

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

A STUDY OF THE CURRENT IMPLEMENTATION OF SOCIAL ACTION
WITHIN THE SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM OF MANITOBA

Being a report of a Research Project
Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of
the requirements for the
Degree of Master of Social Work

by

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WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

April, 1969

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express appreciation to Mr. David Vincent, research advisor, and to the agencies and organizations which participated in this study.

Thanks is extended to the other members of the research group for their cooperation and assistance.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research project is the study and description of the nature and extent of social action activity within the Manitoba social welfare system during a two year period. The agencies and organizations surveyed included the Manitoba Association of Social Workers, the Community Welfare Planning Council, and twenty-six direct-service agencies. Areas studied encompassed the issue around which action was taken, the vehicle used for expression of the action, the source initiating the action, the responsibility for carrying through the action, and the social system toward which the action was directed.

The study was based on data obtained from a survey of available records of social action activities, supplemented by interviews with administrative personnel.

Findings revealed that all but six of the agencies and organizations surveyed had been involved to some degree in social action. The three issues on which the greatest proportion of action was focused were inadequate housing, child welfare and inadequate income. More than half of all social action endeavours were expressed by formal means, such as briefs, reports and letters. In all agencies, the majority of ideas for social action had originated with staff members; while staff also carried out the

greatest number of activities in M.A.S.W. and C.W.P.C., administration tended to take this responsibility in direct-service agencies. Over forty-two percent of total social action measured was directed toward some level of government.

A majority of the agencies and organizations studied expressed some commitment to social action as a part of their function, and a majority also foresaw some increase in social action activities in the future.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE SOCIETAL SETTING OF SOCIAL ACTION

The concept of "the just society," which has recently received much attention, may be assumed to describe a society which allows for the optimal meeting of the needs of all its members. Society may be viewed as a network of interrelated systems which together meet the needs of individuals, groups and communities within it. In order to remain functional, a society must provide institutions and activities which permit the adequate functioning of its members, and make possible their survival as a group.

A society must make provision for the basic biological needs of its members, such as food and shelter. Related to this function are economic activities, the production and distribution of goods and services. The reproduction of new members to maintain the society requires suitable arrangements for the creation and maintenance of new families. In order that new members may be socialized into functioning adults, provision of opportunities for education and training are necessary. Appropriate laws and regulations for the protection of members are required for maintenance of internal and external order. To maintain meaning and motivation, there must be opportunity and freedom for the development of philosophy, culture and religion.

The major responsibility for fulfilling these specific basic functions of society tend to be assigned to particular social systems; for example, the system of education carries much of the responsibility for socializing new members, and that of government for the maintenance of order. However, the functions of society, and therefore its systems, are closely interrelated. Changes in the social order affect all systems, requiring constant adjustment and adaptation if integration of their needs-meeting functions is to be maintained.

Within the matrix of society, the social welfare system fulfills a major role in responding to the needs of individuals and groups, both through creating welfare services, and through promoting arrangements for meeting needs through other institutional structures. Social workers who staff social welfare agencies and organizations not only carry the role of delivering services, but also have ". . . a distinct responsibility and contribution in relation to need-recognition, need-articulation, and need-implementation."¹

In an era of ever more rapid social change, social welfare institutions and social work practice cannot remain static. In order to remain relevant to the needs of individuals in a changing society, effective activity in the social welfare field must, to

¹Alfred J. Kahn (ed.), "The Function of Social Work in the Modern World," Issues in American Social Work (Columbia University Press, New York, 1959), p. 31.

use Elizabeth Wickenden's words, " . . . include a built-in dynamism for change"¹

Urbanization, specialization and population mobility, following in the wake of the advancing industrial and scientific revolution, have caused and are causing major changes in social organization. As the structure of society becomes more complex, its social systems become more interdependent. However, this very complexity leads to an imperfect meshing of the functions of the traditional systems of society; gaps and overlaps occur in the meeting of the needs of individuals, families, groups and communities. With the increasing interdependence of social systems, failure of one system in the societal network to adapt to social change and fulfill the current needs of members of society reverberates throughout other systems. In the same manner, positive adaptations of one system to social change are reflected in other systems.

The social welfare system, carrying the broad function of ensuring the social well-being of all members, has traditionally been accorded the responsibility of meeting in some fashion the deficiencies of other social systems, of helping individuals cope with what Richard Titmuss aptly terms the "diswelfares"

¹Elizabeth Wickenden, "Social Action," Encyclopedia of Social Work, ed. Harry L. Lurie (Fifteenth Issue, National Association of Social Workers, New York, 1965), p. 698.

of our society.¹ In filling this role, the social welfare system, (and members of the social work profession operating within its agencies and organizations) has broad and varied contacts with individuals, families, groups and communities encountering problems in functioning in our society. It is therefore in an exceptional position to identify and analyse unmet social needs, and to work toward adjustment of the social environment to allow for meeting of these needs, whether or not they fall within the operational scope of social welfare.²

Within the conglomerate organizational structure of our society, the expressions of organized interests tend to have a greater influence on policy makers than do those of unorganized individuals. Social welfare agencies, in their role of providing a link between their clients and society, carry the responsibility of communicating observed social needs to the various social systems, as well as identifying from practice fields those areas in which current policy or structure is insufficient to meet needs adequately. Their findings about sources of deprivation and stress in society which are impeding adequate social functioning must be interpreted with a view to influencing those with the power to

¹Richard M. Titmuss, Commitment to Welfare (George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London, 1968), p. 59.

²Wickenden, op. cit., p. 679.

change policy or create legislation.

Society, in becoming more aware of and carrying more fully its obligation to provide opportunities for its members to meet their needs, will at the same time be moving toward making it possible for its disadvantaged members to themselves make a greater contribution to the public welfare.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND

AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF SOCIAL ACTION

The increasing interest in social action in the social welfare field and the social work profession today is perhaps best viewed from the perspective of the history of the social welfare movement, and of the growth of the profession.

Although the social welfare movement on this continent began as a reform movement in response to social change and social problems, from its very beginnings it carried the dual functions of social service and social action.¹ Under the leadership of pioneers such as Jane Addams, social settlements like Hull House took a strong and active role in pushing for social reforms and legislation. Throughout the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and the early years of the twentieth century, the settlement workers helped with enactment of laws regulating child labour, providing for workmen's compensation and establishing separate courts for juveniles; they planned and promoted service programs including adult education and recreational resources, and maternal and child health services; they stimulated interest and took an active part in housing and other reforms. The settlements acted not only as service agencies, but as agents of

¹John McDowell, "Social Service," Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. XX (William Benton, publisher, Chicago, 1962 ed.), p. 906.

of social reform. They were actively involved with individuals, government, and their communities as a whole, in working toward the improvement of social conditions and problems which they observed through their service function.

The pioneer leaders in social welfare and the founding fathers of the social work profession accepted the challenge to look beyond the individual situation to the social causes of problems, and (in the words of Robert Paine, speaking in 1893 to the Boston Associated Charities) to aim ". . . at removing the prolific sources of all the woe. . . ." ¹ Much of the dynamism of the early social reformers, however, evaporated as social work directed its energies toward increasing its knowledge base and refining its methodological skills. The emphasis on the reform of social conditions, evident in early social agencies and their employees, began to shift to an emphasis on the adjustment of the individual, family, or group affected by the conditions.

While Mary Richmond wrote, "Mass betterment and individual betterment are interdependent . . . social reform and social casework of necessity progressing together . . ." she also commented on the large numbers of social workers in "one by one" work as compared to the few active in social reform. ² While she acknowledged

¹As quoted by Patricia Todd in "Some Comparisons in the Development of English and American Casework," Social Casework (October, 1961), p. 399.

²Mary E. Richmond, Social Diagnosis (The Free Press, New York, 1965. Originally published by the Russel Sage Foundation, 1917), p. 25.

the importance of social reform activities in providing resources for the individual, and in promoting measures for the prevention of social problems, her concentration on developing casework method was undoubtedly an early influence on the profession's move toward individual treatment, and away from social reform.

As the number of function-oriented social agencies grew, and as the social work profession became increasingly institutionalized, progress in developing skills in work with individuals far out-distanced progress in the area of dealing with social change.¹ During the 1920s to 1940s, psychoanalytical theories had a profound effect on the development of social work practice; the focus on helping the individual to make the most of his environment tended to replace, rather than add to, the stress on social reform as a means of removing environmental handicaps. The acceptance and integration into social methods of the new psychological knowledge influenced not only those working with individuals, but also community organizers, resulting, as Beck suggests, in ". . . muting and masking the social reform component in social work . . ." ² The attempt to transpose psychoanalytic theory to the field of social change influenced a shifting of focus from the amelioration of negative external conditions to the

¹Bertram M. Beck, "Shaping America's Social Welfare Policy," Issues in American Social Work, Alfred J. Kahn, ed. (Columbia University Press, New York, 1959), p. 194-195.

²Ibid., p. 196.

improvement of intra-community functioning.

Although the tradition of concern for the social welfare of people remained, reform activities became secondary to the establishment of professional competence in treatment. Despite the growth of social work skills and the proliferation of social welfare services, a gap between cause and function, between social action and practice, was created.

The very strivings of social work toward acceptance of its status as a profession seemed to militate against an active participation in social reform. The professional concentration was on achieving acknowledged expertise in the area of direct-service methods. Professional social workers, functioning from an organizational base in the social welfare system, felt their freedom to act limited by the structure of their settings. Even the fact that social agencies were becoming increasingly supported by the whole community, and therefore more subject to the pressure of mass opinion seemed to lead to a reluctance to risk the professional image by battling in the arena of social change.¹

Basic to this emphasis on the direct and individual service function was the residual view of social welfare. In this perspective, social welfare is seen, not as an integral and permanent system of society, but rather as a peripheral system,

¹Charlotte Towle, "Social Work: Cause and Function, 1961," Social Casework, Vol. LXIII, No. 8 (October, 1961), p. 17.

existing to lend temporary assistance to those who, because of personal failures or inadequacies, are unable to meet their needs through the regular institutions of society.¹

The residual view of social welfare, however, presupposes a stable and well-organized society, where inequities which do arise inadvertently can be adjusted through rational planning, and where the "social drop-outs" can be rehabilitated by treatment and returned to the mainstream of society. Social work then carries a social control function, accepting society's assignment of the task of control agent, rather than agent for social change.

