

## Chapter IX

### CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON INCOME GUARANTEES IN AUSTRALIA

The First Main Report of the Poverty Inquiry was published in April 1975. It made many suggestions for improving the lot of the poorest Australians. The majority of those suggestions consisted of plans to extend the existing welfare system in terms of both amount and the scope of coverage. Amongst the many recommendations which have been implemented in ways compatible with the thrust of the Inquiry's proposals, may be noted the introduction of the Supporting Parents Benefit; a Zone Allowance for isolated areas; the conversion of tax deductions into increased Family Allowances; increased income relief for poor farmers; the extension of home help services; the liberalisation of the Supplementary Assistance means test and the setting up of a federal emergency assistance program(1). But other suggestions have not been adopted, and of these the most notable was the recommendation to introduce a guaranteed minimum income.

The political obstacles to the introduction of any form of income guarantee are different from impediments in the way of most other social welfare policy changes in Australia. Because the introduction of income guarantees would involve a major restructuring of the welfare and tax systems, it could not be tacked on to the existing system of welfare delivery as was the Family Income Supplement. It would necessitate an increase in government outlays (most of which would be recouped through the income tax system). It would require the abolition of the divide between worker and welfare recipient in a way which the Family Income Supplement could have done, but failed to do because of the low take-up rate. It would remove the concept of charity and replace it with a rights oriented approach to income maintenance.

A generalist income guarantees heralds the possibility of a major redistribution downwards, it is a move in the direction of promoting equality in a most inequitable society. The scope of changes required is bound to create, in the transition period, considerable debate. In anticipation of that debate, I set out in this thesis to investigate the ideologies which support the existing income maintenance structure and the ideological opposition to the introduction of income guarantees.

In the opening Chapter, I looked at the differences between theories and ideologies and described the methods I adopted in identifying ideologies which have had an impact upon the existing system of income maintenance and which stand in the way of income guarantees.

The history and structure of the Australian income maintenance system was considered in detail in Chapter II. This was done by concentrating upon the history of the administration of the Invalid Pension and the values which played a part in the creation of Invalid Pension policy. The Chapter also looked at questions such as adequacy, complexity, social insurance and social assistance and the safety net approach to welfare problems. I concluded that the range of residual welfare techniques used in Australia reinforces the concept of less eligibility which is expressed in terms of discrimination on the basis of age, class, race, gender and locality.

The next two Chapters addressed the division in the public mind between work and the family. The value accorded to paid employment and the denigration of unpaid domestic labour plus the attitudes which underlie this segmentation were elaborated.

In Chapter III the issue of work (what about "work" instead of "the issue of work") was considered at length with particular attention paid to the issue of work disincentives. The treatment considered appropriate for those experiencing poverty was compared with occupational and fiscal welfare arrangements. It was noted that the controllers of welfare services frequently rely upon the alleged unwillingness of the poor to work (even in countries where there are far fewer jobs available than there are workers to fill them) to justify the structure of eligibility conditions applying to welfare services. I contended that such an approach is taken in an effort to limit extension of the social wage. Such attempts are assisted by the coupling of the ideology of work with the issue of less eligibility. This, in turn, ensures the atomisation of the least affluent, the control of the under classes, and support for the status quo in relation to wealth and income distribution.

In Chapter IV the family was considered in relation to the development of social welfare policy. The role of patriarchy in the determination of dependency and the unit of welfare payment was examined as part of a gender analysis of the mode of distribution. The central point to come out of this analysis was that whilst governments maintain the myth of the preponderance of the stereotypical nuclear family with its presumed equitable intra-family transfer of income, they avoid addressing the frequent inequalities which are prevalent inside families. If governments were to accept that often massive inequalities in intra-family income transfers often occur, they would be hard pressed to justify the continuance of income maintenance policy based on the presumption that all members of a family will be looked after if one member receives sufficient income to support the entire family. They would be forced to recognise that, if equity or equality was the intended goal of social welfare policy, it would be necessary to create policy around individual equity.

In Chapter V, I examined the ideologies identified in the literature which underpin the society generally and the welfare system in particular. The critique of these ideological positions was informed by feminist insights which revealed the gender bias, which though seldom acknowledged, is omnipresent in the ideologies of conservatism, liberalism, social democracy and Marxism. This led to a discussion of other ideological forces which give rise to discrimination on the basis of race, age and locality. It was argued that the welfare system which these ideologies underpin is sexist, racist, ageist and urbanist. The impact of these ideological forces upon the way families are conceived was a particular focus in this Chapter.

In Chapter V I also discussed the concept of need and its use as a central justifying ideology in conservative, liberal, social democratic and Marxist approaches to social welfare. I put the argument that need is a major vehicle used both to limit the amount and quality of welfare services provided to the least affluent and to legitimise the considerable inequalities in wealth and incomes. Such legitimisation was brought about through state controls on recipients by means of the technique of relying on the poor to individually establish need in relation to a confusing array of categorical payments, many of them presented in a residual fashion.

From a description of existing income maintenance structures and the ideologies which underlie them the thesis moved on to a consideration of proposals to implement a system of income guarantee.

Chapter VI detailed the Poverty Inquiry's suggested guaranteed minimum income scheme, or rather schemes, and went on to look briefly at other income maintenance programs for national superannuation and compensation suggested during the 1970s in Australia. This led, in Chapter VII, to a comprehensive review of the literature concerning income guarantees in Britain and the United States. With the exception of Family Income Supplement, introduced in Britain in 1970 and

in Australia in 1983, it really amounted to a catalogue of rejected options for rationalising income maintenance programs in these three countries.

The foregoing Chapters provided the basis from which to determine in Chapter VIII if income guarantees were compatible with the Australian capitalist form. I concluded that such income guarantees could be introduced in Australia without undermining the existing mode of production. I then went on to examine the various ideologies, identified in earlier Chapters as influencing the style and structure of the existing Australian income maintenance system in order to identify support for, and opposition to, income guarantees at an ideological level.

The analysis involved a consideration of what, from some perspectives, could be seen as technical features. However, as was clearly pointed out, in relation to the unit of payment (individual/family/household), such "technical" determinations are informed by ideological considerations and may have crucial ideological consequences. Certain ideological or political incompatibilities were found to exist between parts of conservative, liberal, social democratic and Marxist perspectives on the one hand, and truly generalised income guarantees on the other. Only in relation to conservative thought was the disjunction judged to be of central importance. That is, no obstacles were identified which would, by their very nature, present to other than conservative ideologues a compelling reason to reject the concept of a guaranteed income to all citizens.

It was suggested that income guarantees are tailor-made for social democrats but provide some difficulties for liberals. There was a recognition that both the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal-National Parties have come to be considerably influenced by monetarist economic policies in their decision-making in relation to other parts of the economy. I held that income guarantees are ideally suited to such a form of economic analysis in that they constitute a deregulation of the relations of distribution.

The Chapter then proceeded to a review of Labor and Liberal Party platforms on social welfare and their actions in relations to income guarantees when in office. It was noted that despite what would appear to be general ideological support for such guarantees they have not been introduced nor does their implementation appear imminent.

## **THE FUTURE OF INCOME GUARANTEES IN AUSTRALIA**

If there are only peripheral objections to income guarantees within the articulated philosophies of liberals and social democrats, then it may be that the substantial obstacles are located within or associated with racism, ageism, urbanism or patriarchy. Were this found to be the case, then this would help explain the seeming contradiction presented by the fact that writers from the far right such as Friedman, through liberals like Galbraith, Tobin and Theobald, to Marxists such as Westerguard, all support the concept of income guarantees and the fact that such guarantees have also been supported by conservative political leaders such as Nixon and Heath as well as by the Australian social democratic leader, Gough Whitlam.

In Chapters II, IV and V, the extent of racism as an impediment to the expansion of welfare services to Aborigines was discussed. Whatever past institutional racist impediments to the introduction of income guarantees existed, these are fast disappearing in Australia and the overwhelming majority of Aborigines are either becoming part of the workforce or are already covered by existing social welfare payments. Until late 1988 when John Howard, Leader of the

Liberal Opposition, rejected a bipartisan multicultural approach to migration, racism directed against migrants had been decreasing. It is not clear whether the current anti-migrant and particularly anti-Asian statements emanating from established groups such as the Returned Services League(2) and racist fringe groups will have any lasting impact in Australia.

Urbanism, with its concentration on the supply of goods and services to city dwellers, is starting to be confronted by both Labor and Liberal-National Party governments. This has been in part due to the recognition that in the past there has been a failure to deliver welfare services in the more remote areas of Australia and also as a result of the unprecedented political unrest amongst rural producers in the 1980s. The growth of Aboriginal organisations in remote areas in the 1970s-80s. This has also resulted in focussing attention on Aboriginal welfare needs in isolated regions.

Urbanism results in the neglect of rural areas but this indifference towards the welfare needs of country people is not inspired by powerful interests. It is sustained by a lack of knowledge about the needs of rural communities. It amounts to a contented neglect rather than a positive determination to discriminate against country people. As such it does not, of itself, constitute an insurmountable obstacle to the extension of income guarantees.

Ageism is undoubtedly the most obvious impediment to the introduction of a generalised income guarantee. At one end of the spectrum are children and teenagers and at the other are the elderly.

Teenagers who have not found jobs are evaluated far less highly than are the old who are generally seen to have earned a "decent" pension during their past working lives. Because the young are paid at a lower rate than adults in the workplace, it is highly likely that a lower level of income guarantee would be offered the young. But even if there are differentials in the rates of guarantee provided for adults, the young and children, this would still constitute a major advance on the existing confusing patchwork of categorical and residual benefits.

Perhaps the greatest obstacle to the introduction of a guaranteed minimum income, particularly if it is to adopt the individual as the unit of payment, is that caused by patriarchy with its assumptions about dependency of spouses and children. As noted in Chapters IV, V and VIII the conservative view of appropriate family structure relies on the man of the house to provide sustenance for his wife and children.

This idea of family life has been compromised by the introduction of Child Endowment (now termed Family Allowance in Australia) and Family Income Supplement (now termed Family Allowance Supplement) as far as workers are concerned; and further compromised by other social welfare payments made to the families of the workless. Underlying all such payments is the concept of the state taking

some responsibility for the upkeep of children and even spouses. A guaranteed income would go some considerable distance towards ensuring, as John Ruskin had advocated in the middle of the nineteenth century, "the first duty of the state is to see that every child born therein shall be well housed, clothed, fed and educated till it attains the age of discretion." (3)

Another feature which needs to be taken into account is the mechanisms which men might use to articulate opposition to income guarantees in a politically sensible manner. The trade union

movement has been the vehicle which many have identified as having been used throughout this century to promote patriarchal working class views. Yet this movement too has come under sustained criticism from feminists during the last 10 years and has started to confront its own sexism and so could not now be counted on to continue to act as it has done in the past.

