

THE TERM "SOCIAL WORK" AS USED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Prior to the Tenth International Conference of Social Work, each National Committee of the ICSW was asked to prepare, as part of its national report, a statement of not more than 300 words explaining how the term "social work" is used in its country. Twenty-four countries submitted reports on their national experiences and views in relation to the over-all Conference theme "Social Work in a Changing World — Its Function and Responsibilities," and most of these included the requested statement.

The report of the pre-Conference Working Party in Milan, which drew heavily on the national reports, and particularly on the statements on "social work," will be published in the next issue of **INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK**. In the meantime, it is believed that the statements on "social work" will be of particular interest to our readers, and we are therefore printing those from the following countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong and Israel. Statements from other countries will appear in future issues.

The Meaning of "Social Work" in Australia

THE changing usage of the terms social work, social welfare and social service over the past two or three decades reveals significant developments in Australia's concept of social work, used in its broad generic senses. The usage varies, however, from group to group and from place to place throughout the continent. In some communities social work refers (where the phrase itself is used at all) in an undifferentiated way to the activities of those agencies whose central concern is the restoration or promotion of some aspect of the physical, economic and social well-being of individuals and groups. Generally it is seen as the offering of direct services but increasingly also as their coordination.

Where the influence of the professional worker is strongest and oldest social work is coming to be identified with the activities of social workers, most of whom are case workers, while social welfare is used more to denote the wide field of endeavour covered by social work as described above. This development has naturally followed the growth of professional education. Social workers became articulate as a group only after statutory provision for major hazards to the individual's social and economic survival had been established for many years and by the time a great variety of voluntary social services under secular and religious auspices were already old. Social workers came to be expected to add a special dimension to their administration, namely individualisation. Now, through some division of labour, an increasing number of social workers is employed in a purely advisory or consultative capacity. Their function here is seen as assistance in making a design for some kinds of welfare services.

At the same time social welfare seems to be less and less the business only of service organisations. A number of instrumentalities — local authorities, industries, government departments — are showing concern that

their activities incorporate methods of promoting the social and physical well-being of those people they either serve or employ. At least part of the explanation of this development seems to be that social welfare, both as a concept and as an activity, is gaining a wider and more conscious acceptance as a basic function of social life. For most of us it has become more than a rescue operation to restore the status quo when a problem disrupts normal processes.

Rapport Du Bresil

Au Brésil, le terme "Service Social" peut avoir deux sens: au sens large, "Service Sociaux"; ce sont des oeuvres ou institutions appelées aussi "Services d'Assistance"; les cliniques, les dispensaires, les institutions de protection de l'enfance ou de la vieillesse abandonnée, etc...; au sens restreint, le "Service Social" est une méthode par laquelle l'assistant social (professionnel diplômé par une école spécialisée) aide le client (individu, famille, groupe ou communauté) à prendre conscience de ses difficultés et à trouver les moyens de les résoudre. Comme méthode, le Service Social est donc un ensemble de principes et de normes qui servent de base à la technique; celle-ci s'adapte aux problèmes, au client et au but que l'on désire atteindre.

Nous avons ainsi le Service Social des Cas (casework) le Service Social des Groupes

(groupwork) et l'Organisation de la Communauté. Dernièrement, on y a joint la "Recherche Sociale" et l'"Administration des Services Sociaux".

Le Service Social des Cas (casework) a pour but d'aider l'individu ou la famille à résoudre par lui-même ses problèmes familiaux et psychologiques et à lui apprendre à prévoir les difficultés futures.

Le Service Social des Groupes (groupwork) vise à aider les individus et les familles à satisfaire leurs intérêts ou à trouver une solution pour leurs problèmes en employant pour cela, les expériences en groupe et les travaux en collaboration; et par la même occasion, leur enseigner l'application des principes démocratiques.

L'Organisation de la Communauté se propose d'aider les individus et les groupes à résoudre les problèmes de la collectivité par leurs propres efforts.

La "Recherche Sociale" est un ensemble de méthodes et de techniques dont se sert le Service Social pour mieux connaître son champ d'action.