It is impossible in today's world to assume a stable society. The rapidity of social change creates constant stresses on all basic social institutions. Despite the expansion of direct services within the social welfare system, social problems are multiplying. Demands for changes in society, for the reduction of inequities, the increase of opportunities, and the humanization of social institutions, are coming in increasing numbers from groups representing other social systems of society -- from labour, from students, from minority and special interest groups, from political groups.

As the social welfare system has become more cognizant

¹Charles F. Grosser, "Changing Theory and Changing Practice," Social Casework, Vol. L, No. 1 (January, 1969), p. 17.

Harold L. Wilensky and Charles N. Lebeaux, Industrial Society and Social Welfare (The Free Press, New York, 1958), pp. 138-140.

of the inability of the average individual in the complexity of modern life to provide for all his own needs, it has tended to support the institutional view of social welfare, seeing comprehensive welfare services as a normal and necessary function of modern society.

In order to fulfill its function in the modern world, the social welfare system must not only broaden and up-date its direct service functions in relation to current social needs and problems; it must also resume and expand its "cause" activities. The profession of social work must ". . . assume once again the original and traditional responsibility accorded it by society. This is the responsibility to try to achieve the solution of social problems by removing or altering their causes, whatever their nature, whether cultural, political, economic, or social values and organization, or interpersonal values, emotions, and ideas."¹

THE PLACE OF SOCIAL ACTION IN THE SIXTIES

The importance of social action in the welfare system and social work activities today is widely recognized in current writing in the field. The fact that changes in society require responsive changes in the social welfare system if it is to fulfill its role of meeting social need is generally accepted. The

¹Werner A. Lutz, "Marital Incompatibility," Social Work and Social Problems, Nathan E. Cohen, ed. (National Association of Social Workers, Inc., New York, 1964), p. 140.

ineffectiveness of the bias, on the part of professional social workers, in favour of developing the individual self-adequacy of their clients, when the problems are in fact based in our social, economic or political structure, has been pointed out by John Turner, who writes, "The real test of a profession is its ability to be relevant to the problems of society it is granted sanction to remedy."¹

What is the situation in which social problems of the 1960s are based? As technological and social change continue to accelerate, social inequalities increase also, widening the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged. Aspirations climb, stimulated by mass media advertising, as opportunities for their achievement diminish for some individuals in our society. With rapid technological change and the introduction of automation, the need for education and training rises, and employment opportunities for the poorly educated decrease.

The age composition of our population is changing, the increase in numbers of dependent children and the aged leaving a smaller proportion in the wage-earning years. Population mobility continues to increase in our technological society, reducing regional and cultural differences, and adding stresses

¹John B. Turner, "In Response to Change: Social Work at the Crossroad," Social Work, Vol. III, No. 3 (July, 1968), p.7.

on primary group relationships. The burgeoning of metropolitan centres as a result of rural to urban migration creates alterations in the patterns of intergroup relationships. The dehumanizing effect of huge, bureaucratic organizations leads to the alienation and disengagement of some segments of the population.¹

In order to retain relevance to the complex and changing society of today, social welfare provisions and social work services related to a stable community structure and a stable way of life must change and adapt. As Kahn states, ". . . the nature and specific function of social work (and thus the methods of social workers) must, in fact, reflect the given, changing social situation."² While social work has a valid function to perform in continuing to staff direct social services, it has an equal responsibility to identify and recognize needs as they emerge with changing social conditions, to articulate and study the implications of these needs, and to work (in cooperation with other groups and professions) toward the creation of institutional structures (both in social welfare and in other systems) which will allow for satisfaction of these needs.

¹This discussion is based largely on that of Alfred J. Kahn in "The Function of Social Work in the Modern World," pp. 19-23.

²Alfred J. Kahn, (ed), Issues in American Social Work (Columbia University Press, New York, 1959), p. 8.

The social welfare system, operating in a milieu affected by radical social change, and aware through direct client contact of areas of social stress and unmet needs, can no longer seek merely the coordination and expansion of presently available resources and current policies, but must seek "... new ways in which to alter the environment out of which social problems emerge."¹ This responsibility points to the development of broader institutional supports in areas such as health, education and employment, supports geared to meeting changing human needs and shaped to changing social conditions. It also points to the translation of human needs to legal rights, where necessary, through working toward appropriate legislative guarantees.

SURVEY OF RECENT SOCIAL ACTION ACTIVITY AND STUDIES

Social action in the welfare field in this decade has run the gamut from the radical approach of Saul Aulinsky, fighting the power structure for the benefit of the poor, to the formal approach of the National Association of Social Workers, publishing reasoned position statements such as So all may live in Decency and Dignity.² Strategies have ranged from techniques of open

¹Robert Morris and Martin Rein, "Emerging Patterns in Community Planning," reprint from Social Work Practice (Columbia University Press, New York, 1963), p. 13.

²So all may live in Decency and Dignity (National Association of Social Workers, New York, Circa, 1968).

confrontation to presentations of a rational arguments for change, based on data and reasoned planning. The sphere has varied from activities in the political arena to education of the general public. Assumptions on which action has been based have been as disparate as the view that only militant protest can force the power structure to agree to desired changes, and the view that adequate knowledge about a problem will lead to rational action to correct it.

Toward the more radical end of the social action continuum is the prescription for "... the creation and support of neighborhood and direct action groups representing the interests of the disadvantaged. . . ." ¹ the groups then using protest and pressure strategies to force a response from vested power interests. The strength of numbers is used to confront "the system" by picketing, boycotts and protest marches, as in the Welfare Rights Movement in New York. ²

The strategy of exposing cases of social injustice to sufficient publicity that the discomfort created effects change has been used by the Ontario Civil Rights Organization around issues such as discrimination in housing and employment. It is based on the theory that militant action provokes a negative

¹ Paul Terrel, "The Social Worker as Radical: Role of Advocacy," New Perspectives, Vol. I, No. 1 (Spring, 1967) p. 86.

² Joseph E. Paull, "Recipients Aroused: The New Welfare Rights Movement," Social Work, Vol XII, No. 2 (April, 1967), p. 102.

reaction in the general public, and that rational argument alone is rarely a sufficient influence to effect change. This organization also encourages the coalition of various small interest groups affected by similar issues, to exert effective mass pressure for social and legislative change. Alan Borodny, a lawyer who has had experience in social action with the Civil Rights Organization for several years, suggests as a maxim for social activists that "coalition politics is the father of social reform."

The effective use of social action in the political sphere is discussed by Wilbur Cohen.¹ He sees legislation as growing from the need for action to mitigate particular social problems arising from social change. "Out of this need for social action, ideas are developed through a variety of channels in which the theories become political currency that can in turn be transformed into legislative proposals."² Alliances of social work with groups who share concern on the same issue is seen as aiding effective action, as is knowledge of the political process, selection of feasible goals, and demonstration of perseverance.

The question of whether the indigenous activist, strongly motivated by personal concern and self-interest, can be more

¹Wilbur J. Cohen, "What Every Social Worker Should Know About Political Action," Social Work, Vol. XI, No. 3 (July, 1966), pp. 3 - 7.

²Ibid., p. 4.

effective than the professional in carrying social action activities is currently being debated. Kahntinenta Horn and Fred and Peter Kelly, for example, indigenous activities among our Canadian Indians, argue that the middle-class social worker is not effective because he is motivated less by concern for, and understanding of, the disadvantaged than by social guilt. However, it can also be argued that the social worker is idealistically motivated by a commitment to humanistic values, and that since his point of view is more objective, he is better able to consider the problem and its possible solutions. As well, there may be the added factor of his better understanding of the established social structure, and of means of intervention to produce change.¹

Familiarity with the established social structure is undoubtedly a positive factor in the planning of social action strategies, but the other side of the coin, the identification with the status quo, may also be present as a hindrance to effective action. Traditionally, modes of social action used by employees of the welfare system have tended to be institutionalized in form. Direct action and confrontation strategies seldom have been seen as appropriate. Epstein's conclusion from a study of

¹Gail Abrua, "The Social Action Organization: Indigenous versus Non-Indigenous Membership," New Perspectives, Vol. I, No. 2 (Fall, 1967), pp. 53 - 56.

the attitudes of social workers to various social action strategies was: "The greater the institutional involvement of social workers in the problem area, the more conservative will be their perceptions of effective social action strategies for social workers as well as for other politically active groups."¹

While Epstein's study focused on perceptions of social action strategies, an earlier study by Joseph Vigilante describes actual social policy and social action activity of selected national welfare organizations in the United States.² This study does not attempt to show the total amount of activity nor to measure its effectiveness, but rather to describe how the participating organizations view their roles in social policy and social action activity, and what methods they use to implement social action. Again, however, the formal view of social action as communicating the organizations' positions on social issues to policy makers seemed to predominate. The level of interest in social action among organizations surveyed showed some variance, but the general attitude found was that agencies had both the right and responsibility to bring their case knowledge to social action activities.

¹Irwin Epstein, "Social Workers and Social Action: Attitudes Toward Social Action Strategies," Social Work, Vol. III, No. 2, (April, 1968), p. 106.

²Joseph L. Vigilante, Study of Social Policy and Social Action Activity of Selected National Welfare Organizations (Committee on Social Issues and Policies, National Social Welfare Assembly, New York, 1960),

While the social action role of members of the social welfare system has never been completely denied, the tendency has often been to assume that the responsibility for initiating action lay with agency administrators or organization officials, rather than with direct service workers. The role of professional organizations has often been stressed. The National Association of Social Workers in Goals of Public Social Policy (1967 ed.), outlines the responsibility of the professional organization to communicate the knowledge and experience of its members to policy makers, but at the same time sees the involvement of social agencies and direct-service workers, who observe the actual needs of people in their practice, in interpreting this knowledge to society.