The trade union movement is the most likely organised force capable of articulating the opposition of Australian men who wanted to oppose income guarantees being paid to individuals as the basic unit.\* However, the trade union movement might not become involved as a protagonist. Much would depend on how the issue of the income guarantee was seen. If the issue was seen as a welfare issue independent of industrial matters then it is likely that, as was the case with Child Endowment, general acceptance would follow after initial trade union suspicion. The money would be seen to be going in the main to support the needy, the old, widows, children, the "genuine" unemployed, the sick, etc.. Unions covering low paid and regular part-time workers would be conscious of the help that a negative tax or guaranteed minimum income would be to their members. The presence of the Family Income Supplement (now termed Family Allowance Supplement) has alerted the more progressive unions to the need to ensure that their membership is informed of its availability and they have come to recognise that the division between workers and welfare recipients is narrowed by such provisions (4).

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\* The Australian Liberal and National Parties might use such arguments to oppose income guarantees if the real conservatives within these parties continue to predominate.

If the payment of income guarantees was made in the social dividend mould this would also increase union acceptance because it would be seen that everyone was treated equally. The fact that the payment was income tested would increase the perception of equality of treatment. The poverty-alleviating aspect of income guarantees would be obvious to all. Unions, whose efforts on behalf of the poor, particularly those who were not members, have been at best spasmodic and usually non-existent might well feel relieved that this issue was removed from their shoulders.

However, if the unions perceived the issue as intimately tied up with industrial conditions, or even if the debate concentrated over much on redistribution rather than welfare, then the unions might well become heavily involved. This would not automatically mean they would be opposed to the introduction; but it would create a situation in which opposition was likely at least from those unions whose members are in receipt of the average wage or better, and therefore least likely to need to call on the provisions of the income guarantee. Were the income guarantee perceived as a replacement for widespread minimum wage legislation or workers compensation or even superannuation\* provisions, then this would cause these unions to be at least very wary and most likely opposed. The issue of superannuation and compensation will be a major hurdle for the proponents of

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\* Superannuation is an issue intimately connected with the ideology of work and attitudes surrounding it derive out of the worker/workless divide discussed in Chapter III where the differential treatment thought appropriate for the affluent was considered alongside the assistance for the poor. But the fact that white, city-based, men are the major beneficiaries of superannuation shows that ideologies of gender, race, and locality are all related to this issue.

income guarantees as far as the union movement is concerned (5).

The Australian Council of Trade Unions has embarked on a campaign to get a national superannuation scheme accepted and the union movement as a whole has fought long and hard to improve workers' compensation provisions.

Clearly, it would be easier to get a family-based income guarantee adopted than it would to install one which used the individual as the unit of payment. Only an income guarantee which adopts the individual as the unit of payment has the capacity to address existing inequalities within families.

### **THE LIKELIHOOD OF CHANGE: STEPS TAKEN**

In recent years there has been a continuing rationalisation of levels of assistance of the many benefits and pensions supplied by the Commonwealth Government. Saunders argues that the rationalisation of levels of payment constitute a step in the direction of introducing a guaranteed minimum income in Australia (6). As the amount paid for benefits and pensions, and the services (fringe benefits) associated with such payments become more equal, this challenges the logic of the categorical approach. The next step would be to make all benefits and pensions payable at exactly the same rate with exactly the same means test applying - such a step is quite conceivable within the existing system of welfare relief. Were this to be done, it would certainly challenge the logic of having categories of assistance, but it would still not herald the introduction of an income guarantee. What it would do is underline the fact that some people (those poor who have a current eligibility for a benefit or pension) are considered worthy of assistance and those who do not now qualify are deemed unworthy. The ideology of less eligibility would still inform such a welfare benefits structure.

An income guarantee will only become a reality when the Australian Government finally comes to accept a pure economic definition of individual need - "a person has an entitlement for assistance provided his or her income is below a certain point". Such a shift in emphasis would require the Government to do away with the idea of assistance being provided on the basis of some social need.

The importance given to the social definition of need (7) has been canvassed earlier in this thesis. When most Australians speak about the welfare system which exists in this country, they call it the social welfare system. This is not just an insignificant naming process but recognition of the social features embodied in the eligibility requirements, the aims of the relief measures, and the values which they see underlying the entire distributional mode.

The Hawke Labor Government has made many moves to deregulate the productive sector of the economy and has explained its actions in terms of economic pragmatism. Economic rationalism would suggest that deregulation of the distribution system would be compatible with such an approach.

Despite the continuing attachment which many Australians have for a conservative/liberal view of the poor, their attraction to conservative views about the role of the family, their limited understanding of their own racism and ageism, their failure to look at the needs of people living in rural areas and their circumscribed attitudes towards gender relations, there are signs of change. Apart from the rationalisation of levels of benefit payments, there are other alterations to the Australian

political system which could be seen to be a move in the direction of introducing income guarantees. One of particular interest is the split off from the Department of Social Security of its subsidy programs, emergency assistance section, and other areas which deal with services. These functions have been placed in a new Department of Community Services and Health leaving the Social Security Department primarily as a paying body for benefits and pensions. This reorganisation would make any future move to amalgamate the Taxation and Social Security Departments easier. Before such a move could solve the problem of unifying the positive and negative tax functions of the government, work would need to be done to rationalise many of the 127 different income maintenance payments made by the Commonwealth Government.

There have also been considerable changes in the breadth of groups covered by Social Security provisions during the last forty years. Many Aborigines, migrants and unmarried lone parents were specifically excluded when the Social Services Act of 1947 was proclaimed. But they are now included in the 127 different income maintenance programs mentioned above.

We have already seen the introduction of lone parent payments, irrespective of marital status. The Sex Discrimination Act is intended by the Hawke Government to be extended in its coverage and, were it to include the Social Security Act, then such an alteration would necessitate the adoption of the individual as the unit of payment, the standardisation of the age at which the Age Pension is paid, and a general streamlining which would involve the abolition of at least some categories of benefits and their replacement by more general ones. This would remove the gaps in

cover for the last remaining large group of adults excluded from the provisions of the Social Security Act - those deemed dependent on a spouse. The Family Allowance Supplement has the capacity to pay all children deemed dependent on a parent.

The extent to which a guaranteed minimum income has the potential to move Australia towards a guaranteed adequate income should not unduly worry liberals and conservatives. A guaranteed minimum income can and should be seen as a step in this direction, but it is a very small step. There is nothing inherent in the Henderson type proposals which necessarily mean further developments will occur. Any development towards a guaranteed adequate income would necessitate a major change in the direction of prevailing ideologies (8).

The forces which are arraigned against a guaranteed adequate income would be strengthened by the installation of a guaranteed minimum income in the sense that they would be able to point to the guaranteed minimum income as an adequate, economic, rational, humane response to welfare needs. They could adopt Lady Rhys-Williams' point, arguing that they had

provided a line below which no-one fell and could "justifiably" oppose imposing a ceiling above which no-one could rise (9).

The social background for an alteration in income maintenance policy has been prepared through other changes such as the more humane response to those in economic need; the revolution in attitudes towards women and Aborigines (created by the feminist movement and the land rights campaign), rural militancy, and the presentation of their real economic needs by youth and pensioner organisations. Yet the movement in social attitudes has not been uni-directional (uni-directional?). The Liberal Party's commitment to deregulation and privatisation, the mining lobby's anti-Aboriginal campaigns, and the attacks by business interests on the union movement, are attempting to push Australia towards a more conservative future.

## CONCLUSION

The main conclusion of this study is that there are no insurmountable impediments to the introduction of a general income guarantee set at or about the poverty line contained within the articulated tenets of Marxism, liberalism and social democracy. Social democrats, were they motivated primarily by the acknowledged doctrines of that philosophy, would find in the concept of income guarantees an ideal method of administering income maintenance. Conservatives, on the other hand, could locate in their enunciated central belief structures substantial objections to the introduction of income guarantees.

This thesis also argues that there are other ideological impediments affecting the holders of quite diverse political views which constitute important obstacles to the installation of income guarantees. These ideologies arise out of discrimination based on gender, race, age and locality. Such ideological beliefs can be identified in current and past Australian income maintenance policy and practice. The techniques which the existing system employs in order to distribute funds to recipients allows the possibility of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age and locality.

These techniques on which the welfare system relies in delivering welfare payments include a complex and inadequate safety net, dependency (in both its actual and implied forms), work incentives, selectivity, categorical payments and the individualised assessment of needs. These techniques are designed to directly control the workless and, indirectly, those in the workforce. That is, the control of the workless and workers acknowledged by poor law administrators in the nineteenth century as a necessary part of the system of welfare relief is still very much a part of current income maintenance policy. This practice and ideology of less eligibility has links going back to the earliest days of welfare relief and, at the moment, constitutes a major obstacle to the installation of income guarantees.

Those who argue for the retention of such techniques hold that their abolition would undermine the very foundations of capitalism. This proposition was considered in the thesis and I concluded that income guarantees set at or about the poverty line do not of themselves necessarily pose a substantial challenge to the capitalist mode of production.

Arguments are provided which show that discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age and locality have become, or are becoming, anachronistic in the last part of the 20th century. The "need" for such mechanisms to control the workless and workers has disappeared or is disappearing, and this is becoming recognised by both liberals and social democrats; (for example,

Supporting Parents Benefit and Sex Discrimination Act). At the same time, the power of such ideologies (because they pervade most, if not all, aspects of our lives) is still great and as such will need to be confronted by a widespread information campaign before there will be a general acceptance of general income guarantees.

The continuing discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age and locality (facilitated through the reliance upon such techniques as individualised need determination and safety net solutions) coupled with conservatism, constitute the main ideological obstacles to the introduction of a generalised Australian income guarantee.