L'"Administration des Services Sociaux" comprend l'ensemble des opérations par lesquelles le but des organismes est déterminé, les tâches distribuées et contrôlées, les fonds prévus et appliqués, les fonctions du personnel définies, les cadres sélectionnés en vue de leurs attributions et le travail supervisé et évalué.

Chaque technique emploie des moyens qui ne sont pas particuliers au Service Social, mais qui doivent être adaptés à la technique employée et au but que l'on poursuit, telle l'"entrevue" pour le Service Social des Cas ou la "réunion" pour le Service Social des Groupes ou pour l'Organisation de la Communauté. Le juste choix des moyens et leur application correcte constitue la technique spécifique de chaque méthode et permet

de considérer jusqu'à un certain point, le Service Social comme un art.

Dans son sens restreint, le Service Social est assez récent au Brésil: la première école de Service Social date de 1936. On compte actuellement 27 écoles dont cinq à Rio de Janeiro et trois à Sao Paulo. Il y a une école dans chaque état, à l'exception de l'Etat de Mato Grosso.

En 1945, à la suite du premier Congrès Pan Américain de Service Social, de Santiago du Chili, les écoles fondèrent la "A.B.E.S.S." (Association Brésilienne des Ecoles de Service Social). En 1946, les assistants sociaux organisèrent la "A.B.A.S." (Association Brésilienne d'Assistants Sociaux). En 1953 les deux associations obtinrent la reconnaissance des Ecoles par l'Etat et leur incorporation aux Universités. En 1956, la profession d'assistant social fut reconnue comme profession libérale et le premier syndicat organisé en 1959.

Dans les premières années, le Service Social au Brésil, subit une très forte influence du Service Social Européen, surtout du Service Social français. Cette influence qui est surtout doctrinaire, se fait encore sentir aujourd'hui et se retrouve dans la terminologie du sens large. Les techniques américaines de Service Social furent introduites pendant la 2ème guerre mondiale et ce sont elles que nous utilisons aujourd'hui.

Malgré ces fortes influences étrangères, un Service Social Brésilien ayant ses caractéristiques propres, adapté à la situation du pays pouvant faire face aux problèmes de base, se définit peu à peu.

La tendance actuelle est donc de distinguer le Service Social "sensus restrictus" du Bien Être Social, de l'Assistance Sociale de la Sécurité Sociale et de l'Action Sociale. Le "Bien Être Social" terme très ample, couvre tout ce qui concerne une vie saine,

tant dans ses aspects éducatifs et culturels. Le terme d'Assistance Sociale s'applique aux services organisés: oeuvres, institutions ou sociétés diverses publiques ou privées, gratuites ou à paiement réduit, ne visant à aucun bénéfices. La "Sécurité Sociale" est un système d'assurance contre la maladie, la mort, les accidents dont les primes sont payées par les patrons, les travailleurs et le état. Finalement, l'Action Sociale couvre toutes les activités des organisations professionnelles ou des particuliers afin d'obtenir les mesures législatives ou institutionnelles de bien-être social nécessaires aux collectivités.

The Meaning of "Social Work" in Canada — Prepared by Swithun Bowers, O.M.I.

The term "social work" is generally understood, by the social work profession in Canada, to refer to a professional activity in which a social worker uses skills in controlled helping relationships with persons and knowledge concerning the interaction between man and his environment to the purpose of enabling people to achieve some greater measure of adequacy in their social functioning. "Social functioning" is understood as the ways in which persons fulfil the various social roles they hold in relationship with other people, as, for example, in the basic family roles of husband, wife, parent, child.

The method implied is employed through three differing processes, the case-work process, the group work process, and the community organization process; in these the helping relationship is applied to the individual, the small group, and the community, respectively.