Cooperation with all other professions and groups sharing social work's concern for social progress is stressed as enabling society to ". . . make the best use of all its institutional resources in advancing the welfare and meeting the needs of its members."¹

Suggesting the importance of case documentation by direct-service agencies and practitioners to avoid ". . . the sterile

¹Goals of Public Social Policy (National Association of Social Workers, New York, revised edition), p. 12.

output of social action by the profession . . ."¹ Leonard Schneiderman has developed a social action model for the practitioner. The direct-service worker carries the dual obligation of serving his clients and of using his practice to document the need for institutional, policy and legislative change. While agency boards and administrations may be important instruments for social change, their ties with the community may mute their real effectiveness; where this is the situation, the agencies should accept responsibility for use of their knowledge and practice in documentation of areas of need, carrying this information to the professional body which has both the commitment and the freedom to act.

Schneiderman comments that the annual reports of agencies could include not just the amount of direct service given, but also the number of cases in which the need for social change was documented and this information carried through to appropriate legislative bodies.²

Consistent following of such a model would indeed illustrate the dual commitment of a social welfare system to the two major inherent aspects of its responsibility, direct service and social action.

¹Leonard Schneiderman, "A Social Action Model for the Social Work Practitioner," *Social Casework*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 8 (October, 1965), p. 491.

²Ibid., p. 491.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

The purpose of this study is the exploration and description of the nature and extent of the involvement of the social welfare system of Manitoba in social action.

The major question which this research project was designed to answer, based on concern about the need for social action in the changing society of today, and the recognition of social action as an inherent function of social welfare is:

- How is the Manitoba social welfare system's recognition of social action as an inherent part of its function being implemented?

Sub-questions formulated to further define and direct the explorations of the research group are:

- What agencies or organizations within the Manitoba social welfare system participated in social action during the period from January 1, 1967 to December 31, 1968?
- By what means was the social action communicated?
- Around what issues was the social action focused?
- What was the original source of the idea for the social action?
- Who took responsibility for the carrying through of the social action?
- Toward what social systems (including the social welfare system) was the social action directed?

In planning a research design which would enable us to answer these questions, we were limited by the size of our research group, which consisted of ten members, in relation to the size of the Manitoba social welfare system, which consisted of more than two hundred and fifty members. Further limits were imposed by the time available to us, and by the lack of models of similar research projects in the field of social action. Since surveying the entire population universe was not feasible, it was necessary to devise criteria for the selection of a sample which would be representative of the population. A means for the collection of data, and a way in which pertinent data could be recorded for analysis were also required. The most feasible method appeared to be the use of teams, each composed of two researchers, who could examine agency records of social action activity, and conduct interviews with appropriate agency personnel. Both the survey of written material and the interview would be guided by a schedule, devised to aid the collection of appropriate data in a consistent fashion.

In order to ensure the obtaining of information on which a description and assessment of the characteristics of social action activity in the Manitoba social welfare system could be based, it was necessary to identify the major concepts related to our questions, and to define these concepts in a measurable form. The significant variables, data on which could be expected

to provide answers to our questions, appeared to be the means by which social action was communicated, the area of concern on which the social action focused, the source of the social action, the responsibility for carrying through the social action, and the direction of the social action.

Since the core concept which we wished to measure and describe was social action activity, the vehicle by which the activity was expressed was selected as the logical indicator of social action, and therefore the basic unit of measurement.

For the purpose of our study, then, the following concepts require definition: the Manitoba social welfare system, social action, indicator of social action, source responsibility and direction.

"The Manitoba social welfare system" is defined as the system of agencies and organizations which together meet the welfare needs of the Province of Manitoba, and which consists of the twenty-eight agencies and organizations listed in Appendix A.

Because of the wide range in size, structure, auspices and function of the members of our population universe, it was necessary to evolve criteria for selection of a representative sample. In order to obtain breadth of representation, it was felt desirable to include in the sample both primary and secondary

agencies, those agencies under private and under public auspices, and rural-based as well as urban-based agencies. Further criteria deemed advisable in order to make the sample as representative as possible were the size of the agency, its relevance to the total social services network, and its employment of professional social work staff.

For a preliminary selection of agencies meeting the above criteria, use was made of agencies selected by the School of Social Work of the University of Manitoba as centres of field instruction. These agencies included eight of the nine fields of practice listed by Bartlett,¹ public assistance, family services, child welfare, corrections, medical services, rehabilitative services, school social work, and group service agencies.

In order to represent the ninth field, that of community planning, the Community Welfare Planning Council of Greater Winnipeg was included. The local professional social work organization, the Manitoba Association of Social Workers, was also added to the sample, because of the assumption of its commitment to, and freedom to participate in, social action, and because its broadly based professional membership would

¹Harriett M. Bartlett, Analyzing Social Work Practice by Fields (National Association of Social Workers, New York, 1961), p. 15.

add to the sample's over-all representativeness.

Since the urban and semi-urban agencies which act as centres of field instruction for the School of Social Work would not necessarily be representative of the total Manitoba social welfare system, both private and public agencies located in various centres outside greater Winnipeg were added to the sample.

The term, social action, may be used to describe a wide variety of social change activity, originating both within and outside of the social welfare system. The scope of this study automatically limited our explorations to the social welfare system of Manitoba. Within activities of the social welfare system, further limits were necessary in order to avoid major problems in classification and measurement, and to ensure consistency of data.

For the purpose of this study, therefore, "social action" was defined as activity undertaken in the name of a social agency or organization for the purpose of communicating an awareness of social needs to any body with the direct or indirect power to shape or influence social policy.

For the purpose of this study, "indicator" of social action refers to a form or method used by a social agency to communicate a concern around social need, and includes briefs,

committee reports, radio and television releases and presentations, press releases, speeches and public addresses, initiation of or active participation in conferences or institutes, citizens meetings, research and study reports, petitions, public demonstrations, and letters, as listed in Section 3, Appendix B. The use of one indicator is to be considered one unit of social action.

"Issues" are defined as the specific social problem areas or conditions of society of inadequate income, inadequate housing, child neglect, illegitimate pregnancy, divorce (or desertion, separation or marital discord), alcoholism, drugs, unlawful behavior, mental handicap, physical handicap, and urban renewal, as listed in Section 4, Appendix B.

The "source" of the social action is considered to be the individual or group within the agency (including client, staff, agency administrator or board of directors) or outside of the agency, as listed in Section 5 (1), Appendix B, which originated the idea for the social action.

"Responsibility" refers to the individual or group, within the agency (including client, staff, administration or board of directors) or outside the agency, as listed in Section 5 (2), Appendix B, which carried through the social action in the name of the agency.

"Direction" refers to the level and area of government, or one of the social systems of law, education, economics, family, religion, recreation, or social welfare, or to a specific field of practice within the social welfare system, or to the general public or a civic group or community organization, as listed in Section 6, Appendix B, to which the communication of concern around a social issue is made.

In order to obtain data on the basic variables involved in the study (including identifying information on the agencies and organizations making up the Manitoba social welfare system, the indicators used to express social action, the issues about which action was taken, the source, the responsibility for carrying through, and the direction of the action) an instrument for recording information was designed.

An interview schedule (Sections 1, 2, 3 and 8, Appendix B) was constructed to guide interviews with an administrative person in each agency or organization in our survey, in order that data gathered be as comprehensive and objective as possible. The schedule was set up to include identifying information about the agency, and questions about attitudes to social action and expected future trends in social action activities, as well as including a list of indicators of social action.

Sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the schedule were designed for

the purpose of consistent recording of data on individual units of social action with regard to the major variables of agency or organization, indicator, issue, source, responsibility, direction, and response, if any.

An introductory letter was prepared, explaining the purpose of our study and requesting the cooperation of participating agencies. An explanation of social action, as it had been defined for the purpose of this research, was included in the letter.

An informal spot-check of several agencies indicated that social action, as we had defined it, was a measurable part of the activity of the agencies which, according to our criteria of selection, comprised the Manitoba social welfare system.

A pre-test of five agencies was conducted in order to assess the suitability of our research methods and instruments for the purpose of obtaining the data required for the project. The agencies in our pre-test sample group were the Social Service Department of St. Boniface General Hospital, the Children's Home of Greater Winnipeg, the Canadian Paraplegic Association, the Provincial West Office of the Department of Health and Social Services, and Care Services of the Department of Health and Social Services. (Selection was made on the basis that these

agencies met the major criteria of representativeness used in the choice of our actual sample.)

The survey of the pre-test sample indicated the general suitability for our purpose of both our methods and instrument. However, it was evident that the five-year time span for our survey which had initially been proposed was not feasible; written records of past activity were often incomplete, and as staff changes had frequently taken place, it was not possible to gather or verify data over such a lengthy time span. As well, the volume of social action data in instances where an agency had been particularly active in this area would pose problems in recording and analysing within our time limits. The time-span for our study was therefore altered to cover a two-year period, from January 1, 1967 to December 31, 1968. It was also found that the original definition of social action in our introductory letter was not sufficiently precise; this resulted in difficulties in distinguishing public relations activities and internal policy matters from social action. Helpful suggestions from personnel of the agencies participating in the pre-test resulted in minor amendments to our introductory letter in order to further clarify the definition of social action for the purpose of our study.

The survey of the actual sample selected for the research project was carried out in January and February, 1969. Five

teams, each consisting of two researchers, conducted interviews and examinations of available recorded material on social action activities. Interview schedules on attitudes were completed, and data on major variables was recorded on each unit of social action. Following the collection of the raw data, facts were organized and classified as to the major variables, and then factored according to the categories (as listed in Appendix B) to be used in the analysis.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

With regard to the complete and accurate collection of data two limitations were present, that of consistent availability of data, and that of differences in interpretation of data, both on the part of the interviewer and of the interviewees.