## Footnotes Chapter 9

- (1) Henderson, R. Poverty in Australia, Vol I, op cit., Chapter 21.t
- (2) Canberra Times, 9 September 1988
- (3) Ruskin, J. Time and Tide, (letter XIII)
- (4) Victorian Trades Hall Council, Social Policy Unit.
- (5) Manning, I. "Social security and the future", op cit., p.52. See also Harper, J. op cit., p.29
- (6) Saunders, P. "Henderson's guaranteed minimum income scheme: A perspective from the 1980s", in Mendelsohn, R. Social Welfare Finance: Selected Papers, Australian National University, Canberra, 1982. See also Manning, I., "An Australian guaranteed income scheme", Paper given at workshop on Income Distribution and Redistribution, University of Melbourne, 31.7-1.8.81, pp.5-22
- (7) See Appendix C.
- (8) Liberals and conservatives should be reassured that although the 8 hour day was first achieved in 1855, it took until 1948 before the 40 hour week became a reality for the bulk of the workforce and workers have not been able to substantially shorten the working week since then, Massive unemployment was regarded as preferable to shortening the working week by providing work to all who wanted it.  
In 1855 striking stone masons working on two Sydney churches won an 89 hour day. In 1916 New South Wales Parliament passed the 8 Hours Act. In 1922 this Act was repealed. In 1925 Queensland reduced work to 44 hours per week by legislation.. In 1926 New South Wales' Lang Labor Government introduced the 44 hour week without loss of wages. This was partially followed at the Commonwealth level. In 1930 the New South Wales Government reimposed the 48 hour week. In 1931 Lang Labor reduced hours to 44 hours per week. In 1936 the 40 hour week was raised at the Premiers Conference with only three states in favour. The Commonwealth and the other states opposed it. In this same year the Commonwealth spoke in favour of a 40 hour week at an International Labour Conference. The Commonwealth Arbitration Course, (Course?) after 22 months of hearings, set the commencing date for the 40 hour week to be 1 January 1948. (Source: Fraser, B. (ed) The Macquarie Book of Events, Macquarie, Sydney, 1983.)
- (9) Rhys-Williams, J. A New Look at Britain's Economic Policy, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1965 (ed. Glyn, S.) p.163

## Appendix A

### THE CONNECTION BETWEEN IDEOLOGY AND THEORY

Wide variations in meaning are attributed to the words "Ideology" and "Theory". This process is exemplified in the writings of O'Donnell, Stevens, and Lennie who use the phrase "theoretical ideology" as a term of abuse (1). Stevens makes the point that any critique of social theory needs a social theory on which to be based; he accepts that his theory of ideology is part of a general social theory that owes a great deal to Marx (2). He goes on to explain that "Any theory in which the subordination of control and understanding to the protection of interests (consciously or not) is built into the problematics of the theory is what we call a theoretical ideology" (3).

Mannheim, writing in 1936, makes the important distinction between ideology - used as a term to denote that an opponent has sunk into "more or less conscious disguises of the real situation" which he calls "the particular conception of ideology" (4) and the "total conception of ideology" which he defines as "the ideology of an age or of a concrete historico-social group, e.g. a class, when we are concerned with the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this epoch or of this group." (5)

Much of Mari's writings whilst addressing the total conception of ideology imply a more or less conscious misrepresentation on the part of the ruling class (6), McCarney, writing in *The Real World of Ideology* makes the suggestion "that a purely instrumental use of ideology is impossible, so that 'a class

that **uses** an ideology is its captive too'." (7) An issue which thus, has been an intimate part of the debate is the extent to which ideology, in Mannheim's terminology - the total conception of ideology, is class based and dominant. A related question is to what extent the ruling ideas are those of the ruling class. Gramsci used the word "hegemony" to describe the situation in which the ruling class was able to force acceptance by subordinate classes of its social definition of reality (8). His analysis derived from those Marxist writings which suggested that the underclasses' acceptance of the prevailing ruling class conception stemmed from false consciousness. McCarney

has challenged this body of literature and argues with some reservations that "There is no longer any rational basis for attempts to correlate ideologies and classes on a one to one basis." (9) He claims support from Stedman Jones and Poulantzas for the idea that there is a complex **interplay** of forces between dominant and subject class in the creation of ideological perspectives (10). Chamberlain researching the Australian situation comes to similar conclusions (11).

By way of proceeding an initial effort will be made to describe important attributes of social theory.

Theory is an explanation of social phenomena which serves as a reliable guide to social outcomes (12). Put another way social theory aims to explain the development of society and the ways in which people are affected by and affect society (13).

There is a considerable history of attempts to distinguish between the main components of theory and ideology: Marxist writings frequently refer to the differences between science (theory) and ideology and between both and philosophy. Marx, himself, sometimes suggests that philosophy is ideology but at other

times distinguishes between these two categories (14). Anthony Giddens reviewing Mari's analysis of ideology suggests Mari conceived of the uses of ideology in two senses - "The first tends to operate around a polarity of science / ideology, the second around a polarity of sectional interests/ideology" (15). Perhaps the clearest distinction between ideology and science is drawn by

Egyed who asserts

"The aim of philosophy is the search for truth, **the Truth**. However, as Hegel has demonstrated, truth is system, it is the systematic unfolding of the totality of knowledge. In contrast to philosophy, the aim of science is not truth but the systematic effort to keep the universe of discourse open. A scientist is not after the truth in the Hegelian sense but after the principles of its understanding..... What is crucial for science is that it makes a constant effort to keep itself open and to reopen itself to the 'voice of nature'. However, there are also affinities between science and philosophy. The philosophical-ideological concept of truth is necessary in order to make the enterprise of science intelligible. Also, there will be essentially philosophical (*ideological*) elements in science because it is impossible to keep the universe of discourse open everywhere at all times. In order to be able to ask certain questions and to receive certain answers parts of the discourse have to be closed." (16)

Mellos, writing in the same journal issue provides a further dimension to this debate when he asserts.

"All these factors, epistemology, conception of man historical process, each of which presupposes and encompasses the others, are related by the crucial point that man's existence is a process of becoming. Thus there cannot be a substantive theory of the nature of social man. There can be no substantive universalistic theory of society which claims that such and such social objects and relations are permanent and universal features of society. A theory which by implication or by explicit assertion, holds the contrary, denies the dynamic character of man's existence. It rejects the

transformative potential of society and attributes to a particular moment of its development, a universal, static character. Such a theory which abstracts from a given society general, universal propositions is but a justification, a rationalisation of these social relations. The theory itself, emanates from or corresponds merely to those socioeconomic conditions which it seeks to universalise. Such a theory is a conceptual structure, which misunderstands its origin, implications, and consequences. It is an ideology."(17)

Clearly both theory and ideology are abstractions, both attempt to account for social actions.

Both provide a filter through which activities are viewed.

Althusser (18) tried to extend our understanding of ideology through his rejection of the conception of ideologies as conscious reflections of social reality. He proposes that an ideology should be conceived of as if it were a structure of social relations "no less . real' than the economic and political" concepts with which they are associated. (19)

Hirst's work in relation to false consciousness is heavily influenced by an Althusserian understanding of ideology. He makes an important contribution by challenging the Marxist conception that subordinate classes are not "truly aware" of their best interests.

"False consciousness., is explained in Marxism by the relation of the subject to the object. Reality (the object) determines the place of the subject within it and, therefore, the conditions of its experience of it. Reality determines the content of ideology; it generates false recognitions of itself by subjecting subjects to circumstances in which their experience is distorted. Reality is the origin of ideology because it creates the different 'places', class positions, from which subjects view it. To know ideology is ideological is to perceive reality itself. To determine the position of the subject in the real is, therefore, to recognise both the content of ideology and its source. Once the social position of the subject is known, the nature of its consciousness and its source can be determined. Sociologism (reducing ideology to an effect of the social position of the subject who expounds it) is a legitimate procedure if knowledge is conceived as experience and if society is considered as a system of places conditioning that experience into 'class outlooks'. Althusser denies that knowledge through experience is possible and, therefore, that class positions automatically generate experience-effects, 'class outlooks". The social position of the subject is not the origin of its ideological position. ideology has conditions of existence which cannot be 'read off' from the place of the subject in the relations of production." (20)

Once the perception that the subordinate classes cannot be "truly aware" of what is in their best interests is questioned development of alternative explanations is possible which can account for the fact that some of the "intelligentsia" perceive a different social reality from that of the majority of the workers. Mann has argued that "'ideologies' or belief systems of the mass of the citizenry are generally abstractions by the intellectual of the concrete actions and experiences of the Citizen." (21) The concept of embourgeoisement, popularised by Marcuse and others (22) provides an example of an attempt to account for this duality of perceptions, but it is an analysis which is closely linked to the Marxist false consciousness thesis.

One possible solution to this dilemma is to follow on from Mannheim's comment that "With the emergence of the general formulation of ideology, the simple theory of ideology develops into the sociology of knowledge." (23) During the 1960s one branch of the sociology of knowledge attempted to conceptualise about working class situations in ways which were less abstract. A major contribution, was made by Jack Douglas in (*Understanding Everyday Life* (24) This book was a significant forerunner to Glaser and Strauss' book *The Discovery of Grounded Theory* in which they

centre their argument around the issue of theory development: they insist that theories have to be expressed in words **and concepts** which are intelligible to the group whose behaviour the theory purports to explain (25).

Not all social scientists find themselves in agreement with such a proposition. Giddens sets himself specifically against this suggestion arguing that because two different orders of relevance are involved that competent social theory need not necessarily be reducible to every day concepts and language (26).

Glaser and Strauss' approach if adopted must go some of the way towards ending the division between intellectuals and workers' perceptions of social reality. It would at least allow the working class to engage in the debate. Once this was done they would be in a position to consider whether they are able to assess their "true reality" or are simply subject to false consciousness. The very process of theory creation (provided it exposed the ideological implications inherent in bourgeois theory and practice), assuming it was simply expressed, would lay bare the mystification

of "social reality" attempted by the dominant classes. The working class through their involvement in such a process would be empowered in their struggle with any residue of false consciousness which some Marxists assert they experience ~ this would in Mellos' terms exemplify the process of becoming. There have been several recent attempts to develop this analysis and utilise it in practice.

Rose, in a paper in which she seeks to lay the foundations for the establishment of a feminist epistemology, urges feminists to theorise from practice and to return theory to practice; a central argument put by Rose is that feminists have to refuse to submit to the reification of theory by men and that feminists must write their experience into the development of theory (27).

Althusser, among others, has been criticised by Egedy for making too sharp a distinction between ideology and theory (28).

He argues that "If science has anything to do with lived relations between man and their world even the products of knowledge are bound to become 'ideologised'. Thus, science and ideology cannot be conceived in a static 'theoreticist' manner. It is best to conceive them as mutually limiting." (29)

Giddens relying heavily on Habermas' analysis is critical of those who would "define ideology as a 'non-science': as necessarily involving either 'invalid' claims to knowledge, or as distinct from science (natural and social) in some other clearly ascertainable way" (30). He is at pains to sidestep the science/ideology polarity and to address himself to the sectional interests/ideology polarity and claims that this latter polarity insists "that the chief usefulness of the concept of ideology concerns the critique of domination"(31).

At this point it is necessary to set out some conclusions concerning the foregoing discussion in relation to the interface between theory and ideology, and then to outline the sense in which both these terms are being used throughout this thesis.

Hopefully it is clear from the foregoing analysis that I am interpreting ideology in a way which is considerably removed from Mari's essentially "critical and negative conception", as Larrain has expressed it (32). Whilst I've been influenced by Gramsci, Althusser, Poulantzas and other Marxist writers the sense in which the concept shall be used does not fit neatly into any particular Marxist school of thought. Rather I use ideology to convey a narrower meaning than

the "total conception of ideology" which Mannheim has outlined but one which is basically a positive formulation. I believe that societal units other than the ruling class generate ideologies and are in Althusser's words captives of those ideologies.

The word ideology is employed to describe a pattern of beliefs and concepts "which purport to explain complex social phenomena with a view to directing and simplifying sociopolitical choices facing individuals and groups." (33)

The pejorative meaning of ideologue originally attributed to Napoleon will be avoided in this thesis (34).