In the case-work process, the knowledge and skills of the social worker are used to help an individual person (or family) who has experienced some breakdown or impairment in social functioning attain the maximum level of social adequacy possible to him in view of both personal and environmental limitations. In the group work process the social worker uses his knowledge and skill to help the group and its individual members as part of the group, improve and enhance their capacity for social functioning. In the community organization process the knowledge and skills of the social worker are used to help the community function as a social unity in making provision for the social needs of its members. In practice, community organization in Canada has concerned itself with the organization and maintenance of both health and social welfare services, but both have been seen as related to the process of helping the community, and the vari-

ous sub-groups within a community, with their own social functioning as groups. Social work research and social agency administration are sometimes considered additional processes in social work, but the more generally accepted view is that research and administration are processes not specific to social work which, however, are used within a social work context, to facilitate and aid social work practice.

Chilean Committee of Social Work

What is the meaning of the term social service and in what form has it been used in the country?

Social work or social service are terms which, in their most ample acceptance, are synonyms and both mean the struggle or work for the welfare of a society, whether applied to individuals, groups or communities.

However, in Chile we have tried to give a more precise meaning to this terminology and to establish a difference between Social Work and Social Service.

Social work would be, therefore, all efforts carried out in order to achieve social welfare and this can be done by any person, whether professional or not.

Social service would be the same efforts indicated above, but carried out in an organized form by a competent professional who carries out her work through the application of methods and techniques supported by a philosophy and by the fundamental principles of human rights.

The Chilean Association of Social Service Schools has defined professional social service as "the action of placing the individual and his family in normal living conditions or readaptation, through a process of help and education".

The Panamerican Union defines social service as "the techniques through the application of the scientific conquests and with a human concept of social justice. Its purposes are:

- (a) To help the individuals, groups or communities to solve their own problems; and
- (b) To act in the establishment and maintenance of a social order which guarantees the security and welfare of all individuals".

In Chile, the term social service has been used as the development of a professional work that is, it has been so named when in different organizations, public or private, in which social work is a primary or secondary function, there exists a section or department of Social Service managed by one or several professionals who have received their titles of Social Assistant in a School of Social Service.

The Phrase "Social Work" as Used in Finland

The concept "Social work" is rather vague in Finland. Thus any report on it is necessarily somewhat subjective. No empiric research has been made on the question of the connection in which the phrase is used in practice.

The phrase "social work" has often, especially in earlier times, been used in a broad meaning in Finland. The nearest synonyms to it have been "social action" and "social policy". By these three expressions has been roughly understood activity which aims at securing a reasonable standard of living, social security, and comfort for different groups (classes) of society, for families, and for individuals. Perhaps the concept "social action" has been used in the widest meaning". Social policy "is mainly directed towards legislation and measures to be taken by the State and the communes.

In this broad sense it can thus be said that "social work" contains the following main branches:

1. Labour policy, i.e. industrial relations, wages, and workers protection.
2. Labour market policy, i.e. employment policy, labour exchanges, and vocational guidance.
3. Social security.
4. Housing and community planning.
5. Public health.
6. Alcohol policy.
7. Rural settlement.

In most of these branches the central principle is family welfare.

Social security can be divided into three main branches: (1) Social insurance, (2) social assistance, and (3) social welfare proper.

Social insurance and social assistance benefits are granted according to schedules to persons who satisfy certain general conditions. The financing of social insurance is, at least in part, based on insurance principles, while social assistance is financed entirely from public money. Lately the nature of social insurance has been growing increasingly indistinct. Thus social insurance and social assistance have been gradually merging into each other, thus forming a new type of social security (social assistance in a broader sense).

The characteristic of social welfare proper is considered to be action taken separately in each individual case. The quality and amount of support is applied separately for each family and individual. They are not decided schematically on the basis of universal schedules. Social welfare contains social casework and

group work as specific methods, characterized by immediate personal contact between the social worker and the client or clients.

According to a slightly narrower interpretation social work is understood to comprise the whole of social assistance and social welfare proper.

Recently, the term "social worker" has been increasingly used in accordance with foreign terminology in addition to the earlier term "welfare worker". The term "Social worker" is used to refer to professional workers in the fields of social assistance and social welfare proper, and also includes people who work in an administrative or educational capacity in these fields.

There have been signs of a tendency to use the phrase "social work" in a still more concise and more clearly defined and limited meaning, being taken to refer to a personal service which requires specialized training.

The continual improvement of methods and training in social work may lead to a more concise definition of this concept. With increasing international interaction, the definitions as well as the terminology of other languages, will probably have an influence in this direction, too.