Records of social action activities among agencies and organizations surveyed were often incomplete. Recording practices may have introduced a bias in favour of formal, written activity, such as briefs and letters. The fact that much indirect social action activity, such as telephone calls and private conversations, which on occasion may have exerted real influence on social policy, were not usually recorded, limited a full collection of data; as well, staff changes had sometimes occurred during the two year period which we were studying, so that the staff person who had been most involved in the activity was not always available to verify or supplement information.

Differences of interpretation of data on the part of the interviewers or those being interviewed may have caused some inconsistencies in both the collection and recording of data for this study. Particularly in areas such as that of public relations material, which might carry the dual purpose of educating the public about agency function, and influencing policy makers, possible biases in individual judgment may have affected inclusion or exclusion of material.

The aim of this research project was the exploration and description of the characteristics of social action undertaken by the social welfare system of Manitoba during the two year period surveyed. The raw data on social action was first assembled into the broad categories of major variables, agency, indicator, issue, source, responsibility and direction. Because of the volume of data, and because some of the sub-classifications originally formulated to order our analysis of the major variables were not sufficiently relevant to the actual data obtained, the following alterations of category were made.

Indicators of social action were classified under the following categories:

1. letters
2. briefs, reports and position statements
3. citizen's meetings, other meetings, conferences
4. speeches, verbal presentations
5. news media, T.V., radio, press releases
6. petitions
7. miscellaneous.

Issues were classified under the following categories:

1. inadequate housing
2. inadequate income
3. medical services
4. urban renewal

5. family breakdown
6. child welfare
7. education
8. alienated youth
9. status of women
10. unlawful behavior
11. recreation
12. Indian problems
13. inadequate services
14. other.

Source and responsibility were classified under the following categories:

1. client
2. agency staff
3. agency administration
4. board of directors
5. combination within an agency
6. cooperation with an outside agency
7. outside the agency.

Direction was classified under the following categories:

1. government (including federal, provincial and municipal levels)
2. social welfare system
3. other systems (excluding government and social welfare)
4. public sector.

ANALYSIS OF MAJOR VARIABLES

1. Agencies

Of the twenty-six direct-service agencies included in our original sample, two stated that they had undertaken no social action according to the terms of our definition, and were not surveyed, and two were unable to arrange mutually convenient times for an interview with a research team. Two agencies which were surveyed stated that they had undertaken no social action.

Therefore, data on social action relates to the twenty participating direct-service agencies which had undertaken social action, to the Community Welfare Planning Council, and to the Manitoba Association of Social Workers, making a total of twenty-two agencies and organizations.

A chart indicating the numerical distribution of social action according to agency, indicator, direction, source and responsibility is given in Figure 1. This chart provides a general overview of the means by which social action was implemented by the agencies and organizations in the sample representing the Manitoba social welfare system.

A total of one hundred and eighty-four units of social action¹ were undertaken by the members of the sample during the two-year

¹Due to slight variations in recording and possible errors in tabulating, this figure should be taken as approximate rather than precise.

FIGURE 1

NUMERICAL DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ACTION
 ACCORDING TO AGENCY, INDICATOR, DIRECTION, SOURCE AND RESPONSIBILITY*

AGENCY	ISSUE													INDICATOR							DIRECTION							SOURCE							RESPONSIBILITY																							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	F	P	G	M	P	S	S	W	C	S	A	B	CA	CO	O	C	S	A	B	CA	CO	O															
A							1									1																																										
B		1			1	4	3									2	2		3	2						3	4	2																														
C			1		1	3										3	1	1					1	2																																		
D						5		2								2	4	4		1			2	4	2																																	
E						6										4	1	2		2			3	1		3	1	1																														
F	7	1														2	4	1	1		1		2	1	2	4		4																														
G																1							1																																			
H	1	2	1													2	1	1					1	2		1																																
I	1	2					1	1	2							1	5		2				4	2	1		1																															
J							4									1	1	1		2																																						
K							2	1								1	1			1																																						
L	1	1				1	2									6							2	4	1		2	3																														
M																1																																										
N	1	9														8	1		1				4				6																															
O	4	1	8			1	1	6		1	5	6	3			17	10	5	1	2	1		6	6	10	4	6	14	5	4	4		9	3	11	2	5	8	3	8	10																	
P	7						1									2	2	1	3																																							
Q																1							1																																			
R			1													1																																										
S																1																																										
T		1	1			1		6				1				5	4	1		1			4	6			3	1		1																												
U	6	2	3	3	1		6	1		2	1					9	6	4	4	2			8	10	5	5	6	6		14																												
V	2	1	9		2					7						6	8		2	2			6	10	4	4	11	5		1	17																											

CODE:
 F - Federal Government
 PG - Prov. Government
 M - Municipal Government
 PS - Public Sector
 S - Other Systems
 W - Social Welfare Systems
 C - Client
 S - Agency Staff
 A - Agency Admin.
 B - Agency Board
 CA - Combination Within Agency
 CO - Cooperation With Other Agency
 O - Outside Agency
 A to T - Direct Service Agency
 U - C.W.P.C.
 V - M.A.S.W.

* Based on 187 units of social action

period studied. The number of units of action in which any one agency was involved varied from one unit to thirty-six units. The average units of social action among the direct service agencies was 6.2, as compared to twenty-two units by M.A.S.W. and twenty-five units by C.W.P.C.

These figures indicate that M.A.S.W. and C.W.P.C. are significantly more involved in social action than are the direct-service agencies. However, a striking exception is Neighborhood Services Centre, which was involved in thirty-six units of social action.

No significant differences were noted between the degree of involvement of rural agencies as compared to urban agencies. Primary agencies, however, with an average of 10.2 units of social action, were significantly more involved than secondary agencies, with an average of 4.3 units. Private agencies undertook an average of 8 units of social action, while public agencies averaged 4.9 units, a significantly lower amount.

The major proportion of each direct-service agency's activity was related to issues of direct concern to its field of practice.

2. Indicators

The distribution of the relative use of the seven categories of methods of social action by direct-service agencies, M.A.S.W.

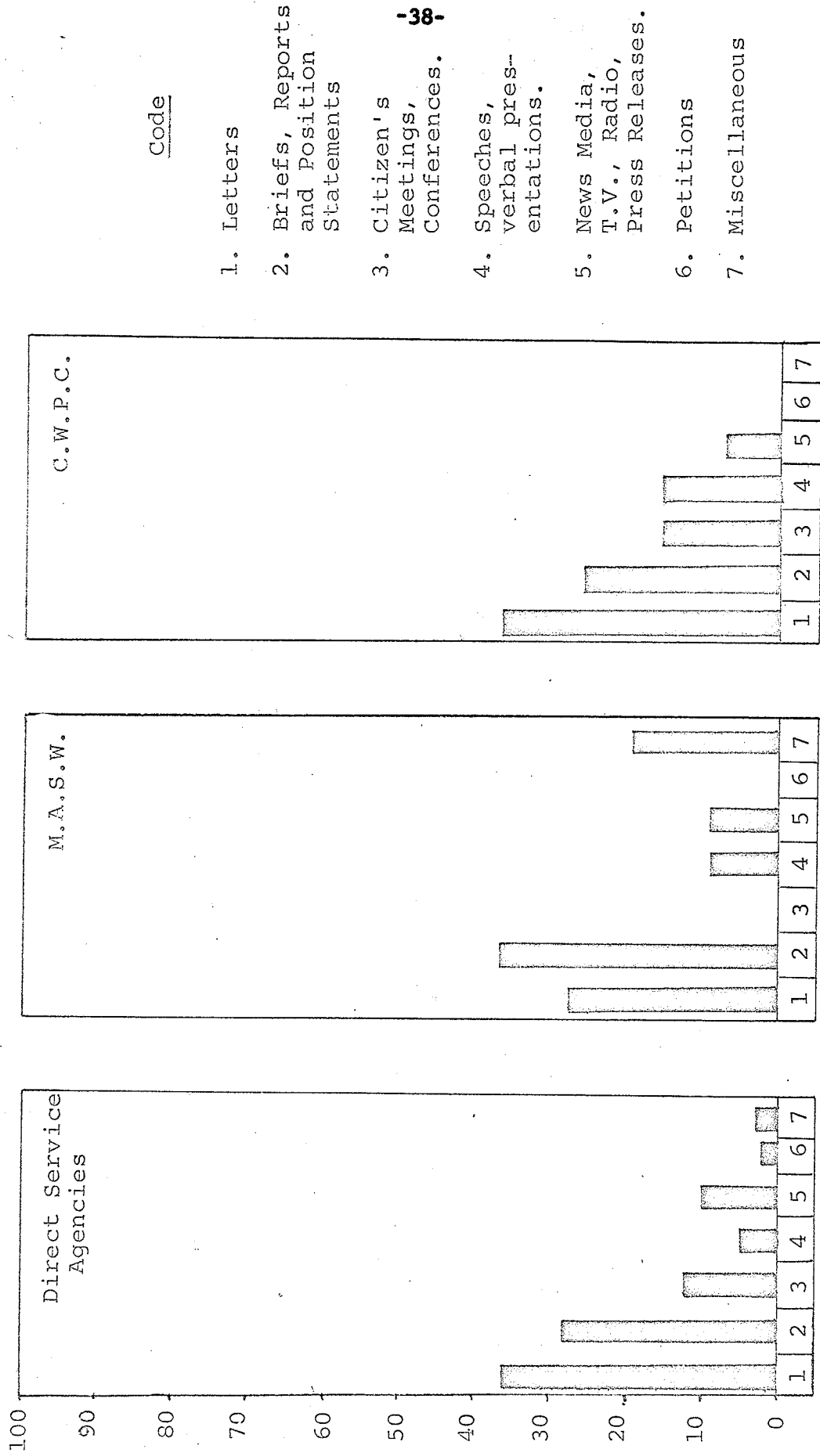
and C.W.P.C., is illustrated in Figure 2. The data on which this comparison is based is supplied in Table 1.