The term "social theory" will be used to describe the codified abstract conceptions of a causal nature which seek to explain actions by groups or societies, embodied in this use of the term is the implication of predictability, of replication, and of on going scientific debate.

As mentioned in Chapter 1 any theory which seeks to describe human actions will be imbued with, or perhaps will arise out of, or will seek to promote ideological interpretations of "social reality".

1 O'Donnell, R., Stevens, P. and Lennie, I. (eds) *Paper Tigers*, Philosophy Department, University of Sydney, 1978, pp.xi-xii.

2 Stevens, P. "Ideology", in O'Donnell, R., Stevens, P. and Lennie, I. *op. cit.*, P. 3.

3 *ibid*, P. 13

4 Mannheim, K. *Ideology and Utopia*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1936, p.49. See also Giddens, A., "The prospect for social theory today", *Berkley Journal of Sociology*, Vol 23, 1978-79, pp.201-206 and McCarney, J. *The Real World of Ideology*, Harvester, Brighton, 1980. pp.53-63 who compares Poulantzas. Marx. Lenin. Gramsci, Althusser and Lukacs' views.

5 Mannheim, K., *op. cit.*, pp.49-50. Althusser, L., writing in Althusser, and Balibar, E. *Reading Capital*, (trans Brewster, B.), Verso, London, 1979, p.128, attributes a similar distinction to Gramsci.

6 See particularly Marx, K. and Engels, F. *The Communist Manifesto op. cif.*

7 McCarney, J. *op. cit.*, p.66. This point was originally made by Althusser. L. *For Marx*, (trans Brewster, B.) Verso, London, 1979, pp.234-236.

& Mouffe, C. and Sassoon. A. "Gramsci in France and Italy - a review of the literature", *Economy and Society*, Vol 6, 1977, pp.42-50. In this review, Mouffe and Sassoon note Buci-Glucksmann's suggestion that "for Gramsci a fully realised hegemony involves real progress for society as a whole. It is much more than the mere establishment of certain mechanisms whereby the masses are made to, acquiesce to the politics of a single class. This notion cannot therefore be redwted to the notion of dominant ideology in the traditional Marxist sense or to the Weberian mechanism of legitimisation. According to Gramsci, ideology is not just a

process of subjection. It also has a positive and progressive role to play when it succeeds in uniting several social groups into a single body, around a hegemonic class which takes responsibility for the direction of society and undertakes to realise objectives which are not corporative but are in the interest of the whole society." p.48 See also Gramsci, A. *Selections from Political Writings 1910-1920* (ed Hoare, Q.) (trans Mathews, J.) International, New York, 1977, pp.53,170~172 and 185-189. Gramsci, A. *Selections from Political Writings 1921-1926* (ed and trans Hoare, Q.) International, New York, 1978, pp.233-235, 255-266, 443-459. Note particularly his comments on fascism and the state, p.152.

· McCarney, *op. cit.*, pp.38- 39. Note Gramsci, A. *Selections from political Writings 1921-26 o .p. cit.*, p.255

10 *ibid.* p.47. See also Mandel, E. *The Marxist Theory of the State*, Pathfinder, New York, 1971, p.1 1.

1 1 Chamberlain, C. *Class Consciousness in Australia*, George, Alien and Unwin, Sydney, 1983. PP.3-35,122,147-153.

1 2 Abel, T. 'On the future of sociological theory', *International Social Science Journal*, Vol 33. No 2,1981, p,217. 1 3 Himmelstrand, U. 'Innovative processes in social change: theory, method and social practice', *International Social Science Journal*, Vol 33, No 2, 1981, pp.242-244. See also Poulantzas, N. *State, Power, Socialism, N.L.B.*, London, 1978, p.19.

14 Egyed, B. 'Marxism, science and ideology', *Social Praxis*, Vol 7, Nos 1 and 2, 1980, p.92.

15 Giddens, A. *op. cit.*, p.168

16 *ibid* p.115. See also Marcuse, H., Habermas. J. *et al*, 'Theory and politics', *Telos*, No 38, Winter, 1978-79, pp.146-147,

17 Mellos, K. "The concept of ideology in Marx", *Social Praxis*, Vol 7, Nos 1 and 2, 1980. pp.7-8

18 Althusser, L., *Tor Mxx, op cif.*, pp.219-246. Althusser, L. and Balibar, *Reading Capital*, *op. cit.*, Part I I,

19 Hirst, P. "Althusser and the theory of ideology", in *Economy and Society*, Vol 5, 1976, P.385. Somewhat similar views are also put forward by Poulantzas, N., *op. cit.*, p.28.

20 . *ibid*, P, 3 8 6

21 Mann, M. "The ideology of intellectuals and other people in the development of capitalism", *Telos*, No 38, Winter 1978-79, p.275. See also Chamberlain, C., *op cif.*, Chapter 1.

22 Marcuse, H. and Habermas, J, *et a/*, *op. cif.*, p.148. See also Western, J. *Social inequality in Australian Society*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 1983, pp.21-22

23 Mannheim, K. *op. cil.*, p.69. See also Larrain, J. *Marxism and Ideology*, Macmillan, London, 1983, PP20-30,71,103-108.

24 It is important to note that in attacking the theory of false consciousness I am not intending to challenge, "the whole notion of a critical and negative conception of ideology". (*ibid*, .p.43)

24 Douglas. J. *Understanding Everyday Life. Routledge and Kegan Paul* Routledge and Kegan Paul. London. 1971.

25 Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. *The Discovery of Grounded Theory*, Aldine, Chicago, 1975, particularly Chapters IX and X. See also Bottomley, B. "Words, deeds and Postgraduate research", in Bell, D. and Encel, S. (eds) *Inside the Whale*, Pergamon, Sydney,, 1978.

26 Giddens-, A., *o .p. cit.*, pp.246-247 27 Rose, H. "Hand, brain and heart", *o . p. cit.* See also London Edinburgh Weekend Return Group, In *and Against the State*, Pluto. London, 1980. particularly PP. 1 13-147

- 28 Egyed, B., *op. cit.*, p.117. However, Althusser in 1955 wrote "But we should not forget that the frontier separating ideology from scientific theory was crossed about one hundred and twenty years ago by Marx; that this great undertaking and this great discovery have been recorded in the works and inscribed in the conceptual system of a knowledge whose effects have little by little transformed the face of the earth and its history', Althusser. *L. o oil.*, p.246. See also Althusser, L. and Balibar, E. *op.cit.* pp. 129 and 142.
- 29 Egyed, B. *op. cit.*, p.118. See also Hirst, P. *open*, pp.369-400 and McCarney, J. *op. cit.*, pp 20-22 and 70-72
- 30 Giddens, A. *op. cit.*, p.195
- 31 *ibid*, p.187
- 32 Larrain, J. *op. cit.*, PP.20-30, 71, 103-108. See also Larrain, J. *The Concept of Ideology*, Hutchinson, London, 1979.
- 33 Gould, J. "Ideology", in Gould. J. and Kolb, W. (eds) *A Dictionary of the Social Sciences*, Macmillan, New York, 1974, p.313.
- 34 McCarney. *J. op. cit.*, p.4

## **Appendix B**

### **IDEOLOGIES WHICH IMPINGE ON THE AUSTRALIAN WELFARE SYSTEM**

In this appendix I outline four theoretical *cure* political ideological positions which have affected the construction of the Australian welfare system. I then discuss feminist theory because it has been feminists who have provided the most telling critique of each of the foregoing theoretical *cure* political positions. I consider each position in relation to the influence it has had on the development of income relief policies.

#### **Conservative perspectives**

There are some conservatives who claim an antiquity for their ideology dating back to Plato. The birth of the modern British conservative tradition is seen, however, as being a late 17th century phenomenon. The philosopher Hume, writing in reaction to the Enlightenment, set out to turn reason on its head I, arguing strongly for an organic conception of society. Burke, following in this tradition, made his most articulate conservative pronouncements in the years immediately after the French Revolution before the Reign of Terror began 2.. These writings of Burke's are clearly a reaction to the "excesses" of the French revolution. Thus the foundations of British conservatism arose in response to and in an attempt to negate the philosophies of the Age of Reason rather than a summation of the established ideas of the day.

The conservative tradition is closely associated with the ideas of Englishmen such as Burke and later Disraeli, with respect for antiquity, concern for precedent, abhorrence of planned (particularly "utopian") social change, and concomitant reliance on "natural" evolving of social systems 3. Built into conservative thought is a defence of established order, the belief in the inherent imperfection of human beings, and the necessity of privilege and leadership, all of which are founded in a fear of "the tyranny of the majority" which in turn is associated with a belief in the primary role of property as essential to liberty and social order4.

Burke

“argued that society and the state are not created by man's conscious reason in the form of a contract; they emerge as an organic growth. Traditions and customs are ancient and important; they embody a wisdom more profound than reason. Institutions must be adapted to new situations, but the changes must be organic and from within, not violent and from without. Religion is the necessary basis of social stability. The hierarchy of society is a natural order difficult to improve. The doctrine of progress is dangerous.”<sup>5</sup>

Harrington has commented that

*“The preference for the unplanned, and even the irrational, as opposed to conscious government policy... is a fundamental conservative theme, (portrayed in) the nostalgia for the vanished *Gemeinschaft*, the suspicion of the contemporary *Gellschaft*. From Burke to Dostoyevsky to Spengler it has been at the very centre of conservative thought”.*

The central features of the conservative position, in the twentieth century, are the **support for traditional values**, such as the family, the importance of work and of sexual restraint, and **the sanctity of private property**. Conservatives support the continued existence of inequality and minimal welfare (of the residual kind) because of their fear that planned change will undermine the natural order. They place strong reliance on "freedom", but it is a particular form of freedom, it is a liberty to continue as they have always done: an absence of governmental "interference". They are opposed to regulation of the productive processes.

Conservatives place stress on freedom from restraint, yet they see the rights of the individual as being constrained within a concept of the common good as defined by the ruling class. "Individualism is not a ticket to non-conformity. By stressing voluntary collaboration between individuals and by exalting the virtues of social institutions, individualism does not open the flood gates to libertarianism."<sup>7</sup> Lukes makes the point that conservative thought in the early nineteenth century was nearly unanimous in condemning the rights of the individual: to exemplify this stream of thought he quotes Burke in his "Speech on the Economic Reform" when he said "Individuals pass like shadows; but the Commonwealth is fixed and stable."<sup>8</sup>

Welfare relief provided by government is seen to weaken individuals' attachment to traditional loyalties and allegiances. It is for this reason that conservatives want to see charity based, privatised welfare systems where the process of less eligibility is enforced in ways akin to the poor law system in 19th century England.