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Use of the Phrase "Social Work" in Germany

In West Germany social work is an independent field of work existing side by side with the social insurance and pension system whose competence, substance and scope are settled by political legislation.

The special character of social work is constituted by the fact that it gives or procures help to individuals or groups in distress who are

not provided for under social security,

do not receive the necessary help for development from either family or society.

handicapped mentally or physically, socially or because of an abnormal disposition.

Social work's guiding principle is to give help to enable people to help themselves.

The constantly increasing domain of social services in industry, administration of justice, schools, etc., makes it more and more difficult to delimitate the term "social work". The term "social worker" is, however, applied as a designation of a profession only to full-

time experts who have received their training at recognized technical schools and have passed a state examination (obtained a diploma) though other professional groups—particularly in sick-nursing and youth welfare carry out similar or identical functions.

Local social administrations are making efforts with the aim to give their administrative personnel the status of social workers through short-term training.

The tendency to classify under the summary term "welfare system" institutions and staff of social services, social administrations and voluntary welfare services serves the same purpose.

The value and the chances of success of these tendencies are in dispute.

The process of an organic disposition of experts, administrative and honorary collaborators is as much in its initial stage as the transformation of social services with parallel activities into an organism of social work reasonably geared and working efficaciously.

Economic and social changes to-day make it necessary to employ fully trained personnel above all in the field of social pedagogics in positions in which in the past untrained or semi-trained workers were able to give satisfaction.

This fact has led to the delimitation of new specializations inside social work, to the organization of supplementary courses and to the expansion of university training for workers in leading positions.

An increase in the number of trained workers in voluntary welfare is another result of the above situation.

Fortunately it is increasingly recognized that social work should not be restricted to group and individual help, that scientific study and evaluation of the experience of the mutual influence of social institutions—in particular of legislation—are as necessary to supplement social workers' knowledge as the exchange of experience with countries abroad.

The new knowledge and methods which were in preparation in our country before 1933 and in the meantime have been developed abroad into Casework, Groupwork, Supervision and Community development are gradually becoming of practical importance for us.

"Social Work" in Hong Kong

Social work in the colony of Hong Kong would be defined in exactly the same way as the 1958 pre-conference described it, i.e. social work involves the practice of casework, group work and community organization and in addition social research, social policy and

social action. Added to this, the peculiar needs of Hong Kong mean that a great deal of the social work involves considerable practical giving of relief in the way of goods and financial aid, involving many home visits and much investigation. The needs of the "consumer" are essentially basic and social work is adjusted to this factor, covering a wide range of fundamental and ancillary services.

Definition of Term "Social Work" in Israel

1. The term "social work" is used in this country to denote an activity, on the part of public as well as semi-public and private bodies, for the provision of care for those citizens who are, or consider themselves to be, temporarily or permanently incapable of mastering their own life situation in a satisfactory way.

2. Social work is carried out by professional personnel trained on various levels as well as by volunteer workers.

3. It is generally held to be one of the foremost obligations of the Government and semi-public organizations to take financial, administrative and professional responsibility for planning, initiating and carrying out adequate social work services with the view to improving the socio-economic situation of those in need, thus helping them to become self-supporting.

4. Social work is recognised as a discipline which can be relied upon when determining and attempting to achieve the aims of social welfare policy.

5. The objects of social welfare policy in Israel are:
- a. Improvement of the economic situation of underprivileged persons;
 - b. Improvement of the social relationships of individuals;
 - c. Creation of facilities for the care of special categories of persons;
 - d. Absorption of groups of new immigrants;
 - e. The development and strengthening of new communities.

With the view to attaining these ends, social work provides appropriate services to families, children and youth, mental patients, the chronically ill, the handicapped, the aged, and juvenile and adult offenders. Although the methods of social work practice, such as social case work, social group work and community organisation, figure prominently in the syllabus of the School for Social Work as well as in the various programmes of in-service and on-the-job training, the application of these methods is still not general. This is due to the shortage of skilled professional personnel on the one hand, and the heavy case load on the other.