TABLE 1
 NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
 OF SOCIAL ACTION ACCORDING TO INDICATOR

INDICATOR	DIRECT SERVICE		M.A.S.W.		C.W.P.C.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	49	37.7	6	27.27	9	36
2	38	27.7	8	36.36	6	24
3	19	13.9	-	-	4	16
4	8	5.8	2	9.09	4	16
5	17	12.4	2	9.09	2	8
6	2	1.5	-	-	-	-
7	4	2.9	4	18.18	-	-
TOTALS	137	99.9	22	99.99	25	100

The use of formal methods of social action, such as letters and briefs, predominated in all three groupings, constituting 65.4% of methods used by direct-service agencies, 60% used by C.W.P.C. and 63.63% used by M.A.S.W. This suggests a tendency to avoid "live" confrontations and situations allowing for open dialogue.

The direct service agencies as a group used the widest range of methods. With the exception of one citizens' meeting



Distribution by Percentage of Types of Social Action Indicators used by the Agencies studied. *Based on a total of 184 Units of Social Action.

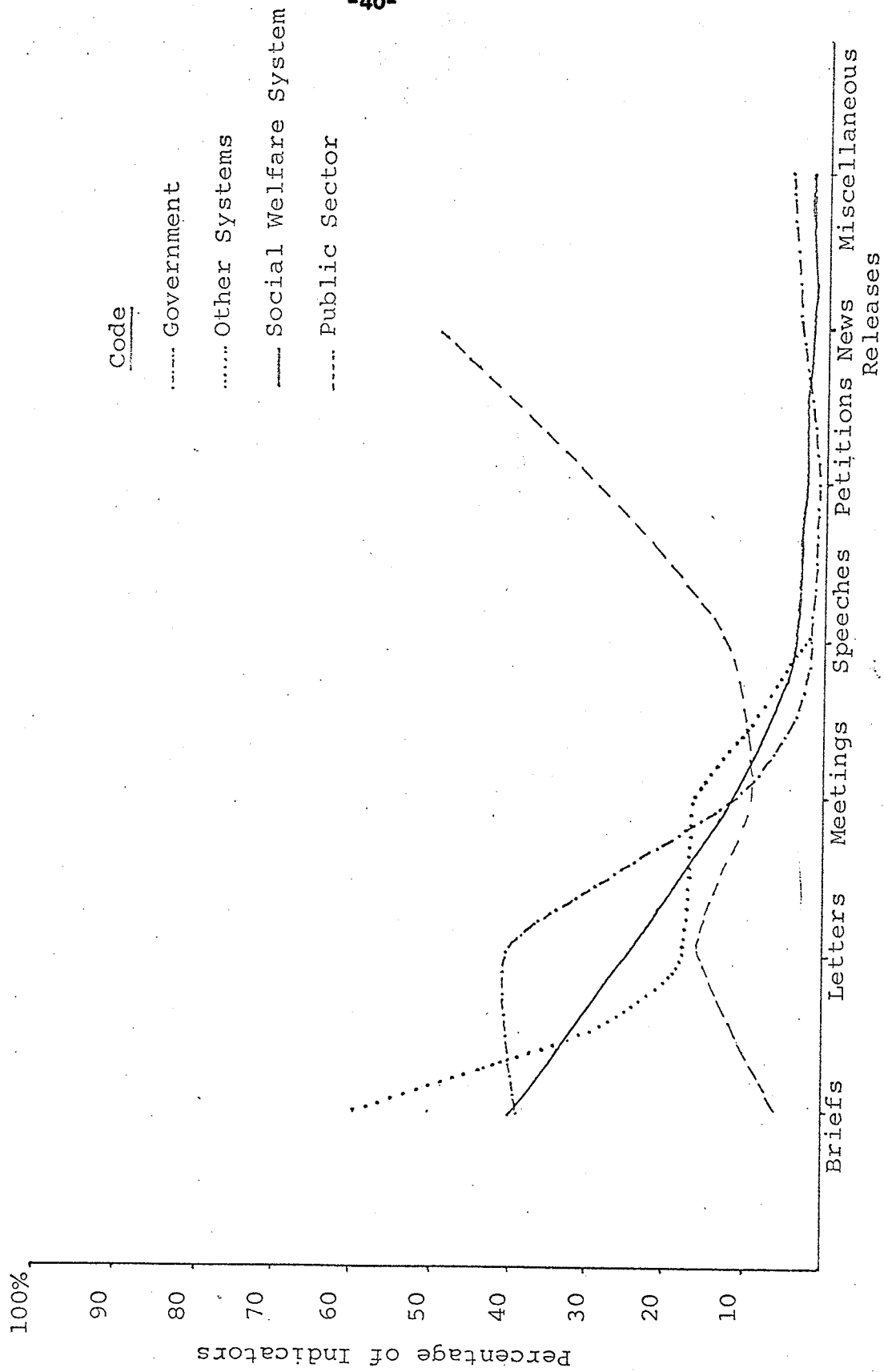
FIGURE 2 : Social Action Indicators

(included under indicator 3) C.W.P.C. showed no use of innovative methods of action. M.A.S.W. communicated 18.18% of its action through miscellaneous innovative methods.

A large majority of the indicators directed toward various levels of government were of a formal nature, with briefs and reports predominating. A smaller majority of the indicators directed toward the social welfare system and other social systems were also of a formal type. This tendency is indicated in Figure 3, which illustrates the distribution of indicators according to direction. Approximately half of the social action directed toward the public sector was via the mass media, the majority of the remainder being through use of meetings and speeches.

There appeared to be no significant relationship between the type of indicator and the source of the action, or responsibility for carrying it through. The general trend was for meetings to be used most often (39%) when action was undertaken and carried through in cooperation with other agencies, but letters and briefs were used almost as frequently (36%). There is some indication also that the degree of formality of the method chosen may bear some relationship to the level on the agency hierarchy of the individual or group carrying through the action; administration and directors made the greatest use of communication by letter,

FIGURE 3 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF INDICATORS ACCORDING TO DIRECTION



and almost no use of more informal methods, such as the mass media.

3. Issues

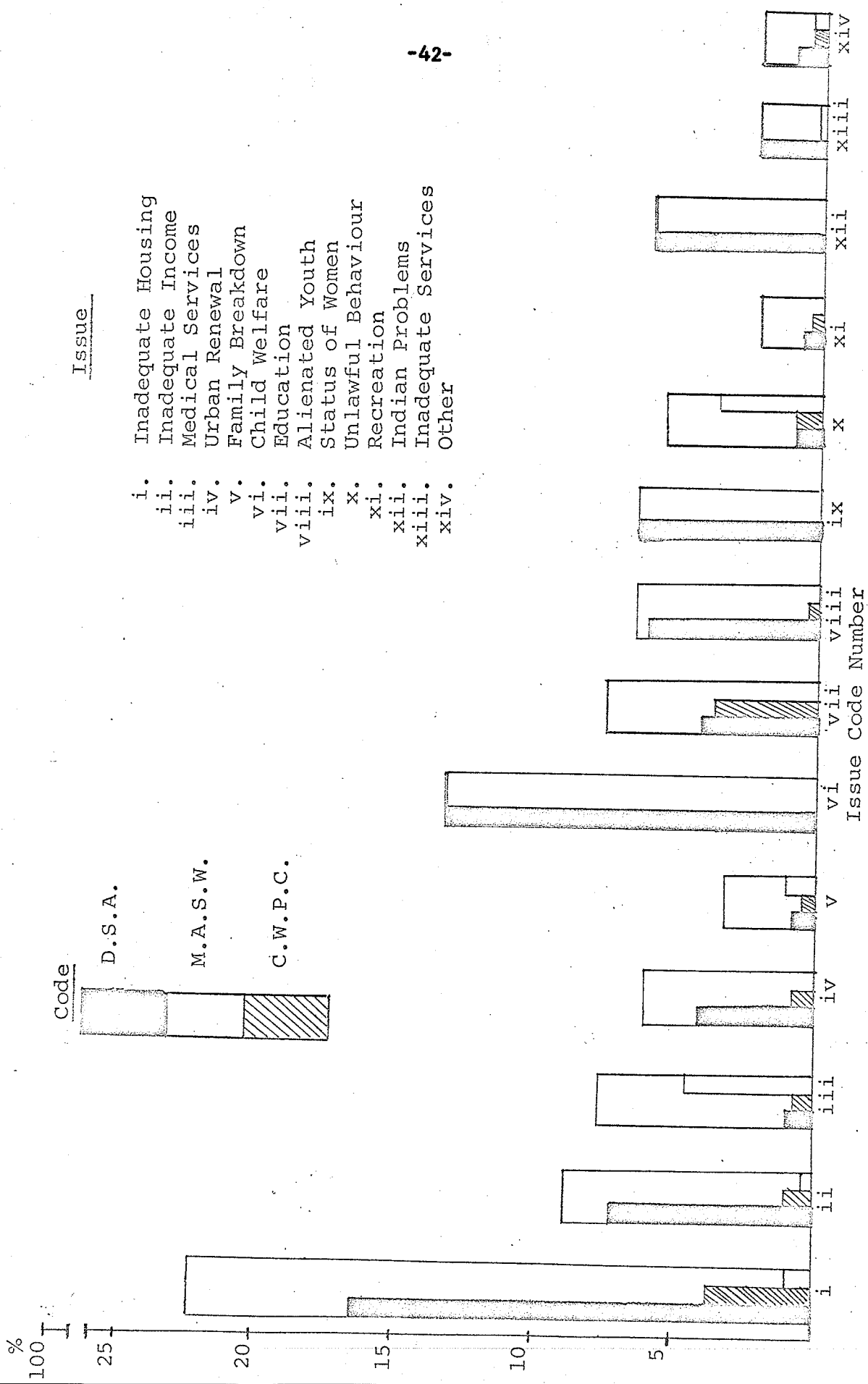
The cumulative percentage and relative proportions of social action undertaken by direct-service agencies, C.W.P.C. and M.A.S.W. in relation to particular issues is illustrated in Figure 4. A table of units of social action, by units and percentages, in relation to issue is given in Table 2 for reference.