### **Liberal ideology**

The liberal tradition is closely associated with the ideas of the Englishmen John Locke and John Stuart Mill, and a liberal collectivist stream with Hobbes, Jeremy Bentham and other utilitarians who popularised the phrase "the greatest good for the greatest number." Bentham developed a complex calculus of pleasure (good). and pain.' (bad) with the intention of introducing

enlightened social legislation in line with morality<sup>9</sup>. Whilst there are elements of egalitarian principles present in the writings of Bentham, they are tentative steps towards equality. The liberal collectivists' link with conservative ideas about the common good is a major point of disjunction with the individualist strand of liberal thought.

. Hobbes conceived of the natural state of man as resulting in the "war of all against all" in which the life of man is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short and as a result conceded the need through some form of social contract to limit "natural rights"<sup>10</sup>. Locke was opposed to the Hobbesian suggestion of surrendering natural rights to the sovereign; in its place he proposed that through mutually contracting to protect each other's rights, people would be freed to pursue their individual self-interest<sup>11</sup>.

The liberal position is notable for its reliance upon **individualism, freedom, self -help. Constitutionalism, property, progress and the free play of market forces**. Lukes notes that the use of the word "individualism" arose in France and that there the concept was criticised by conservatives as well as by followers of Saint-Simon and other socialists<sup>12</sup>.

"It was in the United States that 'individualism' primarily came to celebrate capitalism and liberal democracy. It became a symbolic catchword of immense ideological significance, expressing all that has at various times been implied in the philosophy of natural rights, the belief in free enterprise, and the American dream."<sup>13</sup>

Liberals argue for freedom of action within the market place. in terms of economic policy they do not wish to be constrained by conservative concepts which would limit competition within the boundaries of some preconceived "common good". They reject any call for competition to be confined within limits agreed to by the people's representatives.

Liberalism has become modern capitalism's official ideology yet it is also the justifying ideology of the welfare state in England, the United States<sup>14</sup> and Australia. Liberals reject the organic conception of society. The formation of a society they see as the outcome of competing market forces. Liberals, whilst not wanting to interfere with market mechanisms, are in favour of much bigger government than are conservatives. Where conservatives want less welfare both in terms of scope and levels of assistance, liberals tend to see more of some types of welfare as beneficial<sup>15</sup>.

Some liberals deriving support from Locke wish to see totally unrestrained market forces<sup>16</sup>. Most liberals see the need for the state to intervene on the periphery of the market in the interests of the less affluent. "In place of traditional authority they have supported the authority of reason and

of demonstrated, rather than revealed, truth." 17 To the extent that conservatives rely on the ideas of Hume and Burke, they are reflecting these authors' reaction to the Enlightenment; the liberal tradition can be seen as an extension of the Enlightenment. Liberals hold less absolute values than conservatives and their values tend to be conditional and qualified by their intellectual pragmatism. Following on from early utilitarians, many liberals assume that through the pursuit of individualism the collective well-being is increased. They see welfare services as the vehicle to meet need, to provide a redistribution of income and to humanise capital<sup>18</sup>. George and Wilding term such liberals "reluctant collectivists"<sup>19</sup>.

### **Social-democrat perspectives**

Social-democratic parties, a product of the 20th century, arose out of the growth of socialism as an emerging political force in Europe during the last quarter of the 19th century. Social-democratic parties in Britain, Germany and Australia all maintain strong trade union links. **Equality, government intervention, representative government and the peaceful transition to socialism** are the hallmarks of the social-democratic tradition.

The social-democratic position has certain aspects in common with a socialist view of the world, but it also differs in several important ways. Both positions accept the principle of equality but whereas socialists, particularly those of a Marxist persuasion, would see equality as a prime and immediate goal, social-democrats see themselves working towards its attainment at some time in the future.

In Germany, Britain, and Australia the social-democrats have dissociated themselves from Marxism arguing that through a gradual transition they will arrive at socialism. In Australia, in the 1980s, the majority of federal Labor Party parliamentary representatives belong to the centre unity faction and support only marginally even the concept of a "peaceful transition to socialism".

Connell, a Marxist, has described socialism as based on equality, community (or fraternity), liberty, co-operation, direct democracy and reason<sup>20</sup>. By "direct democracy" Connell means the spreading of power' a minimum of delegation and bureaucracy; he also explains that "To be reasonable does not mean to be 'moderate', to live a life of compromises. On the contrary, it demands a militant opposition to the forces of death and exploitation; and a militant compassion for

their victims." 21 It is a commitment to this view which divides socialist from social-democratic parties.

George and Wilding commenting on the basic components of British Fabian beliefs point first to equality, freedom and fellowship before going on to mention "two other central but derivative values democracy, which is the child of equality and freedom, and humanitarianism which is the offspring of equality and fellowship."22 Socialists primary value is equality., yet George and Wilding are aware that for Fabians equality "means more than equality of opportunity but less than equality of income."23

Social-democrats, whilst condemning inequality based on inherited wealth, allow for unequal rewards deriving from hard work, genius, creativity and other factors of individual input. They recognise that inequality of opportunity is an automatic artifact of unequal societies yet are prepared to tolerate inequalities which must of themselves lead to advantaged backgrounds for the children of those who by their "efforts" are "entitled" to greater rewards. In the face of considerable literature which has shown that equality of opportunity does not result in equality of outcome, social-democrats remain uncommitted to full blown equality 24.

The acceptance of this form of equality derives from their acknowledgement of the importance of freedom. Social-democrats view freedom not in terms of the absence of restraint on market forces but in terms of a freedom obtained through state intervention. Whereas, for socialists, freedom is a communal freedom through, which individuals are freed to achieve their maximum social capacity "the meaning of socialism, both logically and sociologically, can only be understood as a contrast to individualism." 25 Conservatives resist government intervention in the market place, yet they would see their freedom to pursue their interests being constrained within the bounds of the common good as defined by the ruling class. Socialists also accept restraint on their freedom; the restrictions they would accept are determined more by an acceptance of the "General Will" 26.

The concept of the "general will" was initially developed by Rousseau, a social-democrat 27. Socialists extend this "Rousseauian" notion of the common good to mean something like "in the interests of everybody" or at least in the interests of all *but* the bourgeoisie. Community workers

constantly and unsuccessfully struggle to operationalise this concept in a meaningful way. In community work practice it comes to mean something akin to the lowest common denominator of consensus attained from amongst the ranks of those who participated.

Social-democrats welcome the extension of the welfare system. They see it as the mechanism which ensures social stability and which delivers to the working class the social wage, as the method of coping with diswelfares 29. The welfare system is seen as the vehicle for the relief of distress and poverty, which in the future has the capacity to reform the capitalist system into a

humanitarian egalitarian welfare society. This is so despite the presence in this camp of writers like Titmuss who are conscious of the very limited nature of transfer of income across class boundaries via the welfare system and the major differences in benefits flowing to superannuated and other well-off groups compared with the benefits obtained by ordinary working people through the welfare system 30.

### **Marxist ideologies**

The central values of Marxism are **equality, fraternity, freedom**. Marxist theory developed out of Marx's attack on capitalism. It is therefore not surprising that Marxism can be explained more easily in terms of its opposition to features of the existing system rather than by listing its central ideas. Marxists are opposed to private ownership, the unregulated play of market forces, individualism, privilege, and inequality., all of which they see

as forms of exploitation.

The entire notion of welfare confronts Marxists with a central contradiction. They wish to introduce a system whose prime function is to ensure that the society operates along the lines of Marx's dictum: "from each according to his (or her) ability and to each according to his (or her) needs."<sup>31</sup> Yet orthodox Marxist theory suggests the possibilities of change are constrained by the fact that "the ruling ideas are those of the ruling class."<sup>32</sup> In Australia, Britain and the United States the prevailing values of the ruling classes are far removed from the Marxist ideal.\*

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**\* Marxists have generally given priority to economic determinist explanations which rely on an acceptance of class conflict as a central feature. However a lot of Marxist writers are pointing to race and gender 33 as factors at least as central as class in social welfare theory.**

Marxists are divided in their support for the existing welfare system. Some see the present system as a result of the ruling class making minor concessions, along the lines of Bismarck's social welfare experiments, in order to forestall important demands of the working class. Others view the current welfare arrangements as the ransom the ruling class has been forced to pay in order to maintain social peace<sup>34</sup>. Gough has described these two perceptions as arising from the paradox that "labour indirectly aids the long-term accumulation of capital and strengthens capitalist social relations by struggling for its own interests within the state."<sup>35</sup> The alternative to struggling within the state for a more equal distribution of resources for the working people is an option which no major political force in Britain, Australia or the United States is currently advocating.

There are Marxists who see the concessions obtained through the working class struggle within the state as the price for social peace, or the price of peaceful social control, and therefore a bar to the eventual socialist victory. However other Marxists share with many conservatives the belief that, as well as buying temporary conformity, any reform has the potential to raise further demands. Miliband after stressing that a major role of the state is mitigation of disadvantage, goes on to say "reform and repression are tried simultaneously. These are not alternative options but complementary ones."<sup>36</sup>

Marxists are united in their belief that the welfare system in capitalist societies is incapable of moving the society towards an equitable distribution of wealth and income and most accept that it is not even capable of removing the gross inequities which exist because of the predisposition of the capitalist state to constantly attempt to increase rather than reduce inequalities<sup>37</sup>. Whereas liberals see the welfare state as somewhat separate from the rest of the economic system, Marxists account for the restrictions on the redistributive power of the welfare system precisely because of the integrated nature of the welfare system within the mainstream economic process<sup>38</sup>.

"Contrary to the present reality, the ideal situation would be one in which the individual's maximum contribution to the society as a whole would be, simultaneously, exactly that person's maximum contribution to his or her own self -development. In a truly humanised

society the ideal towards which we would strive would be the elimination of the duality between actions which primarily benefit the individual actor and those which benefit others. 0.39

Earlier in this book he had spoken of "collective self-determination" as he attempted to encapsulate the Marxist concepts of freedom and fraternity<sup>40</sup>

These descriptions flow from Marx, who "believed, for quite technical philosophical reasons, that when a man is truly rational and universal he is co-operative."<sup>41</sup> Such views are an anathema to many American liberals who consistently refer to the need for individual freedom.

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In order to close this look at Marxist views on welfare systems it is desirable to return to the central values of the Marxist theory and to elaborate upon the particular meaning Marxists give to equality, fraternity and freedom. Galper expressed it this way when he said

"Contrary to the present reality, the ideal situation would be one in which the individual's maximum contribution to the society as a whole would be, simultaneously, exactly that person's maximum contribution to his or her own self-development. In a truly humanised society the ideal towards which we would strive would be the elimination of the duality between actions which primarily benefit the individual actor and those which benefit others."<sup>39</sup>

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"This (liberal view of freedom) is not construed however, as the right to dignity and self-determination; the right to work; the right to health; the right to peace; the right to equality; the right to develop selfhood without alienation, racism, sexism or ageism or the

right to reform the economic private market mechanisms that have failed and that have created the present crisis. Nor does it encompass the internationally accepted right to an acceptable standard of living."<sup>42</sup>

This point is reinforced by Lukes who argues

"that the notion of liberty or freedom is a complex or compound idea which, when subjected to analysis, can be shown to require or presuppose a number of further, more basic ideas, and that central to these are the notions of autonomy, privacy and self -development. Indeed, I would go further and claim that these can be seen, so to speak, as the 'three faces of freedom' - by which I mean that, while distinct from one another, all three are basic to the idea of freedom and that freedom is incomplete when any one of them is absent or diminished.'<sup>43</sup>

Marxists' commitment to equality is not hedged around with the elaborate "pragmatism" of the social-democratic understanding of equality referred to earlier.

