. The result of such pragmatic development policies is, at best, an illusion of social development, pursued for the benefit of relatively small, yet economically and politically powerful elite groups, through exploitation and domination of economically and politically powerless majorities of the population.

History all over the world suggests that such "pragmatic" compromise approaches to social development which acquiesce in established inequalities and injustices, do not work, however well-intentioned their advocates may be. They do not work for exploited majorities whose basic needs remain unsatisfied and who continue to be oppressed and alienated. Nor do these approaches work in terms of the real, long-range, human interest of the power and wealth controlling minorities. The reason for the failure of these development policies is the intensification of intra-societal conflict which usually accompanies their implementation, and which may be inevitable in view of the economic, social, and psychological dynamics generated in an inegalitarian, competitive context, and its scarcity, zero-sum mentality. The human and economic costs of maintaining an established, inegalitarian social order tend to increase exponentially in spite of sporadic patchwork efforts to save that order from collapsing. Sooner or later this process tends to reach levels of massive breakdown. To refer to this self-defeating process as social development is, of course, absurd.

The conclusion of these considerations seems inescapable. Social development, like human freedom and dignity, is indivisible. It simply cannot be secured for segments of a population at the price of exploiting and oppressing other segments. It can be achieved only for all together, or for none at all. Either all are free and equal, brothers and sisters in a universal process towards social development, or none will gain freedom and fulfillment.

## APPENDIX

The purpose of this Appendix is to present a framework which should be helpful when analyzing actual and newly proposed social policies in terms of their appropriateness for social development as conceived in this essay. The framework should be equally useful in efforts to generate appropriate alternative social policies.

The framework consists of a set of descriptive, analytic, evaluative, and synthetic items, the purpose of which is to discern the consequences of given policies and policy clusters, to examine the extent of correspondence between these consequences and the requirements of social development as articulated in this essay, and when indicated, to generate alternative policies which fit these requirements.

Since social policies differ in scope and focus, not all items of the framework will be relevant in the analysis of every policy. However, while certain items are not applicable to certain policies and would be omitted in an analysis, all social policies and policy clusters can be analyzed in terms of their suitability for social development by following the items of the framework.

The framework for the analysis and synthesis of social policies for social development is based on an earlier published, general framework for the analysis and synthesis of social policies.\*

### Framework for Analysis and Synthesis of Social Policies for Social Development

#### A. Descriptive Section: Issues, Objectives, Values, Consequences

1. issues dealt with by the policy, their nature, scope, distribution, and dynamics;
2. policy objectives concerning the issues (overt and covert);

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\*David G. Gil, "A Systematic Approach to Social Policy Analysis," The Social Service Review, Vol. 44, #4, December 1970, pp. 411-426. David G. Gil, Unravelling Social Policy, Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1973.

3. policy-relevant value positions underlying the objectives (overt and covert);
4. theoretical premises underlying the strategy of the policy;
5. population segments at whom the policy is aimed primarily, their size and characteristics;
6. short and long range, intended and unintended consequences of the policy for target and non-target segments of the population;
7. overall investment costs of the policy in terms of human and other resources.

B. Analytic Section: Implications of the Policy for Developmental, Allocative, and Distributional Processes of Society

1. qualitative and quantitative effects on the selection and development of life-sustaining and enhancing resources, goods, and services;
2. effects on the organization of production and the division of labor, or on the criteria and procedures for selection, preparation, and assignment of individuals and groups to statuses and roles within the aggregate of societal tasks and functions;
3. effects on the distribution of rights (entitlements, rewards, and constraints) concerning goods and services; recognition, honor, and prestige; civil liberties and political rights;
4. consequences of modifications effected by the policy in developmental, allocative, and distributional processes for:
  - the circumstances of living of individuals and groups (objective, subjective, relative to others);
  - the quality of human relations among individuals, groups, and society as a whole; and
  - the aggregate quality of life or existential milieu.

C. Evaluative Section: Correspondence Between the Consequences of  
the Policy and the General Requirements of Social Development

1. relevance of the issues addressed by the policy, and their degree of priority, in terms of the central evaluative criterion of social development, namely, evenly shared, balanced progress of an entire population toward enhanced individual, segmental, and collective well-being;
2. correspondence between overt and covert policy objectives and the general objectives implicit in the central evaluative criterion of social development;
3. correspondence between overt and covert policy-relevant value positions underlying the policy objectives and the egalitarian, cooperative, and collectivity-oriented value positions upon which genuine social development is predicated;
4. correspondence between consequences of the policy for target and non-target population segments and the general requirement of social development for evenly shared, balanced progress of an entire population towards enhanced individual, segmental, and collective well-being;
5. correspondence between effects of the policy on the selection, development, utilization, and investment of resources and the requirements of social development for balanced, non-wasteful resource development, utilization, and conservation, geared to basic biological and complex social and psychological needs of people and the size of the population;
6. correspondence between effects of the policy on the organization of production and the division of labor and the quantitative, qualitative, and organizational aspects of production and work upon which social development is predicated;
7. correspondence between effects of the policy on the distribution of social, economic, civil, and political rights and the requirement of social development for flexible, egalitarian distribution of these rights;

8. correspondence between consequences of the policy for the circumstances of living, the quality of human relations, and the aggregate quality of life and the general requirement of social development for evenly shared and balanced progress of the entire population with respect to these existential dimensions;
9. correspondence between consequences of the policy for transnational economic and political relations and the requirements of social development for avoidance of exploitation and domination of humans and natural resources in foreign lands and for equalitarian terms of foreign trade.

D. Synthetic Section: Generation of Alternative Social Policies  
in Conformity with the General Requirements of Social Development