TABLE 2

NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
OF SOCIAL ACTION ACCORDING TO ISSUE*

ISSUE	DIRECT SERVICE		C.W.P.C.		M.A.S.W.		TOTAL	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	31	16.8	6	3.3	2	1.09	39	21.19
2	14	7.5	2	1.09	1	.5	17	9.09
3	2	1.09	3	1.6	9	4.9	14	7.59
4	8	4.3	3	1.6	-	-	5	5.9
5	3	1.6	1	.5	2	1.09	6	3.19
6	25	13.6	-	-	-	-	25	13.6
7	8	4.3	6	3.3	-	-	14	7.6
8	11	6	1	.5	-	-	12	6.5
9	12	6.5	-	-	-	-	12	6.5
10	2	1.09	2	1.09	7	3.8	11	5.98
11	3	1.6	1	.5	-	-	4	2.11
12	11	6	-	-	-	-	11	6
13	4	2.17	-	-	-	-	4	2.17
14	2	1.09	1	.5	1	.5	4	2.19

* based on 184 units of social action.



Cumulative Percentage of Social Action Addressed to Issues By C.W.P.C., M.A.S.W. and D.S.A.

*Based on 184 Social Action Units.

Figure 4

The issues around which the greatest proportions of units of social action were taken by our total sample group are inadequate housing (21.19%), problems related to child welfare (13.6%) and inadequate income (9.09%). The issue around which least action was taken is recreation (2.11%).

Direct service agencies became involved in action around all fourteen groupings of issues. C.W.P.C. was involved in ten different issues, but nearly half their social action efforts (46%) was equally divided between two of these issues, inadequate housing and education. M.A.S.W. focused efforts on six issues, of which two, medical services (41%) and unlawful behavior (34%) received the greatest degree of attention.

There appeared to be no significant differences between rural and urban agencies in range of issues addressed. However, our data suggests that primary agencies involve themselves in action on a broader range of issues than do secondary agencies; the same appears true of private agencies as compared to those under public auspices.

4. Source and Responsibility

Figure 5 shows a comparison of the source of the idea for social action and the responsibility for carrying it through, by direct service agencies, M.A.S.W. and C.W.P.C. A tabular representation of levels of source and responsibility by units

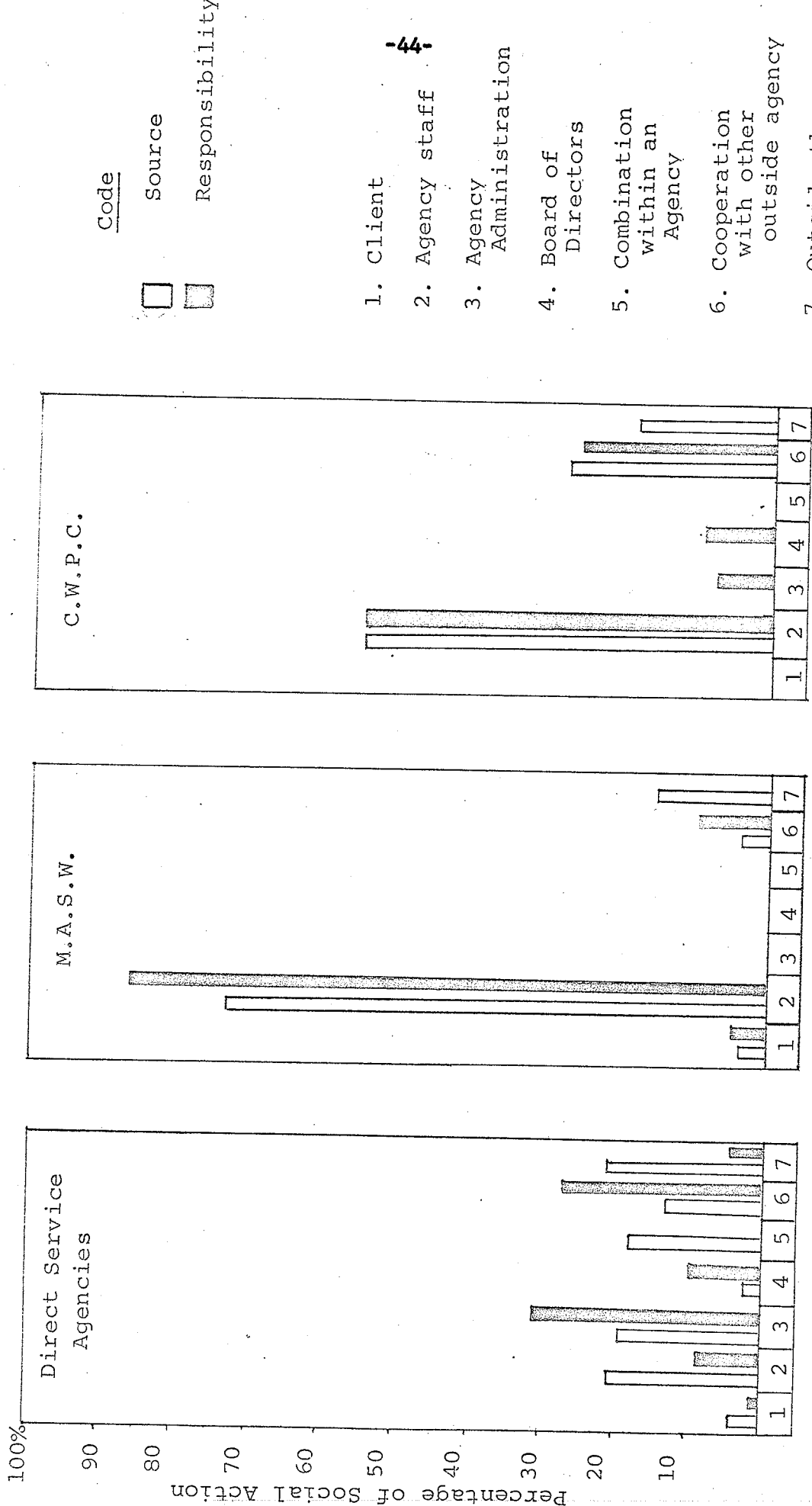


FIGURE 5 : A COMPARISON OF THE SOURCE OF THE SOURCE OF IDEA FOR SOCIAL ACTION AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARRYING IT THROUGH.

of social action and percentages is given below for reference.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF LEVELS OF SOURCE AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOCIAL ACTION*

LEVEL	DIRECT SERVICE				M.S.A.W.				C.W.P.C.			
	Source		Resp.		Source		Resp.		Source		Resp.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Client	6	4.4	3	2	1	4.54	1	5	-	-	-	-
Agency staff	29	20.7	11	8	17	77.27	19	86	14	56	14	56
Agency administration	26	18.61	43	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	8
Board of Directors	5	3.6	13	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	12
Combination within agency	24	16.9	25	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cooperation with outside agency	18	12.9	38	27	1	4.54	2	9	7	28	6	24
Outside the agency	32	22.9	7	5	3	13.63	-	-	4	16	-	-

*Based on 187 units of social action.

One of the most significant findings was the extremely small proportion of client involvement with regard to either source or responsibility. Five of the six units of social action which originated with the client group were from the same direct service agency, Neighborhood Services Centre, the one other unit being from M.A.S.W.

In relation to the total units of social action, staff comprises the single largest group representing both source of action and responsibility for carrying it through. However, this

is not true of direct service agencies taken alone, where administration carries through nearly half the action.

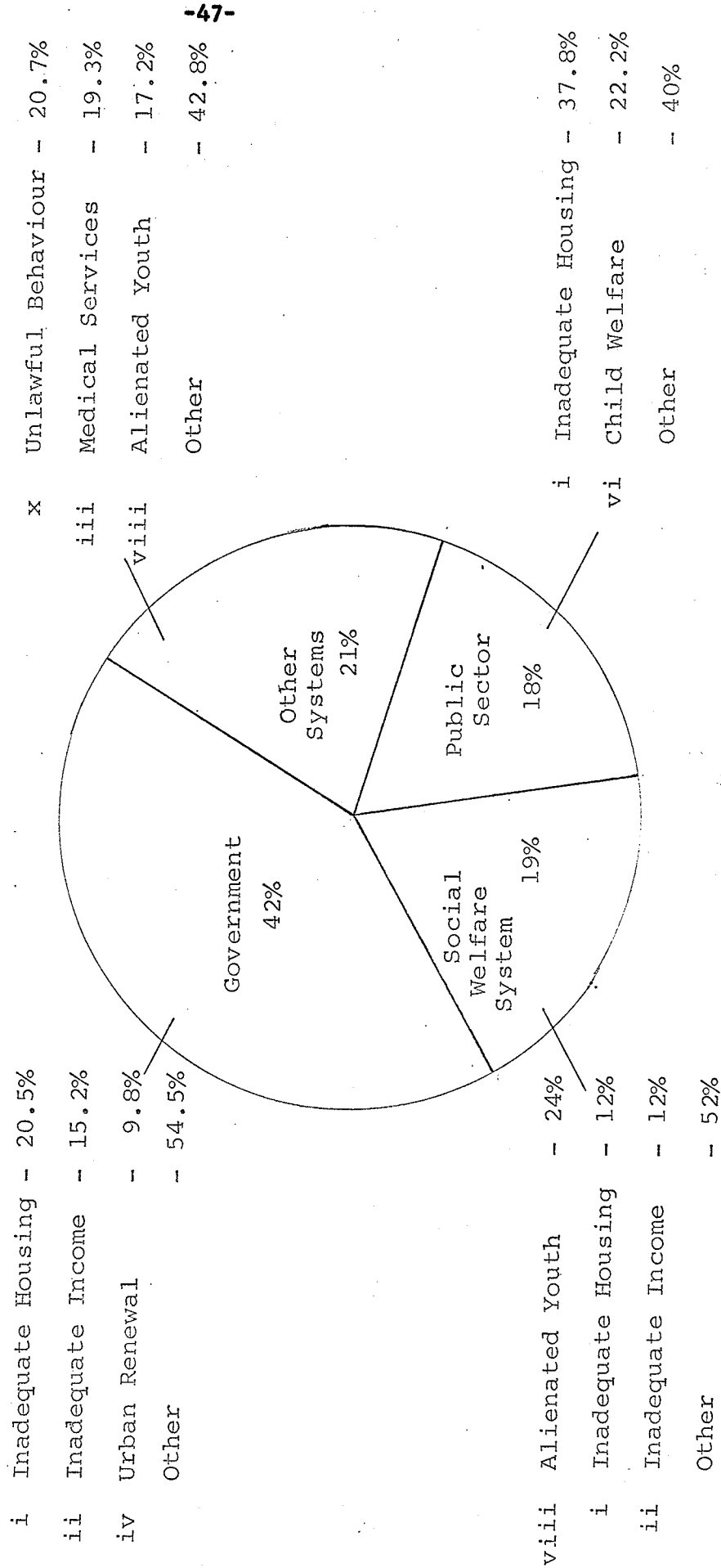
With the exception of M.A.S.W., whose staff both originated and carried through over three-quarters of its social action, there was a significant degree of cooperation with other agencies, with regard to both source and responsibility. Almost one-third (32%) of the total ideas for social action originated outside of the agencies. (The fact that only 5% of the action was carried through by groups outside the agencies cannot be considered significant, since according to the terms of this study, a unit of social action would have been included only if carried through in the name of the agency.)