### **Feminist theory**

Feminists contend that gender discrimination has been basic to the assertion of social power relationships in all societies. They have argued that gender discrimination is not simply an extra aspect of power which has not been adequately dealt with by writers operating from other ideological perspectives. Instead they have asserted that gender issues are fundamental to a thorough understanding of social systems. Feminists point to the prime importance of gender in the division of labour and have argued that it has been this gender division on which other relations are built.

Hence there is a need to concentrate upon the issue of gender in attempts to explain the totality of relations in society.

The importance of these insights to this thesis is that the structure of western society, including arrangements made within the mode of distribution, has been identified by feminists as a manifestation of patriarchal control.

Modern feminist theory developed in response to and as a rejection of prevailing patriarchy. A central theme running through feminist literature is that of the oppressive nature of patriarchy. Liberal and socialist feminists are inclined to link patriarchy with other controlling forces in a society, whereas radical feminists tend to identify patriarchy as **the** determining social force.

In recent times Marxist, socialist, social democratic and liberal writers have attempted to incorporate some feminist insights into their analysis. These are still tentative steps and have not been universally welcomed by feminist <sup>44</sup>. The major criticism of such incorporation is that

gender is a central issue not one that can be tacked on at the end. An example of this kind of inappropriate afterthought was provided in 1987 when the Hawke Labor Government abolished the B class Widows Pension which had been previously paid to older widows not caring for children. The Government distorted the feminist call to enable such women to take their place in paid employment and used it to rationalise the removal of their welfare benefit without substantially assisting them to find work.

Feminists have made a substantial contribution to the understanding of the welfare system by exposing the gender blindness inherent in the ideological perspectives of conservatism, liberalism, social democracy and Marxism. By laying bare the patriarchal assumptions integral to these ideologies they have exposed the sexist nature of societies organised around these ideological positions and have shown that beyond other forms of control exerted upon welfare recipients patriarchy adds a further oppression on women, children and dependent men through welfare service programs.

Understandably, feminists have concentrated upon the issue of the family as a centrepiece of their analysis and have added to our understanding of intra-family repression, the way in which the family is constructed and the implications this has for welfare services.

A major criticism which feminists make of welfare payments is that they enforce a role definition of women which underlines and reinforces their "dependency"<sup>45</sup>. Having forced women into this dependent role, legislators are quick to abuse them for being reliant on the state <sup>46</sup>. Feminists are aware that whilst most welfare programs are predicated on a concept of family welfare, many programs in fact operate in a way which leads to the break-up of family units <sup>47</sup> and to the frequent intra-family repression of individuals in those units which do not disintegrate <sup>48</sup>.

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### Footnotes

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4 Rossiter, C. "Conservatism" in Sills, D. (ed) *op. cit.* Vol 3, pp.290-294. The term "tyranny of the majority" was popularised by de Tocqueville, A. particularly in his two volumes of *Democracy in America* (trans. Reeve, H.) Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, London, 1862.

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- 7 George, V. and Wilding. P. *op. cit.*, p.24
- 8 Lukes, S. *Individualism*, Basil Blackwell. Oxford, 1973, P.3
- 9 Sills, D. *op. cit. Vol 17*, pp226-227
- 10 *ibid*, p.230
- 11 *ibid*, p.231
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- 13 *ibid*, p.26
- 14 Galper, J. *The Politics of Social Services*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1975, pp. 18 and 22
- 15 George, V. and Wilding, P. *op. cif.*, pp.52-58 and Galper, J. *op. cit*, P.3
- 16 Locke, J. *Two Treatise of Civil Government* J.M. Dent and Sons, London, 1955
- 17 Smith, D. "Liberalism" in Sills, D. *op. cit.*, Vol 9, p.276
- 18 Galper, J. *oo. cit.*, p.22. But see also P.30 which criticises such a view
- 19 George, V. and Wilding, P. *op. cit.*
- 20 Connell, R. *Socialism and Labor, An Australian Strategy*, Labor Praxis, Sydney, 1978, pp.7-10
- 21 *loc. cit.*
- 22 George, V. and Wilding, P. *op. cit.*, p.62
- 23 *ibia*, 'P,65
- 24 Huber. J. and Form, W. *.Income and Ideology.. An Analysis of the American Political Formula*, Free Press. New York, 1973. Chapter 9
- 25 Shils, E. *op. cil.*, Vol 14, p.506
- 26 Marcuse, H., Habermas, J. et al, "Theory and politics" *Telos*, No.38, Winter 1978-79, PP.136-139
- 27 Rousseau, J. *The Social Contract and Discourses*, (Trans. Reeve, H.) Longman. Green, Longman and Roberts, London, 1862, Vol I.
- 28 Tomlinson, J. *Is Band-Aid Social Work Enough ?* Wobbly, Darwin, 1978, pp.68-105
- 29 Titmuss, R.(eds, Abel-Smith, B. and Titmuss, K.) *Social Policy*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1974, Chapter 6.
- 30 Titmuss, R. *Commitment to Welfare*, *OP. cit.*, pp.113-123, 188-198. Crossland, C. *The Future of Socialism*, Cape, London, 1956.
- 31 Marx, K "Critique of the Gotha Programme", in Marx, D. and Engels, F. *Selected 9'orks*, Progress, Moscow, 1970, p.321
- 32 Marx, K. and Engels, F. The Communist Manifesto, in Mendel, A. *Essential Works of Marxism of Bantam*, New York, 1971, P,31
- 33 See for example, Van Krieken, R. "The capitalist state and the organisation of welfare", *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, Vol 16, No 3, Nov 1980. Rose, H. "Hand, brain and heart". Paper given at ANZAAS Conference 16-23 May, 1983, Perth., p.18 and Footnote 1. Collins, J. "Fragmentation of the working class" in Wheelwright, E. and Buckley, K. *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, V 0 1 3. A u s U -& t i a n & New Zealand, Sydney, 1978, pp.43, 52-53 and 76-79. Hartwig, M. "Capitalism and Aborigines" in Wheelwright, E. and Buckley, K. *op.cit.* Vol 3. Hirst, P. *op. cit.*, pp.397-399. WiJlhelm, S. "Can Marxism explain America's racism?" *Social Problems*, Vol 28, No 2, Dec. 1980. Cordero, C. and Jennett, C. "Social scientists and social movements", *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Sociology*, Vol 16, No 1, March 1980, p.45 claim support from Gramsci for such a view.

These writers views are opposed by writers such as Breitman, G. *Race Prejudice*, New York. 1971 who claims "race prejudice is a uniquely capitalist phenomenon, which either did not exist or had no perceptible influence in pre-capitalist society." P.3

34 Such a position is exemplified by the following writers:

Mandell B., "Whose welfare? In Mandell, B. (ed) *Welfare in America*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1975. Piven, F. and Clovard. R. *Poor People's Movements* Vintage. New York. 1974. Piven, F. and Clovard. R. *The Politics of Turmoil Poor*, Vintage. Nev York, 197 1. Galper, J. *Social Work Practice*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1980, p@.217-219. Savill. J. "The welfare state" in Fitzgerald, M. *et al. (eds) Welfare in Action*, Routledge and Kegan Paul and Open University, London, 1977. George V. and Wilding. P. o .p. cit., pp.99-100

35 Gough, I. *J.be Political Economy of the Welfare State*, Macmillan, London, 1979, p.55

36 Miliband, R. *State in Capitalist Society*, Quartet, London. 1973, p.242

37 Strachey, J. *Contemporary Capitalism*, Gollancz, London, 1957, p.283 and Galper, J. J, *The Politics of Social Services*, oo. cit,p.3

38 Galper,J. *The Politics of Social Services*, op . cit., p.46

39 *ibid* p.48. A similar description is offered by Lukes, S. *op. cit.*

40 See also Kornegger, P. "Anarchism: the 'feminist connection'". in Ehrlich, J. et a/ (eds) *Reinventing Anarchy. What Are Anarchists thinking these days?* Routledge and Kegan Paul, London. 1979, p.239

41 Australian Broadcasting Commission. *Marx and Beyond*, Australian Broadcasting Commission, Sydney, 1973, P.10

42 Iatridis, D. "Neoconservatism reviewed", *Social York*, Vol 28,. No 2, March 1983.

43 Lukes, S. *op. cif.*, p.127

44 Hartmann, H. "The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism: Towards a more progressive union", *Ca* Vol 8, Summer 1979.

45 Wilson, E. *Women and the Welfare State*, Tavistock, London, 1977, p.7. Cass, B. "Women's place in the class structure" in Wheelwright. E. and Buckley, K. *Essays in the Political Economy of Australian Capitalism*, Vol 3, Australian & Nev Zealand, Sydney, 1978, pp.11-18. Land, H. "Women. supporters or supported" in Barker, D. and Allen, S. (eds) *Sexual Divisions and Society* Tavistock, London, 1976. Rose, H. "The theory of poverty and the poverty of women" *o p. cit.* p.29. Barrett, M. and McIntosh, M. *The Anti-Social Family*, N.L.B. London, 1982. Saver, M. "Political manifestations of Australian libertarianism", *op. cit.*, pp.10 and 14.

46 Moynihan, P. *op. cif.*, Chapters I and II. Moynihan says "the welfare system institutionalises the exploitation of women" (Footnote, p.23)

47 Morton, J. "Women in welfare", in Mercer J. (ed) 7., Pelican, Ringwood, 1975. Adams, M. "The compassion trap" in Gornick, V, and Morgan, B. (eds) *Women in Sexist Society*, Mentor, London, 1972 looks at how even the helpers are constrained by the state's definition of appropriate women's roles. Rose, H. "Hand, brain and heart", Paper given at ANZAAS Conference. Perth, May 16-23, 1983. p.25. Feeley, D. "The family", in Jenness, L. (ed) *Feminism and Socialism*, Pathfinder, New York, 1972, p.75, Mandell, B. "The children of the 'dangerous and perishing classes'", *op. cit.*, pp, 115-117. Stack C. and Semmel, H. "Social insecurity" in Mandell, B. (ed) *op. sit*, pp, 89-93.

48 The proliferation of women's refuges attests to established need for shelter of women physically and psychologically beaten. Men too are coming to admit they can also be the victims of violence within the family. Violence directed at children is also gaining increasing attention. See also Scutt, J, "Suffering in silence? The politics of husband bashing" in Braddock, J. et &I (eds) *Welfare*, Australian Association of Social Workers, Canberra. 1982.