In source of ideas, there were no cases of combination of staff and board, and in only three units did this combination carry through social action. This finding suggests that social work staff tends to cooperate more closely in social action with staff superiors than with either the board of directors, or the client group.

5. Direction

The major directions toward which social action was communicated by the total sample group are illustrated in Figure 6, in relation to issues. A comparison of direction between direct service, M.A.S.W. and C.W.P.C. by units and percentages, is given

FIGURE 6 : PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF SOCIAL ACTION ACCORDING TO DIRECTION, and ISSUES WITHIN EACH DIRECTION.



in Table 4.

TABLE 4

NUMERICAL AND PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION
OF SOCIAL ACTION ACCORDING TO DIRECTION*

DIRECTION	DIRECT S.		M.A.S.W.		C.W.P.C.	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Government (total)	75	45	15	27	23	41
<u>Breakdown</u>						
Federal	(25)		(5)		(7)	
Provincial	(29)		(7)		(10)	
Municipal	(21)		(3)		(6)	
Public Sector	37	22	4	7	7	14
Social Welfare System	38	23	4	7	8	13
Other Social Systems	17	10	32	59	18	32

*As one unit of social action may be communicated in several directions, figures for direction will not correspond with those for units of social action.

While direct service agencies and C.W.P.C. directed the greatest proportion of social action (45% and 41% respectively) toward some level of government, M.A.S.W. directed 59% of its activity toward social systems other than that of government, social welfare, or the public sector in general. The breakdown on levels of government seems to indicate a slight tendency for action to be directed to the provincial government and then to

the federal government, over the municipal government; this possibly might indicate how the welfare system views the responsibility and power of the levels of government in relation to social policy.

The preponderance of social action undertaken by the total sample group was directed to systems other than social welfare (81%) with only 19% being directed to the social welfare system. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of the action directed to the social welfare system was concerned with one issue, that of alienated youth, suggesting that this issue is seen as one where awareness of the need for and coordination of social services within the welfare system is a priority in meeting needs.

The largest proportions of units directed toward government concern inadequate housing, as did those directed to the public sector; this suggests that the need for action around this issue is observed in the welfare system, but must be communicated to government and the electors who carry responsibility for changing social policy in this area.

Most units of social action directed to other systems were around the issues of unlawful behavior, medical services and alienated youth, again indicating an attempt to communicate observed needs to those in a position to make or influence social

policies directed to meeting that need.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Out of our total original sample of twenty-eight agencies and organizations, twenty-two had participated to some extent in social action over the two-year period studied, inferring general acceptance of social action as an inherent part of their function, and also indicating some degree of acceptance of the responsibility to act on this commitment.

The majority of social action is expressed by formal means. This is particularly evident in communication of concern to any level of government, mass media being used for half the communication to the general public. Both the definition of social action for the purpose of this study, and the method of gathering information, may have influenced findings in this area; however, there is a strong suggestion that techniques of direct confrontation or protest are not seen as feasible social action strategies.

Findings on source and responsibility for social action suggest a traditional hierarchical structure within our social welfare system, with agency staff reporting observed needs to administration, which then, often through an agency board, communicates concern to the power structure. The notable lack of direct client involvement in social action indicates that for

the most part, the client remains the low man on the agency "totem pole."

However, the data also indicated that members of the social welfare system are on the whole open to ideas about social action originating from outside the social welfare system, and that they are prepared to take responsibility for carrying the action through. There is also considerable evidence of cooperation among agencies in social action activities around shared areas of concern.

The preponderance of social action directed toward the government indicates that the social welfare system accepts responsibility for efforts to influence needed changes in legislation. The relatively small proportion of social action directed toward the public sector seems to infer that the general public is assumed to carry little influence with policy-makers. This inference is supported by the very small use made of methods such as petitions and citizens' meetings, which involve the general public in the social action itself.

Due to time limitations, it was not possible to correlate findings regarding attitudes toward social action with action actually undertaken. However, some inferences may be made from the attitudinal material.

Only one agency specifically stated it had no commitment

to social action; the suggestion was made that social work staff could participate through their professional organization. Two agencies, while stating they had not been active as yet, did see social action as a future part of their function. A large majority of the agencies both expressed a commitment to social action, and foresaw some increase in their social action activity in the future.

Although private agencies appeared, on the whole, to feel freer to carry out social action than did governmental agencies, several of the latter group commented on government's current acceptance of social action as a valid part of their function. Some private agencies, on the other hand, felt that they were founded primarily to carry a direct service function, rather than a change agent function.

The majority of agencies expected some future increase in social action, and several speculated that clients would be involved to a greater extent. Comments were made about increasing public receptiveness to social action. Two comments inferred that decentralization of agency structure were allowing staff to take greater initiative in such activity. The range of future activity foreseen by the agencies surveyed varied from formal action carried by administration to the government or community elite, to a radical Saul Aulinsky approach; however, strategies

of education and negotiation definitely predominated over confrontation strategies in speculations of future activities. The only member of our sample which specifically referred to political involvement as a future trend in social action was M.A.S.W.

Findings indicate that a large majority of the sample does express a commitment to social action as a part of its function, and is involved to some extent in social action activity; however, there is great variety as to the degree of commitment and involvement, the goals which are seen as guiding such activities, and the views of appropriate strategies for social action.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This study grew out of concern about the need for social action in the complex and rapidly changing society of today. Interest in the social action function of the social welfare system and the social work profession led to questioning about how this role was being viewed and expressed locally.

This research project, focused on the social action role of the Manitoba social welfare system, has explored and described how member agencies and organizations are implementing the social action component of their function. An attempt was also made to assess their perception of and commitment to social action as an inherent part of their role.

The findings presented in Chapter IV indicate that, in general, the social welfare system of this province does acknowledge social action as a part of its responsibility. The Manitoba Association of Social Workers has formed a committee whose purpose is the planning and implementing of social action. The Community Welfare Planning Council's function is largely conceived of as one of social action. The majority of the direct service agencies in the study sample had been involved to some degree in social action during the two-year period surveyed.

While there was considerable range in methods of social action, areas of concern, and direction of the communication,

the most characteristic unit of social action appeared to be the presentation of a written brief to the government on an issue directly related to the service function of the agency. The idea typically arose from agency staff, but was carried through by administration. Client involvement was almost non-existent.

As acknowledged in the previous chapter, both the limited definition of social action used for the purpose of this study, and the methods used for gathering data, may have influenced the information obtained. However, the analysis of findings implies a definite preference for formal and institutionalized modes of action. The tendency seems to be to provide information to policy makers rather than to confront the power structure, and to inform the general public, rather than to involve them.

Social action at times appears to constitute a token response to a topical issue, rather than to grow out of an assessment of current priorities or future needs. This is suggested by the fact that 12% of all units of social action was directed toward federal royal commissions and task forces. Since this study did not attempt to correlate the issues around which action was taken with priorities in social need, no valid conclusions can be drawn in this area. However, the further fact that a very large proportion of social action was concerned

with problems of children and youth, and almost none with the problems of the aged, and that somewhat more action was concerned with the status of women than with the problems of Indians, does raise questions about priorities.

The inference that agencies tend to undertake most social action around issues of current interest is also supported by information obtained on the intent of each unit of social action. While data on this variable was not sufficiently clear or consistent to allow for complete analysis, the agencies and organizations surveyed indicated that they perceived the purpose of more than three-quarters of their efforts as the correction of the existing social structure. Less than one-fifth of all social action was seen as intended to point out future breakdown in the social structure.

Knowledge of the human implications of social disorganization argues for the importance of anticipating areas of future social breakdown. However, the social welfare system appears to direct the vast majority of social action toward the correction of current societal defects. This seems to imply the acceptance of a role in "first-aid," rather than in prevention and planned provision.

A further area in which exploration was attempted, but data obtained was unclear, is that of response to social action efforts. The limited time span selected for the survey, combined with the lack, in many instances, of complete records of social action activity, made a valid measurement of response impossible. The inability to

measure the response to social action is a limitation of this study, but it also seems to raise questions about the strength and directness of commitment to social action. Can an agency plan an effective social action program without awareness of the response to its previous efforts? Can a decision on the most appropriate strategy be made without knowledge as to what method is most likely to achieve the desired response?