## **Appendix C**

### **THE TWIN ISSUES OF NEED AND CONTROL**

One recurrent theme in discussions about the welfare system in Western democracies which requires further discussion is that of the relationship between need and control. Marxists and feminists express considerable concern about the amount of control which is exerted on beneficiaries; this issue is also raised in the sections dealing with the role of the family in social policy and in relation to categorical payments versus income guarantees. Conservatives, and to a lesser extent liberals, see the control functions of the welfare system as a benefit in so far as they help assure stability, conformity, and maintain traditional relationships.

### **THE NEEDS BASED APPROACH TO WELFARE**

The needs based approach has been a central component of welfare relief since before the Poor Law was introduced. The concept of less eligibility which lies at the heart of the method of determining who shall be assisted and who will be refused can be identified in the Speenhamland system's restriction of assistance to labouring families. The various charity systems which operated in English parishes (prior to the Poor Law) only assisted the worthy, leaving those considered undeserving to die. The process of determining whose behaviour and circumstances warranted relief allowed the parish, and later the state, to exert controls on behaviour through the distribution of largesse.

Needs based welfare programs are those in which the agency provides minimal clarification of its eligibility requirements. Agency pronouncements can be as general as "we will assist people in need" without setting out under what conditions and at what rate, an approach allowing frontline welfare workers or their immediate superiors enormous discretionary power.

Such a needs based approach is claimed, by its supporters, to be the most cost effective method of removing poverty. It contains a number of technical assumptions and is grounded in an ideological network in which residualist definitions of welfare are a prime part. The assumptions on which such assertions are founded are:

- (a) those in need can be identified,

- (b) need can be understood and satisfied,
- (c) take-up by the needy will be near total,
- (d) the greedy will be prevented from receiving benefits, and
- (e) the impact of processes such as stigmatisation are not socially costly.

These assumptions have drawn serious criticism from a range of writers on the left, from social democrats to Marxists, all of whom have pointed to the lack of empirical support for such assumptions. Despite this they continue to have a strong influence on welfare practice.

The desire to assist all those "in need" is in effect a determination to refuse assistance to all those whose circumstances do not fit into some societally approved, arbitrarily defined (albeit undeclared and somewhat flexible) set of rules.

It is possible to define need to mean purely financial need and to clearly specify what constitutes financial need in relation to some arbitrary level such as Professor Henderson's Poverty Line 1.

In such circumstances it would be a simple task to specify the levels of financial assistance considered appropriate to satisfy such need.

Current practices in other states' welfare departments still allow inordinate amounts of discretion to the people who determine whether to assist and what level of assistance to provide: these procedures are still justified as a way of ensuring that the Department will be able to address the needs of individuals in the most appropriate manner 2. Griffiths did not mince words when he declared "Discretion as it applies to the present provision of emergency relief is a euphemism for discrimination."3. Even many statutory income maintenance provisions are dependent upon the assessor determining the need *cum* worthiness of the applicant.

Even when eligibility requirements and rates of assistance are specified, as are Social Security payments, it is still possible to create situations where the discretionary powers of officials are substantial. This was apparent in the so-called "dole bludger" campaign orchestrated through the press by conservative forces aimed to limit the number of out of work people who would apply for and/or obtain Unemployment Benefit.

Despite the claims made by Social Security personnel that they rely on the Social Security Act and regulations, the general rule of law, and legal precedents, many officers of that Department have refused to interpret the cohabitation rule in line with the Administrative Appeals

Tribunal ruling, preferring to stay with the old Departmental instructions which are more moralistic in tone and application 4.

### **Need - a non explanation**

The generally nebulous nature of needs based assistance coupled with the obvious difficulty encountered by expert committees in coming to an adequate definition of need requires us to ask why administrators and other service providers continue to use the concept of need to explain their everyday actions in assisting their clients. I would argue that there is a conscious reliance by administrators and other service providers (who operate on a needs based response to clients) on the concept of need so as to mystify the restrictive nature of the assistance provided. The reasons why this happens probably differ between administrators and social workers: the administrators simply seeking to limit expenditure, the social workers using this method of operating to extend professional power over both their clients and the junior administrative levels in the agencies.

Clearly the expression of eligibility for assistance in such nebulous terms as "being in need" allows agencies to avoid publicising just how restrictive their assistance programs are. Agencies know that the more precisely they specify their eligibility requirements the greater will be the take-up rate by eligible people. If people do not know their entitlements they are less likely to attempt to enforce their rights and will be more likely to see whatever assistance they are given as reasonable 5.

Stigma is what many agencies rely on to ensure they see only the most "needy". It is the most determined rather than the most financially "needy" who are advantaged by needs based welfare programs. Note, for example, the result of a study on the take-up of benefits in the British welfare system.

..Roughly one in four households in the UK are dependent on national insurance benefits. mainly retirement pensions, widows benefit, sickness and unemployment benefit. Something like 1,1 million people in addition are solely dependent on means tested supplementary benefit. These households are defined as poor by the state welfare system - they get benefits designed to relieve poverty. Official figures indicate there are nearly 1 million more households scraping an existence below the Poverty line because they don't claim the benefits they have a right to.”<sup>6</sup>

Other studies of the British and Australian family income support programs have established similar poor take-up rates 7.

The take-up rate of benefits could be raised by increasing efforts to inform potential clients of their eligibility, and making the eligibility requirements and ways of applying simple; through removing stigma; by presentation of the benefit as a right rather than as a privilege; by making eligibility dependent upon financial rather than social considerations., and also by defining eligibility in general rather than specified categories 8.

Generalised statements about helping the most needy ensure that not all of those who would meet that definition (in financial terms) apply for assistance. The failure to specify exactly what services are provided and on what terms allows agencies to avoid admitting the restrictive nature of the services provided. Further, the power of the workers in welfare agencies is increased *vis a vis* the client if the client is not certain as to what his or her actual entitlement is.

I chose to concentrate on needs based welfare programs because in these programs the judgemental aspects of eligibility determination, the disregard of common or shared features between clients, and the excessive concentration on individual differences (often of an inconsequential nature) all show clearly how the determination of need is used to restrict service delivery. Although it is often not as obvious, eligibility determination in categorical programs, such as the Widows Pension, rely as heavily upon judgements made about personal attributes. Such a process differs markedly from income guarantee programs where only a person's financial status is examined.

### **'Whose needs?**

Spokespersons for the welfare industry, when they reflect on the motivations of staff, speak in terms of their "altruism" as they go about the task of satisfying the needs of their clients. Not all observers of the way social workers and welfare officers behave see it in these terms. McKnight has put the relationship that exists between professional and client as follows:

"Removing the mask of love shows us the face of servicers who need income, and an economic system that needs growth. Within this framework, the client is less a person in need than a person who is needed. In business terms, the client is less the consumer than the raw material for the servicing system. In management terms, the client becomes both the output and the input. His essential function is to meet the needs of servicers, the servicing system, and the national economy. The central political issue becomes the servicers' capacity to manufacture needs in order to expand the economy of the servicing system." 9

For the same reasons that most Marxist sociologists<sup>10</sup> reject the notion that the state is **simply** the Committee of the Bourgeoisie, I discard the suggestion that administrators and social workers are **simply** agents of social control (that is, they are the Welfare Committee of the Bourgeoisie). Many of the people working in social welfare agencies are genuinely trying to liberate people and provide them with benefits. Such people are often articulate exponents of liberal or socialist philosophical positions and are committed to limiting the excesses of the state and of capital. For example, the workers in some women's refuges around Australia are engaged in a constant battle to counter patriarchal control of women's lives and the workers in Aboriginal run agencies are engaged in a daily struggle against racism.

On the other hand, the intimate connection between welfare personnel and the bourgeoisie or the petty bourgeoisie cannot be overlooked. There are many aspects of decision making occurring in welfare agencies which are clear expressions of the operators' role as agents of capital.

### **BENEFIT AND CONTROL**

The majority of Marxist and socialist commentators argue that social welfare provisions are the result of the struggle of the working class (or some particular segment of it) with either capital or the state. The main thrust of such pronouncements is that the state in a quasi-Bismarckian style grants concessions to head off protest and to aid production. The ruling class is seen as benefiting through increased accumulation and legitimisation<sup>11</sup>; for the working class and welfare recipients in particular the question is one of benefit versus control.

Drawing on both socialist and Marxist reasons, I share the view that the delivery of social welfare benefits allows the **state** to control beneficiaries and, in the short term, limits the capacity of the working class to demand a fair distribution of surplus value.

However, there are writers who suggest that it is unlikely that the 'control' thesis can be maintained because

"In Australia social work and welfare is mainly about assistance to the elderly, the handicapped, widows, and war veterans; to that extent the radicals' 'control' thesis simply seems irrelevant, For instance, why do the elderly need 'controlling' by welfare? This has not been made clear in the radical analysis of welfare. And, if the elderly (or widows, or single parents, or the disabled) have been controlled by welfare, what were they doing (or were likely to do) to necessitate such 'control'? Answers to these questions must be forthcoming if the radical critique is to be salvaged even in modified form. Where the control thesis might be thought to be appropriate, in the case of the unemployed, we have seen that strong counter argument and counter evidence exists."<sup>12</sup>

The payment of welfare benefits may not be necessary to prevent an uprising by such citizens, but in a country where federal elections have been held on average less than every two years in recent times, citizens do not need to mount the barricades. They can bring down a government with a pencil in a voting booth. Any government wishing to stay in power has to ensure it does not alienate its citizens - the maintenance of their support is a form of control.

## **THE CONTROL PROCESS**

Apart from feminists, the most articulate exponents of the control thesis have been Marxists or socialists. Writers of these persuasions see the welfare system as an integral part of the capitalist mode of production, not an appendage "one step removed from" the productive aspects of that mode. They see the welfare system as the means by which the working class obtains concessions from capital - via the state<sup>13</sup>, - and the way the state ensures for capital, the reproduction of the working class<sup>14</sup>. Such writers see the welfare system as the method both of distributing the social wage and of ensuring internal peace in society.

George and Wilding in *the Impact of Social Policy* consider the basic components of the welfare system which the state utilises in order to control the workless to be: its reliance on the establishment of individual needs, its imposition of non-challenging definitions of social problems<sup>16</sup>, its support for authority and hierarchy<sup>17</sup>, and its constant attempt to replace class conflict with group competition (such as home owner/tenant, old young)<sup>18</sup>.

This analysis is extended by Baldock<sup>19</sup> who argues that control is exercised through artificial segmentation of the workforce on the basis of alleged differentiation of skills resulting in the destruction of working class solidarity. She notes that such segmentation is reinforced by ideologies of race and gender, dividing workers from workers, and, in turn, workers from the workless. The artificial divisions between different categories of welfare recipients is effective, in

her view, in controlling the poor, just as skW differentiations are among the working classes. In her words:

“A most effective aspect of bureaucratisation, effective that is as a form of social control, is the development of artificial divisions between different categories of recipients by means of varying eligibility criteria and slightly different formulas for payment.”<sup>20</sup>

Feminist writers are particularly conscious of the twin aspects of control and benefit delivery and have identified the major purpose of the control functions stemming from the needs of patriarchy <sup>21</sup>.