Because time limitations necessitated restricting the scope of this study, an evaluation of the effectiveness of various social action strategies was not attempted. The two year period surveyed was not sufficient to enable the making of valid observations about trends in social action. Although findings implied that primary and private agencies feel freer to involve themselves in social action than do public and secondary agencies, the sample group was not large enough to permit a useful measurement of this apparent tendency; neither was there a broad enough representation from all fields of practice to allow for a meaningful assessment of relationship between practice fields and involvement in social action.

Research aimed at learning what relationship there may be between fields of practice, and/or auspices of agencies, and their social action programs, would be a refinement of the present study.

In consideration of both the lack of client involvement shown in this study, and the questions raised around priorities of issue, research directed toward a comparison of the views of agency personnel and of the client group on social action priorities and

goals would be of interest.

Further study in the area of effectiveness of social action, particularly in relation to the strategies employed, would be of use in providing knowledge on which to base future social action programs. Are briefs sent to the government because this is an effective method of influencing social policy, or rather because (as Dr. William Form suggests) welfare administrators consider making knowledge available to policy-makers ". . . the professional way of behaving . . ." ¹ The profession of social work has tended in the past to assume a cautious, almost neutral approach to social action; knowledge about effectiveness of strategy would enable the flexible selection of whatever method is appropriate for achieving the desired goal.

The broad picture this study seems to reveal is that of a social welfare system aware of and acknowledging some responsibility to social action, and beginning to increase its efforts in this direction. However, the vast proportion of time, skill and resources appears to be invested in direct service functions. Findings imply that the over-all commitment to social action is not, as yet, a very direct commitment. While variations exist, there appears to be in general some lack of clarity about goals, expectations and planning.

¹William H. Form, "Social Power and Social Welfare," Centrally Planned Change: Prospects and Concepts, Robert Morris, ed. (National Association of Social Workers, New York, 1964) p. 86.

A problem may exist in transferring knowledge oriented to casework or group work method into the arena of social change. The shift in social work education from a psychoanalytical focus to a focus on social functioning has again placed social workers in their traditional role of analysing and intervening in social, as well as individual, problems. However, both theoretical training in the design and implementation of effective strategies for social change, and field placements offering experience in social action would seem desirable to help prepare social workers for carrying a role as change agents in society. An educational approach emphasizing values and knowledge would provide a solid base from which appropriate and relevant methods could be developed.

"This is a time for the social work profession to have faith in its cause, to re-affirm its humanistic values, and to work positively for conditions of life that will promote man's humanity to man."¹

¹Charlotte Towle, "Social Work: Cause and Function, 1961," Social Casework, Vol LXIII, No. 8 (October, 1961), p. 23.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE OF AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTING
THE MANITOBA SOCIAL WELFARE SYSTEM

1. Child Guidance Clinic of Greater Winnipeg
2. Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg
3. Children's Aid Society of Central Manitoba
4. Children's Aid Society of Eastern Manitoba
5. Children's Aid Society of Western Manitoba
6. Family Bureau of Greater Winnipeg
7. Jewish Child and Family Service
8. Social Service Department, City Municipal Hospitals
9. Social Service Department, Winnipeg General Hospital
10. Social Service Department, Selkirk Hospital for Mental Diseases
11. Manitoba Home for Girls*
12. Marymound School
13. Winnipeg Juvenile Court
14. Mount Carmel Clinic
15. Neighborhood Service Centre
16. Society for Crippled Children and Adults
17. Young Men's Hebrew Association
18. Young Women's Christian Association
19. City Welfare Department of Brandon
20. South Regional Office, Provincial Division of Social Services
21. North Regional Office, Provincial Division of Social Services*

22. Portage la Prairie Regional Office, Provincial Division of Social Services
23. The Pas Regional Office, Provincial Division of Social Services**
24. Dauphin Regional Office, Provincial Division of Social Services**
25. Social Service Department, Winnipeg Children's Hospital***
26. Winnipeg City Welfare Department***
27. Community Welfare Planning Council
28. Manitoba Association of Social Workers.

* Surveyed, but had undertaken no social action according to the terms of our definition.

** Stated they had undertaken no social action according to the terms of our definition, and were not surveyed.

*** It was not possible to arrange mutually convenient times with agency personnel to obtain data during the period of the study.

APPENDIX B

SECTION I

I. IDENTIFYING DATA

Name of Agency:

Address:

Title of person answering this questionnaire:

Source of data (mainly from written material or mainly from personal interview):

II. DESCRIPTION OF AGENCY

A. Purpose (as officially stated):

B. Delineate the field(s) of practice:

1. public assistance _____
2. family social services _____
3. child welfare _____
4. corrections _____
5. psychiatric social services _____
6. medical social services _____
7. school social services _____
8. recreational social services _____
9. community planning _____
10. other _____

Specify:

C. Structure:

Voluntary _____
Non-voluntary (Governmental) _____

D. Population Served:

Percentage in Metro Winnipeg _____
Percentage outside of Metro Winnipeg _____

E. Staff:

1. Number of service staff (non-clerical) _____

2. Years of practice:

	Number	Number of MSW's (or equivalent)
0 - 3 years	_____	_____
4 - 6 years	_____	_____
7-10 years	_____	_____
over 10 years	_____	_____

SECTION 2

RESEARCH-QUESTIONS RE ATTITUDES

1. Do you believe that this agency has any commitment or responsibility to involve itself in Social Action:

If not, why not? Guides: considered inappropriate or ineffective; a political role? etc.

2. What principles or goals should guide such activity?

Guides: prevention; social work objectives, etc.

3. What form of activities do you think would produce the results this agency desires?

Guide: indicators

4. Where should social action in the agency come from?

Guide: Board of Directors, Executive Staff; General Staff; Client groups, etc.

5. Where do you think this agency's social action could have its greatest impact?

Guide: various directions

6. Has your view of social action changed in the past five years?
In what ways?
7. What future would you predict for this type of agency activity?

Guides: increased occurrence;
community receptiveness;
agency role, etc.

SECTION 3

What form of communication did the social action take?

1. Brief presentation -
2. Committee report -
3. Radio and television releases and presentations -
4. Press releases -
5. Speeches and Public Addresses -
6. Conferences, institutes -
 - a. Initiation -
 - b. Active Participation -
7. Citizens meetings -
Speeches and public address -

- 8. Research and study reports -
- 9. Petitions -
- 10. Public demonstrations -
- 11. Letter writing -
- 12. Miscellaneous -

SECTION 4

RESEARCH GROUP RE SOCIAL ACTION:

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Indicator: _____ Date: _____ Name of Interviewer: _____

ISSUE:

- a. directly related to agency purpose and concern _____
- b. broad (extra-agency) concerns _____
 - 1. Inadequate income _____
 - 2. Inadequate housing _____
 - 3. Child neglect _____
 - 4. Illegitimate pregnancy _____
 - 5. Divorce, desertion, separation, marital discord _____ (specify)
 - 6. Alcoholism _____
 - 7. Drugs _____

8. Unlawful behaviour _____
9. Mentally handicapped _____
10. Physically handicapped _____
11. Urban renewal _____
12. Other (specify) _____

INTENT

1. correct existing social structure _____
2. support existing social structure _____
3. indicate future breakdown in social structure _____

POPULATION GROUP

1. minority group
 - a. Indian and Metis _____
 - b. non-white immigrants _____
 - c. immigrants _____
 - d. other (specify) _____
2. age group
 - a. children 0-12 _____
 - b. adolescents (teens) 13-18 _____
 - c. adults 19-64 _____
 - d. all age groups _____

SECTION 5

SOURCE OF SOCIAL ACTION

1. source of idea

a. agency _____

(i) client _____

(ii) staff _____

(iii) administration _____

(iv) Board of Directors _____

(v) other (specify) _____

b. other groups or individuals

(i) from outside the agency _____

(ii) in co-operation with other agency _____

c. other (specify) _____

2. responsibility for carrying through the Social Action

a. agency _____

(i) client _____

(ii) staff _____

(iii) administration _____

(iv) Board of Directors _____

(v) other (specify) _____

b. other groups or individuals

(i) from outside the agency _____

(ii) in co-operation with another agency _____

c. other (specify) _____

SECTION 6

DIRECTION

1. government

a. level:

(i) Federal Gov't _____

(ii) Provincial _____

(iii) Municipal _____

b. decision-makers:

(i) cabinet/council _____

(ii) administrative officials _____

(iii) legislative committee _____

(iv) individual legislator _____

c. party:

(i) in office _____

(ii) in opposition _____

(iii) other _____

2. agency or organization

a. system:

- (i) law _____
- (ii) education _____
- (iii) economics _____
- (iv) family _____
- (v) religion _____
- (vi) social welfare _____
- (vii) recreation _____
- (viii) health _____

b. if social welfare field of practice:

- (i) public assistance _____
- (ii) school social work _____
- (iii) family service _____
- (iv) child welfare _____
- (v) psychiatric social service _____
- (vi) medical social services _____
- (vii) recreation services _____
- (viii) community planning _____
- (ix) other (specify) _____

c. agency or organization (name) _____

3. public sector

- a. general public _____
- b. civic groups (specify) _____
- c. community organizations _____
- d. other (specify) _____

SECTION 7

RESPONSE

- 1. no response _____
- 2. response:
 - a. direct _____ (from source of direction) _____
 - b. indirect _____
- 3. type of response:
 - a. tangible _____
 - b. intangible _____
 - c. both _____
- 4. reason for response:
 - a. method _____
 - b. volume _____
 - c. timing _____
 - d. source _____
 - e. direction _____
 - f. other (specify) _____
 - g. don't know _____

SECTION 8

TRENDS

Date of social action activities already undertaken.
Is the agency/organization currently planning, or does it expect to plan in the near future, further social action activities?

- a) probable areas of concern
- b) probable direction
- c) probable method