Central to feminist concern about the control aspect of the welfare system is their analysis of dependency, implied and real <sup>22</sup>. The most obvious example of this is provided by the rules and regulations applying to the supply of benefits to unmarried mothers and deserted wives. Feminists argue that the eligibility for Social Security benefits is so structured that it allows the state to become It a more jealous husband than the man they left <sup>23</sup>.

Many writers who have looked at the social welfare system and its effects on groups such as Aborigines in Australia; Asian and Caribbean immigrants in Britain; or American Indian, Black and Spanish Americans in the United States, have pointed to racism as an underlying ideology supporting social control <sup>24</sup>.

Whether the perceived need to control the recipients derives from patriarchy, racism or ruling class fear of the less affluent. it may be argued that there is a propensity in modern social democracies to use the welfare system rather than military or paramilitary forms of social control whenever possible. Althusser expressed this idea as the State's preference for ideological rather than repressive control <sup>25</sup>. This use of welfare operatives to pacify or deflect unrest, to make recipients feel they have a stake in the future, to present the state (or a department of the state) as a caring institution, has been recognised by many writers in social work circles and is referred to as the "soft cop role" <sup>26</sup>.

Leonard operating from a Marxist perspective has pointed out that 'The concept of the welfare state as a humane response to need has performed an invaluable ideological function in

the control and discipline of working-class populations, for in the name of welfare much can be achieved which would be impossible by more direct methods of repression."<sup>27</sup>

In, Western democracies, such as Australia, the control exerted by the state is seldom exemplified in overt police or paramilitary forms - Bowral following the Hilton bombing, or the regular showdowns between Aborigines and the police notwithstanding. Repressive tolerance was the term coined by Marcuse<sup>28</sup> to account for the gentle but firm control exercised over the populace. Gramsci pointed to the importance of the development of hegemonic forces by the ruling classes to underpin the enforcement of their will<sup>29</sup>. Poulantzas argued that the ruling classes rely on ideology rather than direct repression in their efforts to control the working people<sup>30</sup>. All these accounts share a common feature. They all maintain that the state and the ruling classes ensure that a ruling class version of the ongoing reality is accepted by the bulk of the citizens by means of ideological control.

But welfare recipients and those refused welfare assistance, encounter far more obvious control than do any other section of the citizenry. This control is manifested in the policy that the nuclear family shall be the "recognised" economic unit and shall be the focus for primary welfare help, as well as responsible for the reproduction of the next generation of workers and workless. Whether the state exemplifies its control functions by the enforcement of the work ethic, by being a more jealous husband than the man a woman has left, or by enforcing particular child care policies, the state is omnipresent in the lives of welfare recipients.

In supplying benefits and in containing dissent the welfare system serves a legitimating function for capital<sup>31</sup>. By the way the welfare system delivers its benefits; the circumscribed nature of much social welfare research; the use particularly of residualist definitions of who will and who will not be helped; the very real limitations to the redistributive functions; and several other aspects of need determination. The welfare system serves to disguise the privilege of the more affluent and acts to support the status quo<sup>32</sup>.

1 Social Welfare Policy Secretariat, *Report on Poverty Measurement*, Australian Government. Canberra, 1981.

2 Personal discussions with agency administrators. social workers, welfare officers and clients in all states of Australia.

3 Griffiths, D. *Emergency Relief*. Social Welfare Commission. Canberra.

1", p.27. Griffiths supplies other examples of unspecified need being the basis of determinations about assisting people at p.6 and p.14

4 No author listed, *Low Income Earners Survival Booklet*, No 1, Coalition of Low Income Earners, Darwin, 1983.

5 Mishra, R. *Society and Social Policy*, Macmillan, London, 1981. p.37. George, V. and Wilding, P. *Ideology and Social Welfare*, Routledge and Kegan Paul. London, 1976. p. 124

6 Taylor-Gooby, P. and Dale, J. *Social Theory and Social Welfare*, Edward Arnold, London, 1981. p.32

7 Cass, B. "Poverty: Issues for further research and social policy" in *Targeting Welfare Expenditures on the Poor*, Policy Co-ordination Unit, Department of Community Services, Canberra, 1985. At page 7 Professor Cass estimates that less than 30% of eligible families apply in Australia. In August 1985 only 161 families were paid Family Income Support in the Northern Territory. Figure supplied by Director of Social Security in the Northern Territory.

8 Corrigan, P. and Leonard, P. *op. cit.*, pp.85-89. See also McDonald, T. *Separation of Income maintenance and Social Services in the AFDC Program; A Study of Help-Seeking Behaviour*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, Madison (Social Work Department), 1977, pp.52-53

9 McKnight, J. "Professionalised service and disabled help" in Ilich, I. *Et al, Disabling Professions*, Marion Boyers, London, 1977. Throssell adds to this criticism the assertion that the professionals have accepted society's definition of the problem. Throwell, H. "Social work overview" in Throssell, H. (ed) *Social Work: Radical Essays*, University of Queensland, St Lucia, 1975, p6

10 Corrigan, P. and Leonard, P. *Social Work Practice under Capitalism: A Marxist Approach*, Macmillan. London, 1979, pp. 104- 103

11 Baidock, C. "Volunteer work as work: Some theoretical considerations", in Baldock, and Cass, B. *op. cit.*, p.283

12 Pemberton, A. "Radical critiques of social work and welfare", *Australian Social Work*, Vol 35, No 1, March 1982, p.34. Pemberton himself did not always hold such views. For instance, he wrote "Social workers play a crucial part in the management of systemic conflict by alleviating the more severe effects of the unequal distribution of economic resources and political power that exist under capitalism. They are among the 'technicians of consent'; the range of understanders, adjusters and instructors, from the industrial psychologist through to the primary school teacher, who defuse the discontented and 'train' the potentially rebellious." Pemberton, A. and Locke, R. "Towards a radical critique of social work and welfare ideology", Vol6, No2, 1971, p.101. A not dissimilar point is put by Mayer, "Notes towards a working definition of social control in historical analysis &," in Cohen, S. and Scull, A. (eds) *Social Control and The State*, Martin Robertson, Oxford, 1983. A contrary point of view is put by van Krieken, R. "Welfare politics in Australia: A Radical View, *Journal of Australian and Political Economy*, No 11, January 1982, p.90

13 Saville, J. "The welfare state: an historical approach", in Fitzgerald, M. *et al* (eds) *Welfare and Action*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1977, P.4. Connell, R. and Iryine, I. *Class Structure in Australian History*, Longman Cheshire, Melbourne, 1980, pp.203-204. Gough, I. *The Political Economy of the Welfare State*, Macmillan. London. 1979, pp.58-59

14 Gough, I. *op. cit* See also McIntosh, M. "The welfare state and the needs of the dependent family" in Burman, S. (ed) *Fit Work for Women*, Croom Helm, London. 1979. Mishra, R. *Society and Policy*, Macmillan, London.

- 1981, p.82. Rees, T. and Atkinson, P. 'Youth unemployment and state intervention' in Rees, T. and Atkinson, P. *Youth Unemployment and State Intervention*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1982, pp.8-10, and Higgins, W. *op. cit.*
- 15 George, V. and Wilding, P. *The Impact of Social Policy*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1984. pp.194-196
- 16 *ibid*, pp.194-201
- 17 *ibid*, pp.211-215
- 18 *ibid*, pp.215-220
- 19 Baidock, C. "Sociology and the dilemmas of diversity". Paper given at the New Zealand Sociology Association, Auckland. May 1983.
- 20 *ibid*
- 21 Barrett, M. *op. cit.* Eisenstein, Z. (ed) *Capitalist Patriarchy and the Case for Socialist Feminism*, Monthly Review, New York, 1979. Barker, D. and Allen, S. (eds) *in Work and Marriage*, Longman. London, 1976. McIntosh, M. "The welfare state and the needs of the dependent family:" *op. cit.*, pp.163-170. Hartmann, H. "The unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism.. Towards a more progressive union", *Capital*, Vol 8, Summer 1979. Wilson, E. *Women and Welfare State* Tavistock, London, 1977.
- 22 Real dependence is when the person is actually supported and implied dependence occurs when the person is presumed to be supported. 23 Glassman, C. "Woman and the welfare system' in Morgan, R. (ed) *Sisterhood is Powerful*, Vintage, New York. 1970, pp.102-103. Creed, H. "Issues of Women and Sexism in Welfare Education", Paper given at Australian Social Work Educators Conference, August 1980, Adelaide, p. 1. Rose, H. "The poverty of theory and the poverty of women", *op. cit.* p.29. Higgins, W. "To him that hath..."The welfare state", *op. cit.*, p.217
- 24 Anderson, R. et al, *Voices from Wounded Knee*, Akwesasne Notes, New York, 1974. Rowley, C. *Destruction of Aboriginal Society*, Australian National University, Canberra, 1970, Rowley, C. *A Matter of Justice*, Australian National University, Canberra, 1978. Stavens, F. *Black Australia*, Alternative Publishing Cooperative, Sydney, 1981. Jackson, G. *Soledad Brother*, Jonathon Cape and Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1971. Carmichael, S. and Hamilton, C. *Black Power*, Vintage, New York, 1967. Roberts, J. *Massacres of Mining*, Dove, Blackburn, 1981. Wilson, P. *A Black Death, White Hands*, George Allen and Unwin, 1982.
- 25 Althusser, L. *For Marx* (trans. Brewster, B.) Verso, London, 1977,
- 26 Watts, R. *op. cit.* See also, Friedman, M. "The case for negative income tax", in Laird, M. (ed). *Republican Papers*, Anchor, New York, 1980, p.205
- 27 Leonard, P. in preface Gough, I. *op. cit.*, pvii
- 28 Marcuse, H. *One Dimensional Man*, Beacon, Boston, 1964. See also Marcuse, H. *Reason and Revolution*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1980.
- 29 Gramsci, A. *Selections from Political Writings 1910-20* Hoare, Q. (ed), Matheuers, J. (trans) International, Now York. 1977, pp.53, 170-172, 185-189.
- Gramsci, A. *Selections from Political Writings 1921-26* Hoare, Q. (ed and trans) pp.233-235, 235-266, 443-459
- 30 Poulantzas, N. *State, Power, Socialism*, Camilleri. P. (trans) NLB, London, 1978.
- 31 Mishra, R. *op. cit.*, pp.15-29. Land, H. *op. cit.*, p.108. Rose, H. "The poverty of theory and the poverty of women", Paper given at ANZAAS, 16-23 May 1983, Perth. p.8.
- 32 Leonard, P. *op. cit.*, pviii. Westergaard, W. and Resler, H. *o.p. cit.*, p. 19